**Generic policy template**

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has a generic policy template for general practices to adapt to the needs of their practice.

*Policies are a mechanism for directing the behaviour of an organisation by ensuring, in a given situation, people will behave in a way that is predictable and in the best interests of the organisation and the person.*

*Policies provide written guidance explaining processes and procedures needed to be undertaken to adhere to the policy. This written guidance needs to be well worded, unambiguous and clear, otherwise the policy will be of little use.*

*To be effective, your practice policies should be:*

* *publicised and provided to all existing and new members of your practice team*
* *easily accessible (eg kept in policy manuals or available on your intranet)*
* *explained to team members through information and training sessions, at team meetings and during induction*
* *reiterated and discussed regularly to maintain relevance*
* *periodically reviewed to ensure they are current, and updated when changes are made to the processes in your practice or to relevant legislation*
* *re-issued to the practice team when updated.*

[Insert practice name] [name of] policy

*Your policy title should reflect the subject of the policy. The policy title should be written in plain language.*

Current as of: [insert date of last revision]

Introduction

*The introduction to your policy should outline:*

* *what the policy provides information about*
* *who is responsible for implementing this policy*
* *any supporting documents related to this policy such as position descriptions or related policies*

Purpose and objectives

*The purpose section of your policy should explain why the policy is required and what it addresses in the organisation.*

Scope

*The scope section of the policy should describe who the policy applies to and what conduct or activities the policy covers.*

Definitions

*This section of your policy should define words or terms in the policy that may not be commonly understood, including acronyms and any technical information. Only provide definitions for words or terms appearing in the policy.*

Policy content

*This section should contain the actual policy information. Policy content should be structured, concise, action orientated and to the point.*

*Clear and understandable policies can be easily followed, implemented and enforced. Ensure the policy content clearly states what action needs to be taken and who is responsible for taking this action.*

*Ensure any mandatory requirements of the policy are clearly outlined and described.*

Policy review statement

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects the current processes and procedures of [insert practice name] and current legislation requirements.

*You can set a specific review date for your policies*

**Disclaimer**

The *policy template for general practices* is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to particular practices or circumstances. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has used its best endeavours to ensure the template is adapted for general practice to address current and anticipated future privacy requirements. Persons adopting or implementing its procedures or recommendations should exercise their own independent skill or judgement, or seek appropriate professional advice. While the template is directed to general practice, it does not ensure compliance with any privacy laws, and cannot of itself guarantee discharge of the duty of care owed to patients. Accordingly, the RACGP disclaims all liability (including negligence) to any users of the information contained in this template for any loss or damage (consequential or otherwise), cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of reliance on the template in any manner.