



Australian first as female orthopaedic surgeon appointed AOA President

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In an Australian first, Dr Annette Holian has been appointed to lead Australia's 1,800 orthopaedic surgeons, the first female orthopaedic surgeon to have been elected Australian Orthopaedic Association president since the foundation of the association in 1936.

Speaking about the historic appointment, Dr Holian said, "The progress of diversity within the orthopaedic profession is a passion that I intend to help advance during my presidency. We have identified areas of bias against women in training, and we will actively work towards bringing equity in every area where we have influence. It is my hope that the rate of change that we are seeing within the profession accelerates as the value of diversity at all levels in orthopaedics becomes better understood.

"My door is open to all orthopaedic colleagues, but especially to the women who are considering a career in orthopaedics or who have undertaken the training program. The need to support these trainees developing their full potential as consultants is essential, enabling our profession to more accurately represent the community we serve," Dr Holian said.

Environmental sustainability, rural health equity, education including the need for surgical coaching and increasing the wellbeing of surgeons are just some of the other platforms that Dr Holian wishes to promote during her tenure.

The appointment marks a new era for orthopaedics in Australia, outgoing President Dr Michael Gillespie said, "Dr Holian is an accomplished orthopaedic surgeon who has paved the way and mentored many in orthopaedics. Annette's personal achievements and advancements to the profession are considerable and speak volumes about the passion she has in raising up the profession as a whole. I am extremely pleased that Annette is the first ever female to become President of the AOA," Dr Gillespie said.

Dr Holian represents one of just 73 female orthopaedic surgeons in Australia. "The percentage of orthopaedic consultants who are women is now over 5% which can be seen as still low but we have made great advances over the past decade. It is encouraging to see that the proportion of female trainees is much higher with the 2022 cohort representing 22%" Dr Holian said.

Dr Holian is Consultant Orthopaedic and Trauma surgeon at Monash Children's Hospital and has held a number of leadership positions within surgery, including being elected to the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Council where she is currently the Chair of the Board of Surgical Education and Training. Annette has served on the RACS Trauma committee and was Chair of the Military Surgery section. As a current reservist in the Royal Australian Air Force, she holds the rank of Group Captain and is the Clinical Director for Surgery and Preoperative Services for RAAF.

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About the Australian Orthopaedic Association

The Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) is the peak professional body for orthopaedic surgeons in Australia. AOA provides high quality specialist education, training and continuing professional development. AOA is committed to ensuring the highest possible standard of orthopaedic care and is the leading authority in the provision of orthopaedic information to the community. AOA actively supports scientific research and orthopaedic humanitarian initiatives in Australia and overseas.