



AOA

AUSTRALIAN
ORTHOPAEDIC
ASSOCIATION

President's statement on Medical Board's plan to strengthen patient safety

The Australian Orthopaedic Association is pleased to see attention from the Australian media regarding the Medical Board's moves to better support doctors in providing safe, high-quality care for Australian patients. Healthy conversation at a national level and across the healthcare spectrum is crucial to maintaining the high standards of Australian medical practice.

For some time, AOA has been working to embed ethical conduct even more deeply into the ways in which we support both the initial training and the lifelong education of Australia's orthopaedic surgeons. AOA has embarked on a strategic process to implement and embed the recently created AOA *Ethical Framework* ([available on the AOA website](#)), developed in consultation with The Ethics Centre.

We have already seen the *Framework's* implementation into the world-leading AOA 21 Training Program, which is benchmarked worldwide, and training in ethical practice has been included in other AOA programs such as the Mentoring Program and annual Young Leaders Forum, all of which have been designed to encourage leadership, ethical decision making and professional conduct.

The Medical Board's expert committee has asked specialist colleges to enforce better standards of behavior and AOA is also on the front foot in this aspect. The recently implemented revised AOA *Curriculum* requires that all AOA trainees are competent in 'foundation competencies', including 'Professionalism', which incorporates professional and ethical behavior. AOA sees that foundation competencies, together with medical and surgical expertise, are the underpinning of quality patient care.

Furthermore, the AOA Group of Past Presidents independently identified the issue of underperforming surgeons and formed a working group to explore the ways in which a system could be implemented to ensure the highest quality of patient care is being delivered. The working group is currently gaining information on how the successful NOTSSdk (Non-Technical Skills for Surgeons in Denmark) Danish system may also work for AOA members, with recommendations from this group to be implemented in 2018.

Lawrence Malisano
President