

Pre-approved alternative model: Practice-based extended skills accreditation

RACGP Education Services | Quality and Compliance



1. Introduction

This document outlines the steps to be undertaken to accredit a specialty practice as an extended skills placement for a general practitioner in training (GPiT) where no equivalent practice accreditation is applicable. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) *Standards for general practice training* (3rd edition) covers the requirements for accreditation of all training sites. Criterion 1.3.1.2 requires extended skills posts that are not in general practice to be accredited by the body appropriate to the skill.

The process discussed here fits within the framework for 'alternative models for training', which sits outside the RACGP *Standards for general practice training*. These alternative models of training have been evaluated and approved by the RACGP, to be used by training organisations in specific circumstances.

2. Scope

Some training sites appropriate for accreditation as extended skills placements for GPiTs are managed by medical specialists from colleges other than the RACGP. Supervisors are required to be appropriately qualified within the relevant specialist college. The accreditation of these practice environments is managed by the specialist colleges.

Environments eligible for accreditation as general practices are outlined in the RACGP *Standards for general practices* (5th edition). The three criteria are:

1. The practice or health service operates within the model of general practice described in the RACGP's definition of general practice, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/students/a-career-in-general-practice/what-is-general-practice
2. GP services are predominantly of a general practice nature.
3. The practice or health service is capable of meeting all mandatory indicators in the standards.

Some practices run by GPs are so specialised that they do not meet the definition of general practice. These practices do not provide the full scope of general practice. Examples include skin clinics, family planning clinics, and clinics providing youth health or mental health services specifically.

The following process must be undertaken by a training organisation to satisfy the accreditation requirements: 'The training provider is able to provide evidence of: extended skills posts appropriately accredited and suitably equipped to offer training' (Criterion 1.3.1.2, *Standards for general practice training*).

3. Definitions

Accreditation under the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme – where practices are assessed against the RACGP *Standards for general practices* by an approved agency (ie Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited, Quality Practice Accreditation, the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards).

4. Accreditation procedures

4.1 Practice or specialist college accreditation

The first priority of this accreditation is to ensure patient, staff and doctor safety. If accreditation is in place, the training organisation is assured that quality and safe practices exist. The accreditation process includes review of policies, procedures and protocols; confirmation of evidence; and a site visit to ensure compliance with standards.

Review of systems and evidence includes:

- a clinical risk management system to enhance the quality and safety of patient care
- documented processes to effectively monitor, identify, report and manage accidents, incidents, near-misses and complaints
- patient feedback
- adherence with privacy principles
- effective and appropriate infection control procedures
- management of medical records, including results management and follow-up.

4.2 Extended skills placements

Extended skills placements must:

- be accredited by the appropriate specialist college to the skill (eg for obstetrics and gynaecology, The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists)
 - where appropriate accreditation such as practice accreditation or equivalent is not available (eg GP-run skin clinic), the additional requirements listed in section 4.3 below must be met
- have accredited supervisor(s) experienced in the skills being offered
- provide a formal curriculum or a process for planning what will be learned
- provide clear criteria regarding when the GPiT will practise independent of the supervisor
 - detail how much clinical supervision will be provided as part of orientation and training before the GPiT manages patients independently.

4.3 Additional requirements

Where practice accreditation is not available, the training organisation must complete additional checks to gain assurance that the practice is a safe environment for patients, staff and doctors, especially GPiTs. The systems requirements listed in the previous section should be satisfied where applicable.

The training organisation must sight documentation, review evidence and inspect sites to ensure the following are met. Dependent on the speciality of the extended skills placement, some sections may not be applicable (eg reusable instrument processing is not required in mental health clinics).

Communication, rights and respectful care

- Appropriate information is provided for patients to manage their condition or be involved in decisions about their care.
- A complaints management process is in place.
- Patients are given information on billing and fees.
- Patients are able to seek a second opinion or refuse treatment, and understand the risks of doing so.
- Interpreters are available.
- Patients are informed about the presence of the GPiT in the practice.
- Patients are aware that they are able to see another doctor if they do not wish to see the GPiT.

Governance and management

- The prospective training site is appropriately licensed.
- Trained clinicians can make clinical decisions autonomously.
- There is a clinical risk management system.
- There are appropriate orientation mechanisms for the GPiT, including training in the use of any specific equipment.
- Work health and safety systems are in place, such as procedures for not being alone in the practice, duress alarms and the safe operation of equipment as appropriate.
- There are open disclosure processes.

Health records, results and patient follow-up

- Appropriate systems are in place for maintenance of individual patient health information records.
- There is adherence to Australian privacy principles – IT security systems are in place.
- Robust processes are in place to ensure follow up of patient results (pathology results, imaging reports, investigation reports, clinical correspondence), including recall as appropriate.

Infection control

- There is consideration of standard and transmission-based precautions including cross-infection.
- Systems are in place to manage hand hygiene, practice cleaning and equipment cleaning.
- If procedures are performed: Are single use items used? Or how is cleaning and sterilisation managed?
- Personal protective equipment is available (ie masks, gloves, gowns, protective eye wear).
- There is effective management of infectious waste.
- There is appropriate sharps management and disposal.

The practice environment

There is a waiting area, patient toilets, staff area and appropriately equipped consulting rooms.

5. Associated documents and forms

- Guidelines for use of pre-approved alternative models of training
- Notification for use of a pre-approved alternative model of training

6. Resources

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Standards for general practices. 5th edn. East Melbourne, Vic: RACGP, 2020.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. RACGP Standards for general practice training. 3rd edn. East Melbourne, Vic: RACGP, 2021.

7. Appendix

Practice-based extended skills accreditation checklist

Disclaimer

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