



ASOHNS

The Australian Society of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery

Dr Fiona Panizza

Society Medal for Distinguished Service to ASOHNS

Dr Fiona Panizza entered ENT training in Queensland in 1987, sought after by both General and Plastic surgery, but fortunately chose ENT. Fiona is known as exceptional for her intelligence, work ethic and keen passion for surgery.

Fiona was the first female to achieve Australian Fellowship of RACS in Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery by examination in 1990. Previous to this the first female ENT surgeon was Dr Jean Littlejohn who trained in Melbourne, passed the Diploma in Laryngology and Otology from the University of Melbourne, and was admitted as a Fellow by assessment by a Board of Censors rather than examination in 1935. That was over 50 years for another female ENT surgeon.

After completing training, she undertook an Otology / Neurotology Fellowship in Manchester UK with Richard Ramsden, accompanied by her husband Ben Panizza who went as a spouse dependant.

On her return to Australia Fiona was appointed a consultant at the Mater Hospitals and performed adult cochlear implants and commenced the paediatric cochlear implant program at the Mater Children's Hospital in the days when there was still resistance from the deaf community.

Fiona, with her subspecialty training in otology, was an enthusiastic supporter of the introduction of universal newborn hearing services in Australia and joined Professor Harvey Coates on the Australian Universal Newborn Hearing Committee to advocate for the introduction of this program in the early 2000's.

Her strong support and advocacy finally led to the introduction of UNHS in Queensland in 2004 and her commitment towards the attainment of a National newborn hearing screening program was finally realised after many years of lobbying in 2009 when Prime Minister Kevin Rudd mandated this for every Australian baby.

In addition to these accomplishments, Fiona is a strong supporter of ASOHNS and ANZSPO.

For the last 10 years Fiona has conducted frequent Aboriginal paediatric ENT clinics in South East Queensland.

A role model for aspiring surgeons, especially in Queensland, I am delighted to present ASOHNS Society Medal for Distinguished Service to ASOHNS.