

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND  
COLLEGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS (RANZCO)  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
DRAWING ROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 22 JUNE 2018**

Good evening. Dick and I warmly welcome you to this reception for delegates attending the Annual Scientific Congress of the Tasmanian Branch of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land—the Mouheneener people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

I would like to acknowledge:

- Meeting Convenor, Dr Nitin Verma, Clinical Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, and his organising committee;
- RANZCO National President, Associate Professor Mark Daniell;
- CEO Dr David Andrews;
- and distinguished speakers including:  
Dr Robin Abell;  
Dr Elsie Chan;  
Dr Chameen Samarawickrama [*samarra-wick-ramma*];

Welcome also to interstate delegates – who may or may not find time to sample of our Dark Mofo delights, including participating in the Nude Solstice Swim at dawn this morning!

Exercise is of course a key component of health, and although a freezing nude swim is a bit extreme, as medical specialist you are no doubt keenly aware of the benefits of even light daily exercise.

I can remember Nitin Verma telling me that more outdoor time for kids reduces the risk of myopia and I have read that regular exercise can reduce the risk of eye disease in later life like cataracts, glaucoma and wet age-related macular degeneration as well as indirectly, by helping avoid conditions that affect eyesight.

Dick and I have long been committed outdoor enthusiasts – be that bushwalking or cycling, and indeed swimming in the Derwent River, when we lived on its banks at New Norfolk – but I must confess not in winter.

I am telling you this because as Governor I do try to champion the benefits of health whenever that's feasible, and so it is the case that for the past three-and-a-half years we have encouraged thousands of Tasmanians to at least consider outdoor pursuits.

Just yesterday for example we had a visit in this Drawing Room by about 60 Year 5 and 6 Dominic College students. I tell them about the role of the Governor and then take questions. And when I am invariably asked, "What is the favourite thing you do?" – I talk about for example my annual Maria Island walk climbing Bishop and Clerk; and that we cycle along the bike track most weekends.

But not all questions from kids are straightforward. I have been asked what I don't like about the job; how much money I have; how many servants I have; and once, after I had given my talk, a kid put his hand up and asked me where the Governor was! Just this morning we received a bundle of thank you letters from Lindisfarne Primary School students, one of whom noted that he had learnt that the Governor has to be 'a bit old to be chosen'.

Now, I see that you have a very full program, all day tomorrow and then through to Sunday afternoon focusing on the cornea (reading the program with topics such as corneal melts and perforations made my eyes a bit watery) so I won't hold up your socialising any more. I wish you all the very best in your deliberations and discussions and information-sharing in this most important area of the medical profession.

Thank you.