



REDEFINING THE JOINT REPLACEMENT EXPERIENCE

Sunshine Coast Orthopaedic Group

WORDS INGRID NELSON PHOTO SUPPLIED

WHEN PROFESSOR Daevyd Rodda first arrived on the Sunshine Coast in 2015, it was meant to be a temporary move.

Originally from Melbourne, the orthopaedic surgeon had planned little more than a working holiday. But like so many before him, he was captivated by the lifestyle, the people and the potential of the region.

"I've always loved the Sunshine Coast," he tells *salt*. "Ever since I was a child, I've been coming to Noosa for holidays. Originally it was just going to be for a six-month working holiday and then I just fell in love with the place. I loved the people as well. I made the decision that I wanted to live up here full time."

That decision has helped shape orthopaedic care on the Sunshine Coast. Professor Rodda founded the Sunshine Coast Orthopaedic Group, which has grown

into a team of five specialist surgeons consulting across Noosa, Maroochydore and Birtinya.

More recently, as co-founder of Maroochydore Private Hospital, which opened in June this year, he has helped pioneer a new model of specialist orthopaedic care focused on delivering an exceptional joint replacement experience close to home.

Today, Professor Rodda performs around 800 hip and knee replacements each year and has completed more than 5000 joint replacements during his career. Yet, he says, the greatest reward has never been the surgery itself.

"It's rare that we do life-saving operations," he says. "We do things that improve people's quality of life. People come in and they're in pain.

"They can't sleep. They can't play with the grandkids. They can't play golf. Hip and knee replacements have the potential to restore people's

quality of life.

"It's so satisfying to see people come in a few months after surgery. They're often back doing the things they love, with a big smile on their face. They can look like different people."

Medicine wasn't always his intended career.

"As a high school student, I always wanted to do commerce and law," Professor Rodda says.

It was his mother, a nurse, who encouraged him to pursue medicine.

"My mum was really my inspiration to do medicine. She said, 'Daevyd, you were born to be a doctor'."

Once immersed in medicine, he quickly realised orthopaedics was the right fit.

"The thing about orthopaedics is it self-selects people," he says. "You know from very early on if you want to be an orthopaedic surgeon."

"I think people who do surgery fundamentally have to enjoy the technical aspects. They have to enjoy working in a team environment because surgery is absolutely a team sport."

That team philosophy has shaped Maroochydore Private Hospital. Designed specifically around musculoskeletal care, the hospital focuses on excellent clinical outcomes, patient experience and building the right team.

"Healthcare is a people business," Professor Rodda says. "One of our biggest focuses from the very start was how do we get the right team."

Patient wellbeing has influenced everything from the hospital's design to nearly 300 on-site car parks. Even hospital meals have been reimaged through a partnership with high-profile Maroochydore restaurant Market Bistro.

"This hospital is about wellness. It's not about sickness," Professor Rodda explains.

That philosophy even extends to what patients wear after surgery.

"I prefer that they're not in a hospital gown. They wear a T-shirt and shorts, which I jokingly refer to as their exercise gear. The reason is people associate hospital gowns with being sick. I want people to associate what we're doing here with wellness and improving quality of life."

The hospital also features advanced robotic technology, but Professor Rodda believes healthcare should support, not replace, clinical expertise.

"These technologies assist the surgeons. They don't replace the surgeons."

Nor, he says, can they replace the relationship between surgeon and patient.

"A successful outcome isn't just a technically well-executed procedure," he says. "It's someone who is supported throughout the journey, who feels prepared and educated before their operation, who comes in calmly and confidently, who has a high-quality procedure and is then supported through the post-operative journey by an integrated team.

"An important part of that preparation is ensuring patients understand both the potential benefits and the risks of surgery, so they can make an informed decision about whether an operation is right for them."

Professor Rodda's practice focuses exclusively on

hip and knee replacement surgery using muscle-sparing techniques where appropriate, including anterior hip replacement and subvastus knee replacement. He stresses that outcomes vary between patients and surgical approaches are always selected on clinical grounds.

Beyond the operating theatre, Professor Rodda hosts the Sunshine Coast's only international fellowship in hip and knee replacement surgery and continues research partnerships with the University of the Sunshine Coast.

His commitment to improving lives also extends through the Sporting Chance Foundation, established in 2018 to provide free orthopaedic surgery and rehabilitation for young Indigenous athletes from remote communities.

"We realised we're in a very fortunate position doing what we're doing," he says.

"Sporting Chance Foundation was aimed to help young Indigenous athletes, who have had a musculoskeletal injury while playing sport, to help them get back to whatever sport they want to play."

Improving access to surgery has also driven another major initiative.

Professor Rodda founded what became Medibank's no-gap joint replacement program, which has since expanded to private health insurers HCF, NIB and Bupa, helping more than 10,000 Australians receive surgery without significant surgeon or anaesthetist out-of-pocket costs.

"It allows patients to access an extremely comprehensive surgical care pathway in a highly focused and brand new facility, with no out-of-pocket expenses."

For Professor Rodda, watching the region establish itself as a destination for specialist healthcare has been one of the biggest industry changes he has witnessed. "When I first moved to the Sunshine Coast, there was this prevailing mindset that people had to go to Brisbane to receive high-quality healthcare," he says.

"Over time, we've seen that trend reverse."

Today, patients travel from across Queensland, interstate and overseas for treatment.

"I think the most exciting thing for me is to really see the Sunshine Coast be put on the map as a centre for high-quality healthcare."

And after thousands of operations, it's still the people who inspire him the most.

"I still love the technical challenge of orthopaedics," Professor Rodda says. "But what I really love is the patient interactions and seeing patients after their surgery, watching them through their recovery and ultimately seeing them getting back to doing the things they want to do. That's the thing that's really rewarding." 🌟



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