

SURGICAL TRAINING AT EASTERN HEALTH

Eastern Health has established a reputation as a “strong” surgical health service and there is always keen competition for Consultant Surgical positions – there is always an excess of applicants over available positions.

Most if not all consultant surgeons work at Eastern Health because they are interested in surgical education. Pre vocational training at Eastern Health is highly regarded and in the past the success rate of pre-vocational doctors achieving a position in the Surgical Education and Training (SET) scheme has been extremely high. Eastern Health also has a number of post-Fellowship positions i.e., surgical trainees that have completed their training but who desire extra specialised training.

Surgical training is administered by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in conjunction with the surgical specialty training boards. Surgical training is not conducted by hospitals though most hospitals participate in training. It is important to note that hospitals do not select trainees for surgical training. The Surgical Specialty Boards and the RACS does this. Many of the key positions in the College and the specialty training boards are occupied by Eastern Health surgeons. In fact the current President of the College of Surgeons is an Eastern Health surgeon. Eastern Health participates with the RACS by having accredited training positions in the various surgical specialties.

So how does one become a surgeon?

The simple answer is that one has to get selected onto a SET training scheme in one of the nine surgical disciplines, (Vascular Surgery, Orthopaedics, Urology, Plastics, Neurosurgery, Cardiothoracic Surgery, General Surgery, Paediatric Surgery or ENT, Head and Neck Surgery).

So how does one get selected for SET?

Firstly one has to register with the College (www.surgeons.org). Each specialty is a little different but the details are on the RACS website (www.surgeons.org). Basically however one needs a good CV and good references.

How does Eastern Health assist?

Pre-vocational training can be tailored to meet the qualification requirements for those interested in a surgical career. This training provides exposure to many surgeons who can be added to your referee list. Eastern Health also operates a “Surgical Research Group” chaired by Mr. Sean Mackay that enables enhancement of your CV whilst working at Eastern Health.

Will I be able to complete my Surgical training at Eastern Health?

This will depend entirely on which surgical specialty SET program that you are selected for and where the College chooses to send you. It is not up to the hospital or health service.

The Short answer

If you have any desire to pursue a surgical career, Eastern Health provides opportunities to decide if a surgical career is right for you and then the opportunities to successfully pursue a surgical career path.