

22 October 2013

RACGP STANDARDS FOR GENERAL PRACTICES (4TH EDITION) FACT SHEET**RACGP DEFINITION OF A “GENERAL PRACTICE” - FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR ACCREDITATION AGAINST THE RACGP STANDARDS FOR GENERAL PRACTICE (4TH EDITION)**

Who can gain accreditation against the RACGP Standards for general practice (4th edition) (the Standards)?

Answer

In order to be accredited against the Standards, a general practice or health service must meet all the following three core criteria:

1. The practice or health services operates within the model of general practice described in the RACGP definition of general practice (www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/what-is-a-gp/what-is-general-practice/)
2. General practitioner services are predominantly¹ of a general practice nature
3. The practice or health service is capable of meeting all mandatory indicators in the Standards.

Rationale

In April 2013, the RACGP revised the definition of a general practice for the purposes of accreditation. The definition was revised in order to avoid confusion and provide clarity as to which general practices and health services are eligible to be accredited against the Standards.

There are three key issues to consider to determine whether a health service meets the definition of a general practice for the purpose of accreditation:

1. *Is the healthcare provided by the health service comprehensive?*
This issue is addressed by the characteristic of ‘comprehensiveness’ contained in the RACGP definition of general practice (core criteria 1).
2. *Are the general practice services provided by the health service predominantly delivered by general practitioners or is it predominately provided by clinical staff other than general practitioners?*
A measurable requirement for determining eligibility for general practice accreditation enables a fair distinction between a health service that is eligible and a health service that is not. Therefore a simple proportion of services provided by general practitioners at a health service is used as the measure to determinant the general practice status.

¹ ‘Predominantly’ is defined by the *Health Insurance Vocational Registration of General Practitioners Regulations 1989* as ‘more than 50% of clinical time, and more than 50% of services for which Medicare benefits are claimed, are in general practice.’

3. *Does the health service operate within a safety and quality model that meets peer expectations (as required by core criteria 3)? For example:*
- Does the health service have appropriate systems for clinical handover, the follow up of test results and patient identification?
 - Do the general practitioners in the health service have appropriate qualifications and training?
 - Can the health service demonstrate improvements made in response to analysis of patient feedback?

If a general practice or health service can demonstrate that it meets all these core criteria, it can seek accreditation against the Standards.