

1.0	POLICY TITLE	RACGP EXPERT COMMITTEES, TERMS OF REFERENCE
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1.2	Category:	Organisational
1.3	Approval Date:	March 2018
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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 considered important 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.

RRGs means RACGP Reference Groups.

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 – Funding and Health System Reform,
- 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 – Practice Technology and Management.

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 5.8 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:
 - supporting the development of responses and submissions in line with Council and RACGP strategic direction,
 - providing assistance and advice to Council as requested,
 - 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 – Funding and Health System Reform

The RACGP Expert Committee – Funding and Health System Reform is established to:

- provide input into submissions and position papers related to GP system funding and health reform,
- offer informed advice on health system reform and funding,
- update existing tools and resources as required,
- support the provision of safe, sustainable and quality general practice 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 Commonwealth Governments, as directed.

5.3 RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care

The RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care is established to:

- 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 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, and
- assist in sourcing of GPs to represent the RACGP on external committees.

5.4 RACGP Expert Committee – Research

The RACGP Expert Committee – Research is established to:

- provide advice and policy direction on research related issues in general practice,
- 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,
- 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, and
- 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 and associated resources for general practices, including GP education practices, medical deputising services and other primary medical services,
- ensure the standards reflect quality practice and are independent of government policies and initiatives,
- monitor the development and application of relevant standards in Australia and overseas and oversee the RACGP's role in the development and monitoring of standards in related areas,
- establish a mechanism for standards interpretation with organisations that accredit against the RACGP Standards, and
- 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 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, as directed, 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:

- contribute to the identification and implementation of responses to reform initiatives through provision of 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 as directed,

- act as the key interface between RACGP of Specific Interests, providing stakeholder perspective information on educational opportunity for members, 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 – Practice Technology and Management

The RACGP Expert Committee – Practice Technology and Management 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,
- provide input into position papers and RACGP responses to submissions related to ehealth, digital technology in general practice and practice management,
- advise on maintenance of business tools and resources to support general practitioners and general practice, and
- support and promote the uptake of technology in general practice.

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 CEO enter into, but cannot itself or any member enter into, such contracts or incur obligations on behalf of the RACGP,
- c. recommend the 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. a Chair, approved by Council,
- b. up to seven members approved by Council from amongst the RACGP’s financial members,
- 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 meeting shall be face-to-face.

- 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 and through ShareGP*).
- 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 right 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 agreements if the total term of member engagement within a particular Committee would exceed six years.
- 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.
- 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:

- a. paid in accordance with their relevant member's service or consultancy agreement, and
- b. reimbursed for incidental expenses incurred in accordance with *RACGP Member Expenses Claims Guidelines*, and 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 Member Code of Conduct*,
- b. *RACGP Member Expense Claims Guidelines* (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.

8.0 RACGP REFERENCE GROUPS (RRGS)

Council will establish RRGs for specific purposes, which may include the development of position statements, tools or resources. The RRGs' membership and terms of reference will be determined by Council as needed.