



MEDIA RELEASE

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Podiatric Surgery Specialty acknowledged in PHI Reform

The Private Health Insurance reforms announced recently by the Federal Government appropriately reflect existing legislative recognition of Podiatric Surgery as a surgical speciality. Patients who have Gold or Silver Level health insurance products will continue to be able to access rebates from their private health insurance funds for reconstructive foot and ankle surgery performed by podiatric surgeons. The rebates also continue to apply to prostheses implanted during surgery.

The Australasian College of Podiatric Surgeon (ACPS) supports reforms which reduce confusion for patients and encourages more transparency and fairness for patients with private health insurance.

In a statement from ACPS president, Dr Peter Manuel, the private health insurance reform was welcomed but did not go far enough. *This reform is a positive step for consumers. However, the extent of coverage appears to still be at the discretion of the private health funds. This is concerning when there is very good evidence in the form of data demonstrating safety and cost efficacy of podiatric surgery. Given these facts private health funds should be funding podiatric surgery to the same level as all other recognised surgical specialities and therefore allow the Australian public the right to choose their surgical provider*”.

The ACPS now in its 40th year is the peak body responsible for representing and training Podiatric Surgeons in Australia. Under *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2010*, podiatric surgeons are recognised as specialists in the same manner as other providers of medical and dental care. Health care research has clearly demonstrated that podiatric surgery is safe, effective and improves patient quality of life. Independent economic analysis has also demonstrated that podiatric surgery is cost effective.

The ACPS is unique in that it requires all its members participate in a mandatory clinical audit for all surgical procedures undertaken and has a 100% compliance. The National Audit has been in place since 2012 and is a compulsory requirement to maintain ACPS membership. The 2017 clinical audit report displays key indicators demonstrating safety across a broad range of surgical services. The audit reports are can be accessed on the ACPS website at <http://acps.edu.au/audit-reports/>

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About the Australasian College of Podiatric Surgeons

The Australasian College of Podiatric Surgeons (ACPS) is a professional organisation for podiatric surgeons in Australia and is the leading advocate for podiatric surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia. Founded in 1978, the ACPS seeks to advance knowledge in Podiatric Surgery and uphold the highest standards in foot and ankle (surgical and related) care by podiatric surgeons for our patients and the community.