



## JDOCS AND SURGICAL TRAINING

What do the latest developments in the pre-vocational surgical domain mean to SET Trainees?

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*"...To teach them this Art, if they shall wish to learn it, without fee or stipulation; and by precept, lecture, and every other mode of instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons, and those of my teachers, and to disciples who have signed the covenant and have taken the oath to the law of medicine..."*

*The Oath of Hippocrates*

The above oath has passed all our lips at some stage of our medical careers, usually recited in unison with our graduating cohort from medical school. It is a testament to the importance our profession places on teaching the next generation of would be doctors and surgeons. In keeping with this tradition the College of surgeons has long been, not only the guardians of the standards of surgical practice, but also the gatekeepers to surgical training.

### Enter JDocs

The college's most recent development in the training of the next generation of surgeons is JDocs. In recent years, as more medical graduates have entered the workforce, so too has the increased number of pre-vocational years for junior doctors as they wait (and hope) for a spot among the finite positions for specialist training. Pre-vocational positions have long been seen as 'service' jobs, as there has not been a

mandated training framework beyond internship/PGY2. It is this void that JDocs aims to fill for the generation of would be surgeons in waiting.

JDocs is a competency framework that aims to provide a guide for ongoing learning expectations and career development matched to PGY level. It is a road map of graduated clinical tasks and responsibilities based on the nine RACS competencies and in line with both the Australian Curriculum Framework for Junior Doctors (ACF-JF) and the New Zealand Curriculum Framework for Prevocational Training (NZCF). Like any road map, individual junior doctors can choose their own path towards a procedural career by meandering through as many of the highlighted tasks in a sequence that suits their journey.

The JDocs framework is supported by a suite of resources, such as e-learning and library resources, that can help to achieve the selected learning outcomes. Junior doctors can also track their progress, assessments and achievements through the use of ePortfolios and the MALT database. The framework and some resources are freely available from the JDocs website ([jdocs.surgeons.org](http://jdocs.surgeons.org)) with a subscription option for extended resource access.

### JDocs and SET Trainees

So what does a pre-vocational educational framework have

to do with SET Trainees? Surely having managed to get our foot in the door at Spring Street means those pre-vocational days are a thing of the past. However, closer scrutiny of the JDocs key clinical tasks, reveal competencies that are part of SET curriculum, though possibly at the early level. As such the online resources continue to be relevant for all Trainees, SET or otherwise. On the recommendation of the Skills and Education Committee, the extended JDocs resources will be available to all Trainees (as well as Fellows and IMGs) as part of their existing college subscription.

Also in reality, SET Trainees serve as inadvertent ambassadors for surgical training to our junior colleagues. As those who have most recently been successful in achieving admittance to an increasingly competitive vocational program, current Trainees are a natural resource to elicit application savoir-faire. As such Trainees too should be aware of this purposefully constructed set of educational resources that would be most useful for our junior colleagues, particularly since the Generic Surgical Sciences Exam (GSSE) has become available in the pre-training domain.

As Trainees progress through training and graduate in seniority so to comes the increasing responsibility in supervision of junior team members. It is anticipated that senior Trainees will be increasingly called on to sign off on key clinical tasks as their juniors accomplish them. However it is unclear at this stage the role of SET Trainees in sign-off or if that prerogative will remain with RACS Fellows alone. I expect that information will be made available once the JDocs subscriptions with e-Portfolio and MALT access is available in Jan 2016.

### Continuing traditions

While its more than two thousand years since the time of Hippocrates, the Hippocratic tradition of preparing the next generation of doctors and surgeons continues. While training may no longer be 'without fee or stipulation' (instead there is no shortage of both), the transmission of the Art of Surgery continues to be developed and delivered in keeping with traditional precepts but employing every other mode of instruction including a novel suite of online resources.



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