What is AFOEM

- The Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
- A Faculty of The Royal Australasian College of Physicians.
- Fellows are international as well as from Australia and NZ
What is AFOEM

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians
What is an Occupational Physician?

What is Occupational Medicine?

The study of the effects of ‘work’ (medical, physical, psychological, organisational and environmental demands) on workers (individuals and groups) and the effect that worker’s (medical, physical and Psychological) conditions have on their ability to work safely and efficiently within the workplace environment.

The environmental part extends to the effect of workplaces on the surrounding environment and on people not employed by the workplace in that environment,
What competencies do they have?

- Clinical skills at a Physician level
- Workplace assessment
- Critical appraisal of literature and medical evidence
- Research Methods, Biostatics and Epidemiology
- Management
- Communication
- Legislation, Regulation, and medico legal matters
- Rehabilitation
- Environment
Occupational Health Synergies

A. Collegiate

B. Collaborative
Occupational Health Synergies

- **Internal**
  - Within OHS itself.
  - Within medicine and other disciplines.

- **External**
  - With other stakeholders
  - Other countries
  - Other health and safety groups and professionals
Internal Synergies OHS

- Occupational Hygienists.
- Occupational Therapists.
- Psychologists
- Ergonomists.
- Engineers.
- Forensic scientists.
- Management.
- OHS management.
- Rehab coordinators
- Occ. Health nurses
- GP’s with an interest in occupational medicine
Internal synergies Medical Interfaculty synergies

- Rehabilitation Medicine
- Population or public health medicine
External synergies

- Other stakeholders – Governments, Health boards, legislative assemblies, Regulation boards, Health and Safety bodies (WHS)

- Professionals, OHS scientists, hygienists, doctors, groups in other countries
Why do synergies need to be explored and fostered

- Paradigm shifts in the occupational health care area.
- Funding
- Research
- Education
- Pooling knowledge not splitting it
- Pooling resources of all types
- Collaboration
- Cooperation
Past challenges

- Included identifying associations between exposures and ill health in workers.
- Looking at causation.
- Legislating and regulating for those hazards.
- Preventing, Monitoring and evaluating.
- Educating.
Future challenges

- New chemicals
- Shift work
- Organizational stress
Working towards population health through the workforce

- Recognizing the “health benefits” of work.
  (http://afoem.racp.edu.au)

- Influencing those not at work by educating those at work. Diet, exercise, healthy lifestyles.