

**RACGP Presidential Candidate: Dr Magdalena Simonis**  
MBBS FRACGP DRANZCOG MHHS

Dear HMSA Colleagues,

As you may be aware, the time to elect a new RACGP President begins 22<sup>nd</sup> August and ends midday 30<sup>th</sup> August. I am writing to inform my fellow Hellenic colleagues, that I have agreed to take on the challenge of driving the RACGP to the next level.

With the changes and financial challenges forced upon everybody due to COVID 19, what lies ahead will be the most challenging time for GPs, the RACGP, as well as the whole nation. Despite there being more medical graduates, fewer are choosing GP training and existing GPs experience burnout, uncertainty and frustration. Championing the GP cause for improved remuneration is going to be difficult and requires strategic insights which my contribution to many areas of the health sector, proves I have. My full Candidate Statement is available on my website <https://magdalenasimonis.com> and is summarised in my video <https://magdalenasimonis.com/video/>

As some background, I have been on the board of the Australian Greek Welfare Society (now *Pronia*) and have used my Greek proficiency to communicate with Greek Australians in government sponsored health promotions for several of the organisations I work with through seminars, radio and in news media over the years. I have been deeply engaged with the RACGP for many years, currently on their Expert Committee Quality Care and am their preferred media spokesperson on numerous health issues, being interviewed most weeks. I have represented the RACGP at senate enquires and have worked on several National Health Framework reviews. Outside of RACGP, I am on the Strategy and Policy Committee for Breast Cancer Network Australia, on the board of Women's Health Victoria chairing their subcommittee for Strategy and Policy, have presented at the United Nations as part of the Australian Assembly and am National Coordinator for the Australian Federation of Medical Women. Recently the Medical Women's International Association, appointed me the Australian representative to the World Health Organisation, World Assembly on COVID 19.

The three key issues I will drive as RACGP President are as follows:

**1. Putting GPs at the heart of Australia's Primary Care Model**

- We need to improve GP remuneration and reduce GP burn-out whilst doing the work we do, which is improving health outcomes for Australians.

**2. Make sure the College has GPs' backs**

- This means focussing on members' needs and being responsive in times of crisis. For the first few weeks of COVID 19, we lacked one source of truth regarding action needed to protect ourselves, our staff, our patients and our families. Aside from individual GPs posting recommendations, there was not one clear source of information until weekly updates started. Most GPs still feel abandoned.

**3. Drive innovation and opportunity into our profession**

- GPs to date have been the subjects but never the leaders in developing scaled projects/solutions. e.g. EHR and the former PCEHR even desktop interfaces. There is a lack of investment in 'ideas' of GPs, yet we know the patients, their problems and the solutions

to their problems better than most. In order to lead health reform, RACGP needs to invest in supporting our engagement with technology and Primary Care-based research.

Remember to Vote 1 MAGDALENA SIMONIS

Kindest regards,

Magdalena