

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program

Radiology Specific Requirement



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Radiology CPD Requirements

What is 'R-Type' Radiology

Changes to the Health Insurance Act from 1 May 1991 imposed certain conditions on the payment of Medicare benefits for diagnostic imaging services and prohibited certain practices in the provision of those services. The services currently covered by this legislation are diagnostic radiology, Computed Tomography (CT) scanning, nuclear medicine scanning and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI).

Under this legislation, except in certain circumstances, Medicare benefits are only payable for a diagnostic service that is rendered following a written request for that service, by another medical practitioner. The items of service which are subject to the written request requirement are classified as 'R-type' (requested) services and are identified in the Diagnostic Imaging Services Table (Medicare Benefits Schedule) with the symbol '(R)' after the item description. The items of service not subject to the written request requirement are classified as 'NR-type' (not requested) services and are identified with the symbol '(NR)' after the item description.

Who has a requirement?

GPs claiming remote area exemption.

A written request is not required for the payment of Medicare benefits for an 'R-type' diagnostic imaging service rendered by a medical practitioner in a remote area, provided:

- The 'R-type' service is not one for which there is a corresponding 'NR-type' service
- The medical practitioner rendering the service has been granted a remote area exemption for that service.

Benefits are only payable for services exempted under these provisions where the service was rendered by the exempted medical practitioner, at the exempted location. Exemptions are not transferable.

Ongoing Radiology CPD Requirements

The role of the CPD Program is to support GPs who have a radiology requirement in meeting and recording their relevant approved CPD activities, as well as offer advice on the availability of CPD activities in this topic area.

The CPD Program is obliged by legislation to report to Medicare Australia, the names of those GPs who cease to participate and meet the requirements of the CPD Program at any time and who do not meet the minimum radiology requirements within the triennium. Medicare Australia is the only organisation authorised to withdraw the exemption status for any GP.

The activities approved for Radiology, contributes towards the annual CPD requirements and are not in addition.

GPs who are not recognised with Medicare Australia relevant to provision of Radiology services can apply to Medicare directly.

Ongoing CPD Requirements

The minimum requirement for Recognised General Practitioners performing radiology is:

- **6 CPD hours with at least 3 hours of Reviewing Performance (RP) and/or Measuring Outcomes (MO) of activities per triennium**

There is a wide variety of ways to accrue CPD hours:

- Film interpretation and report review by a Radiologist
- Film review and discussion with a qualified Radiographer
- Clinical attachment with a hospital radiology department, or private radiology clinic.
Supervision should be undertaken by a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists.
- Educational outreach visit or clinical teaching visit/Academic detailing visit by a radiologist to a rural doctor
- Clinical audit or Mini clinical audit
- Peer review activity
- Film interpretation and report review by a peer
- Obtaining a State Radiography License
- Educational workshop with case-based presentations and discussion
- eLearning and/or podcasts on radiology specific education
- Peer to peer or peer group learning activity on radiology specific topics

What is a "remote area" for RAE purposes?

- that is more than 30kms by road from a hospital that provides a radiology service under the direction of a specialist in diagnostic radiology
- That is more than 30kms by road from a free-standing radiology facility under the direction of a specialist in diagnostic radiology, and
- Where the facilities for rendering R-type diagnostic imaging services in the area in which the practice is situated (including facilities provided by practitioners visiting the area regularly) are such that patients in the area would suffer physical or financial hardship.

The most common types of diagnostic radiology exams include:

- [Computed tomography](#) (CT), also known as a CAT scan (computerized axial tomography), including CT angiography
- Fluoroscopy, including upper GI and barium enema
- [Magnetic resonance imaging](#) (MRI) and [magnetic resonance angiography](#) (MRA)
- [Mammography](#)
- Nuclear medicine, which includes such tests as a [bone scan](#), [thyroid scan](#), and [thallium cardiac stress test](#)
- Plain [x-rays](#), which includes chest x-ray
- [Positron emission tomography](#), also called PET imaging or a PET scan
- [Ultrasound](#)

Medicare benefits will not be payable unless medical practitioners who provide diagnostic imaging services under either the remote area or pre-existing diagnostic imaging practices' exemptions of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* ("the Act") are enrolled and participating in an approved CPD program.