

**1.0 POLICY TITLE RACGP EXPERT COMMITTEES, TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 1.1 Policy Number:** CO-O-030.2  
**1.2 Category:** Organisational  
**1.3 Approval Date:** July 2015  
**1.4 Revision Due Date:** July 2018  
**1.5 Unit Responsible:** Office of the President and CEO

**2.0 POLICY DECLARATION**

This Policy establishes the RACGP Expert Committees, their membership and responsibilities and provides guidance as to their proceedings.

**This Policy is approved by Council and endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).**

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

**3.1 Context**

Part 10.3 of the RACGP Constitution empowers the Council to establish one or more committees and engaging RACGP members as it thinks fit.

Pursuant to this power, Council through this document establishes the RACGP Expert Committees in those areas of expertise considered crucial to the RACGP and to general practice generally. The advice and products provided to Council by the Committees vitally assists the RACGP's mission.

**3.2 Definitions**

In this Policy:

**Chair** means that member engaged by Council in that capacity for a Committee.

**Committee** means one or all of those committees stipulated in clause 4.0 (as the context permits).

**Member** or **member** means a member of a Committee.

**Policy** means this document.

Other than for these definitions, in the event of any inconsistency between this Policy and the Constitution, the Constitution prevails.

All references in this Policy are to this Policy itself, unless otherwise indicated.

References to the Chair, the CEO or to an RACGP General Manager include reference to their delegate (if any).

**4.0 ESTABLISHMENT**

The following Committees are established:

- RACGP Expert Committee – GP Advocacy and Funding,
- RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care,
- RACGP Expert Committee – Research,
- RACGP Expert Committee – Standards for General Practices,
- RACGP Expert Committee – Pre Fellowship Education,
- RACGP Expert Committee – Post Fellowship Education, and
- RACGP Expert Committee – eHealth and Practice Systems.

## **5.0 RACGP EXPERT COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES**

### **5.1 General objectives**

As an overarching obligation in addition to their addressing the matters in the respective areas described in clauses 5.2 to 5.9 below, each Committee is responsible for (all through the CEO):

- a. pursuing the following objectives within the Committee's area of expertise:
  - advising on the implementation of related initiatives developed in accordance with the RACGP's strategic plan,
  - establishing links with relevant state, national and international groups in order to monitor trends and incorporating suitable innovations into RACGP programs, and
  - increasing the RACGP's profile, and of general practice, by a range of activities, and
- b. providing assistance and advice to Council within the Committee's area of expertise by:
  - overseeing, supporting and updating the development of a program of work, detailing the manner in which the Committee proposes to achieve its objectives in the role of providing assistance and advice to Council,
  - overseeing the conduct of the program of work adopted by the Committee and monitoring that program against an annual plan,
  - monitoring the work program's effectiveness and making amendments to the program as appropriate,
  - recommending new policy and strategic directions to Council,
  - act in good faith in the RACGP's interests, and
  - preparing and submitting to Council an annual report concerning its activities (extracts of which may be included in the annual report of the College) at the time and in the format requested by the CEO or the President.

### **5.2 RACGP Expert Committee – GP Advocacy and Funding**

The RACGP Expert Committee – GP Advocacy and Funding is established to:

- support RACGP responses to government initiatives as they impact on general practice,
- offer informed strategic advice on health system reform,
- develop policy and position statements on key health system changes,
- support the provision of safe, sustainable and quality general practice by advocating across a range of areas including workforce, remuneration and equity of access for patients, and
- maintain a close working relationship between GPs, GP organisations and the State and Commonwealth Governments.

### **5.3 RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care**

The RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care is established to:

- develop and maintain high quality, evidence based tools and resources to improve delivery of care in general practice and to support preventive care,
- provide advice and direction to Council on matters of clinical excellence,
- provide input into guidelines, position papers and RACGP responses to submissions related to clinical issues or delivery of quality care,
- ensure the Committee represents key portfolios in the areas of: preventive health; multi-morbidity and chronic disease management; safety, quality, evaluation and monitoring; aged and palliative care; mental health,

- assist sourcing of GPs to represent the RACGP on external committees, and
- promote quality general practice.

#### **5.4 RACGP Expert Committee – Research**

The RACGP Expert Committee – Research is established to:

- provide Council with information, advice and policy direction on research related issues in general practice
- clarify and promote a strategic agenda for general practice/primary health care research in Australia (clinical and applied)
- support the strengthening of a culture of research in general practice and assist in the development of general practice research capacity, including academic career opportunities
- advocate for GP research and promote general practice research as an essential component of general practice in Australia
- work with other College committees to identify their research needs and facilitate their achievement
- work with research and training organisations to increase engagement of registrars in research and critical thinking
- support the work of the RACGP Foundation.

#### **5.5 RACGP Expert Committee – Standards for General Practices**

The RACGP Expert Committee – Standards for General Practices is established to:

- develop and maintain standards for general practices, including GP education practices, medical deputising services and other primary medical services,
- ensure the standards reflect quality practice and independent of government policies and initiatives,
- determine the impacts of meeting standards (including the cost of meeting standards, and the benefits of meeting standards),
- monitor the development and application of relevant standards in Australia and overseas,
- establish a mechanism for standards interpretation with organisations that accredit against the RACGP Standards,
- advise Council on mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of standards development and maintenance within the RACGP,
- oversee the RACGP's role in the development and monitoring of standards in related areas (e.g. health call centres),
- auspice research on standards-related issues,
- ensure adequate communication about standards for general practices within the RACGP, its members, the medical profession and the Australian community.

#### **5.6 RACGP Expert Committee – Pre Fellowship Education**

The RACGP Expert Committee – Pre Fellowship Education is established to:

- provide Council with information and advice on issues relating to education across the life cycle of general practice and to advise on the implementation of initiatives developed in accordance with the RACGP's strategic plan,
- establish links with relevant state, national and international groups in order to monitor trends in relation to education access across the lifecycle of general practice and to incorporate suitable innovations into RACGP programs, and

- increase the RACGP's educational profile and of general practice via a range of mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on pre Fellowship education and training.

#### **5.7 RACGP Expert Committee – Post Fellowship Education**

The RACGP Expert Committee – Post Fellowship Education is established to:

- provide the Council with information and advice on issues relating to education across the life cycle of general practice with specific emphasis upon post-fellowship education and training,
- advise on the implementation of initiatives developed in accordance with the College's strategic plans relating to QI and CPD and educational development opportunities,
- establish links with relevant state, national, and international groups in order to monitor trends in relation to education access across post fellowship general practice and to incorporate suitable innovations into college programs,
- increase the educational profile of the RACGP and of general practice by maintaining and expanding the knowledge and skills of members in accord with individual determination,
- act as the key interface between faculties of special interest, providing stakeholder perspective information to the RACGP council on educational opportunity for members,
- contribute to the identification and implementation of responses to reform initiatives proposed by Council and that of external agencies and monitor the success or otherwise of those initiatives, and
- advise on professional transition activities including returning to work, broadening of skill bases and domestic and international medical opportunities,

with a particular emphasis on post Fellowship education and training.

#### **5.8 RACGP Expert Committee – eHealth and Practice Systems**

The RACGP Expert Committee – eHealth and Practice Systems is established to:

- provide informed advice on e-health developments, information management, e-health standards and other areas of development that impact on the future operation of Australian general practice,
- develop RACGP position statements on key external e-health initiatives,
- advise on development and maintenance of business tools and resources to support general practitioners and general practice,
- advise Council on and oversee development of RACGP electronic guidelines to support general practice's use of e-health, and
- advise Council on the development and promotion of e-health standards in general practice.

#### **5.9 Future RACGP Expert Committees**

Any additional Committees later established by Council shall similarly be established upon the terms of this document save only to the extent otherwise specifically regulated in any particular instance.

### **6.0 RACGP EXPERT COMMITTEE POWERS**

The Committees can:

- a. assume the CEO has structured the RACGP to ensure adequate staff will implement those recommendations Council chooses to have implemented,
- b. recommend the RACGP CEO enter into, but cannot itself or any member enter into, such contracts or incur obligations on behalf of the RACGP,

- c. recommend the RACGP CEO establishes such sub-committees (whether or not called “sub-committee”; “task force” or “working group”) on such terms and for such period as may from time to time be approved by the CEO, and
- d. meet for the dispatch of business, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings as their Chair thinks fit, subject to conforming to generally accepted governance standards.

## **7.0 MEMBERSHIP**

### **7.1 Committee composition**

Each Committee must consist of:

- a. the Chair, approved by Council,
- b. up to seven members approved by Council from amongst the RACGP’s financial members, and
- c. up to three members co-opted by the Committee, who are either:
  - i. general practitioners and RACGP financial members, or
  - ii. other individuals (whether or not RACGP financial members) who the Committee considers have required expertise for the Committee’s operation, providing that expertise is referable to the Committee or a complimentary discipline (for example, a consumer representative, practice manager, practice nurse, or specific Aboriginal sector expertise), and
- d. the RACGP “General Practitioner of the Year” and “General Practice Registrar of the Year” recipients, as invited by the RACGP President.

### **7.2 Member engagement**

- a. Committee meetings will take place at least 4 times in every calendar year, of which at least 2 meetings shall be face-to-face, and
- b. At least 50% of the members for the time being plus one constitute a quorum for Committee meetings.
- c. Where new members are required, expressions of interest will usually be called for the relevant Committee through RACGP publications (including in *In Practice*).
- d. Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies on a particular Committee, management will liaise with the relevant Committee Chair to identify suitable applicants for recommendation to Council.
- e. Members must have signed and returned to the CEO a fully executed RACGP standard services or consultancy agreement before they are entitled to sit on or participate in a Committee.
- f. Any initial term, or any renewal term, of a member’s service or consultancy agreement must not exceed three years, and each such term must expire no later than the close of the third RACGP Annual General Meeting following the term’s commencement.
- g. The RACGP must retain the sole discretion to renew or extend any of these agreements.
- h. Subject to clauses 7.2k and 7.2l, the RACGP must not renew or extend these agreement if the total term of member engagement within a particular Committee would exceed six years. Despite this, in the event of exceptional or extenuating circumstances then applying (in Council’s opinion), a member may be appointed for a further three year term.
- i. Any initial term, or any renewal term, of a Chair’s service or consultancy agreement must not exceed three years, and each such term must expire no later than the close of first Council meeting following the close of the third RACGP Annual General Meeting following the term’s commencement.
- j. Members cannot be appointed for more than two consecutive terms as Chair. Despite this, in the event of exceptional or extenuating circumstances then applying (in Council’s opinion), a member may be appointed for a further three year term.

- k. The clause 7.2h calculation of total term of member engagement ignores any period that member served as Chair.
- l. The terms of a member's engagement by a Committee is applicable only to that Committee. Accordingly, a member may be engaged through another Committee, in which case clauses 7.2f to 7.2k will apply in isolation to any member engagement on any other Committee.
- m. Council may fill casual vacancies using the above process. The initial term for a replacement member filling a casual vacancy must not exceed the balance of the replaced member's term (but for the vacancy).

### **7.3 Fees**

Members are entitled to invoice for:

- a. fees in accordance with the relevant GP Professional Services tax invoice, and
- b. reimbursement of incidental expenses incurred providing they have the relevant RACGP General Manager prior approval.

The RACGP must ensure members are aware, such as by its inclusion in the relevant service or consultancy agreement, it does not retain any pay as you go withholding tax or superannuation guarantee contributions from fees paid.

### **7.4 Compliance with RACGP Policies**

The RACGP must use best efforts to ensure members, and must ensure all relevant service or consultancy agreements require the member, while on RACGP premises or engaged in the context of Committee business comply with the:

- a. *RACGP Code of Conduct for College Representatives and Appointees to Faculty Boards, College Committees and Other Advisory Bodies,*
- b. *RACGP Travel and Hospitality Policy* (including by ensuring all travel and/or accommodation is booked through the Committee secretariat), and
- c. *RACGP Conflict of Interest policy,*

and must use best efforts to ensure members:

- d. work within the RACGP strategic and policy directions,
- e. are equally accountable and responsible for acting according to the principles associated with being a member of the Committee,
- f. act in good faith in the RACGP's interests,
- g. respect and do not breach the RACGP's privacy or confidentiality obligations, and
- h. promote a favourable image of the RACGP,

including by the inclusion of relevant provisions in the member's service or consultancy agreement.

### **7.5 Insurances**

The RACGP must maintain public liability insurance and workers compensation insurance sufficient to cover any liabilities of the members' engagement as independent contractors in the context of their delivery of the contracted services and/or deliverables.

## **8.0 TRANSITION**

- a. This Policy comes into effect upon close of the RACGP's 2015 annual conference, at which time the National Standing Committees, Terms of Reference (CO-O-030.1) is repealed.
- b. Despite clause 7.2j and as a one-off transitional arrangement, Council is not restricted (by clause 7.2 or otherwise) in appointing members as inaugural RACGP Expert Committee Chairs or members. However upon expiry of this inaugural term, clause 7.2j will apply and all periods

served as Chair or member will be assessable against that Chair's or member's entitlement to further such terms.