General practice: A guide for students and junior doctors
Disclaimer

The information set out in this publication is current at the date of first publication and is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to particular patients or circumstances. Nor is this publication exhaustive of the subject matter. Persons implementing any recommendations contained in this publication must exercise their own independent skill or judgement or seek appropriate professional advice relevant to their own particular circumstances when so doing. Compliance with any recommendations cannot of itself guarantee discharge of the duty of care owed to patients and others coming into contact with the health professional and the premises from which the health professional operates.

Accordingly, The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and its employees and agents shall have no liability (including without limitation liability by reason of negligence) to any users of the information contained in this publication for any loss or damage (consequential or otherwise), cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of any person using or relying on the information contained in this publication and whether caused by reason of any error, negligent act, omission or misrepresentation in the information.

Recommended citation

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, General practice: A guide for students and junior doctors

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
100 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne
Victoria 3002
Tel 03 8699 0414
Fax 03 8699 0400
racgp.org.au

ABN: 34 000 223 807
978-0-86906-464-1 (print)

Published 2017

© The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners 2017. This work is subject to copyright. Unless permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced in any way without The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners prior written permission. Requests and enquiries should be sent to permissions@racgp.org.au

We recognise the traditional custodians of the land and sea on which we work and live.
I am thrilled to introduce The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners’ (RACGP) General practice: A guide for students and junior doctors.

This guide will help clarify your questions about general practice as a specialty, and provide you with important information about what a career in general practice entails, the steps you need to take to become a general practitioner (GP) and the options available throughout your career.

General practice is a unique and exciting medical specialty. In general practice, you are exposed to more medical conditions than you can imagine, and more patient stories than you’ve ever read or heard about in the past.

In general practice, you specialise in your patients. You truly are their specialist in life and there is no greater privilege.

I hope you choose to make general practice your preferred specialty. Life as a GP will offer you enrichment and reward, as well as the opportunity to make a difference in your patients’ lives.

Dr Bastian Seidel
President
When asked why they chose general practice

Chesna said:

‘I chose general practice because I wanted to be able to directly interact with a wide variety of patients on a personal level every day. General practice allowed me to independently help people with their problems, whether simple or complex, exploring almost every area of medicine and to see the effect of my intervention. General practice also gave me the flexibility to explore other interests, personally and professionally.’

Dr Chesna Heydenrych RACGP registrar

Amanda said:

‘I chose general practice as I find unpredictability of the job fun. I remember in the first few weeks of my training, I had a new patient with a one week history of chest pain. We did an ECG that showed NSTEMI, sent him through ED via ambulance and he was home within 36 hours with cardiac stents and six new medications! The range of issues we see and manage are so diverse and challenging. I also enjoy being able to provide continuity of care to patients. It allows us to understand our patients better and walk their journeys with them.’

Dr Amanda Lim RACGP Registrar

Lawrence said:

‘I chose general practice as the continuity of care provided by GPs is one of the many attractive features of general practice. To be able to care for patients from cradle to grave is unique to general practice – creating deep bonds with patients that bring a great fulfilment that makes general practice such an attractive career.’

Dr Lawrence Ling RACGP Student member since 2015
Become a specialist in life

Don’t let the word ‘general’ mislead you – general practice is a unique discipline of largely relationship-based specialist medical care. With comprehensiveness and continuity of care, general practitioners are specialists in their patient’s life from beginning to end, which places general practice at the centre of an effective primary healthcare system.

This guide is designed to:

• help clarify questions you may have about general practice as a specialty
• provide you with important information about what a career in general practice entails, what options are available throughout your career and the steps you need to take to become a GP.
What is general practice?

General practice is the largest medical specialty in Australia and is the cornerstone of Australia’s healthcare system. General practice is a unique discipline of largely relationship-based specialist medical care providing person-centred, continuing, comprehensive and coordinated whole person healthcare to individuals and families in their community.

General practice is often the first port of call for a patient with GPs trained to treat the whole person with a range of medical conditions. GPs also focus on preventative health and are best placed to provide advice on a variety of ways to remain healthy (case dependent).

What does a general practitioner do?

Working in general practice is different to working in hospital and also is different to working in many other specialties. Working in the community as the point of first call, GPs often see the patient in the early stages of their illness when the problem is undifferentiated. Not knowing what the next patient might present with and dealing with undifferentiated problems is challenging, but it is also one of the most rewarding aspects of general practice. GPs also manage an enormous variety of different problems and conditions with a broad span of knowledge, so they never get bored – no two days or patient presentations are the same.

Being based in the community, the access to services and investigations can be different to hospital. GPs get to know what is available and how to help their patients access services; this requires knowledge of the individual patient, their circumstances and their community. Getting to know patients and offer ongoing long-term continuity of care is a special privilege of general practice. Over time, GPs really get to know their patients and their lives; some GPs even deliver the grandchildren of the children they also delivered.

Lastly, GPs have an opportunity to practice preventative medicine. The chance to be proactive in helping patients maintain their health can also be very rewarding.

So, general practice offers person-centred healthcare based on a foundation of trust between patients and their chosen GP. A career in general practice offers enrichment, reward, financial security, the opportunity for personal and professional development, and a truly diverse experience in practising medicine.

Why general practice?

Not only does general practice offer a great choice for the clinical medicine, it has many positives as a career choice.

Variety and portability

A career in general practice allows you the opportunity to work in a wide variety of community settings, including inner-city, outer-suburban, regional towns, smaller rural communities, isolated rural settings and overseas. These community settings provide a range of opportunities to work with different patient groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or those with other special needs like refugees, people experiencing homelessness and the elderly.

Specific interests

A career in general practice allows you to pursue many areas of specific interests. For example, if you have a clinical interest in diabetes, paediatrics or palliative care, you can choose to develop specific skills in that area either during your training or after attaining Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP) by undertaking further formal studies.
Work–life balance
In comparison to many other medical specialties, general practice offers a wide variety of flexible working arrangements, including full-time, part-time, evenings and/or weekends, or short-term locum positions in different and interesting locations to suit your lifestyle.

Business ownership
General practice offers the unique and exciting opportunity to be your own boss by owning a general practice, which can offer career diversity, upskilling and autonomy. Practice ownership can be very rewarding financially, professionally and personally.

For more information on starting a private practice, refer to the RACGP’s members-only resource General practice management toolkit or visit racgp.org.au to register for a ‘Starting in private practice’ workshop in your state.

Characteristics and skill set required to be a good GP
As general practice is largely a relationship-based specialist medical discipline, GPs possess a unique combination of characteristics and skills, including:

- an interest in people and holistic care. GPs understand that health, illness and disease are ultimately personal experiences – their principle role is to relieve personal disease in all its forms in the manner best suited to each individual. Managing people in their community over time requires an understanding of the individual and their circumstances
- the ability to manage uncertainty. Not knowing what a patient is coming in for and managing them without a definite diagnosis can be challenging. Although GPs have support in this, they need to be able to manage the uncertainty that is both a challenge and a rewarding part of general practice
- a range of clinical skills and experience both diagnostic and therapeutic. GPs are skilled in managing uncertainty, undifferentiated illness and complexity. They are able to utilise best practice evidence in the light of individual circumstances, and engage patients and families in understanding, planning and managing their health according to individual capacities for a diverse range of conditions
- good communication skills. In caring for the medical needs of the whole person, the GP functions as a physician, counsellor, advocate and agent of change for individuals, families and their communities. General practice services and skills are not limited by age, gender, body system, disease process or service site
- clinical independence. GPs are often working with the patient and making decisions one on one in their clinic. That said, they are not isolated; there is plenty of support in the work they do, whether that be in the middle of a large city or in a more remote rural area.
Options in general practice

General practice offers an array of diverse options allowing you to focus on your areas of interest or to tailor your career to suit your desired work–life balance. The following are some opportunities you may choose to explore during your RACGP general practice training and possibly expand on later in your career.

Clinical practices range in size, sites and structure. Some are private, while some are publicly funded; some are in cities and some are rural. Many GPs choose to run their own practice, but others work as employees or contractors. Some choose to work in more than one practice and some do locum work, while many combine clinical work with work in areas of special interest, such as dermatology or sports medicine. Lastly, some GPs might do sessions in hospitals or in non-clinical areas, such as administration or teaching. There are many options and possibilities.

General practice in rural and remote Australia

The unique characteristics of rural and remote Australia offer diversity in the range of complex health presentations and provides opportunities for GPs to expand skill sets and take on a wide variety of clinical opportunities.

RACGP Rural has a long history in providing advocacy and support for rural and remote communities. The unique characteristics of rural and remote Australia offer diversity in terms of complex health presentations, and provide GPs with opportunities to expand their skills and take on a wide variety of clinical opportunities.

In many rural and remote areas across Australia, GPs with advanced rural skills training are the only specialist medical services (such as emergency medicine, mental health, anaesthesia and obstetrics) to which communities have access. Rural GPs respond to changes in patient needs and work to minimise barriers to healthcare access. Clinical opportunities for rural GPs may include hospital and community-based work, using a range of procedural and non-procedural skills, emergency response, after-hours services, outreach clinics and population health initiatives.

RACGP Rural recognises the challenges specific to rural and remote areas and supports its members in these communities through advocacy, research, education and policy development. RACGP Rural also provides opportunities to access resources, networking opportunities, mentoring and professional development.
RACGP Rural currently has more than 16,600 members, including more than 7700 GPs in rural and remote Australia making it the largest representative body for rural GPs in Australia.

Additionally, RACGP Rural:

- contributes directly to rural health policy reforms
- delivers the Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) Program
- delivers a range of rural-focused education activities, including webinars and active learning modules (ALMs)
- administers the Rural Procedural Grants Program on behalf of the Department of Health (DoH)
- offers advice and guidance to students, junior doctors and general practice registrars by hosting rural health career checks
- provides a range of learning resources to assist registrars and GPs working in rural and remote Australia
- offers members the opportunity to contribute to projects, events and publications.

To learn about the RACGP FARGP, go to page 17. Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘rural’ for further information.

RACGP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is one of Australia’s highest health priorities. The RACGP is committed to raising awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health needs and, as a result, founded RACGP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in February 2010 to help ‘close the gap’.

By understanding the cultural context, RACGP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health advocates for culturally appropriate health delivery systems that will improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Building strong working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their communities and organisations is fundamental to the ability to work effectively to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

The RACGP undertakes a range of activities dedicated to support Indigenous registrars throughout their general practice training journey. Access to GP mentors, our shareGP* Indigenous registrar forum, and the fully-funded Indigenous Fellowship Excellence Program (IFEP) which has proven to be an invaluable resource for Indigenous registrars during their training.

*shareGP is RACGP’s professional meeting space for GPs. shareGP is a secure, private GP community exclusive to RACGP members.
The RACGP further partners with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, including Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, Indigenous General Practice Registrars Network and National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health’ for further information.

Indigenous Fellowship Excellence Program

The IFEP which has been co-named by the Wurundjeri Council Yagila Wadamba (meaning ‘learn to heal’), is an annual support program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander general practice registrars. The two-day workshop is held in May every year and concentrates on exam performance and other key areas of general practice training. Participants are able to network with their peers in a friendly and welcoming environment, while also taking advantage of the opportunity to hear and learn from medical educators and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fellows. Attendees are supported to not only perform at their best in exams, but to thrive throughout their general practice training journey. Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘IFEP’ for further information.

Growing Strong Award

Through the generous donation of RACGP member Dr Nathan Pinskier and Mrs Susan Pinskier, RACGP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health has established the Growing Strong Award. The award was established to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander general practice registrars during the early stages of their general practice career. The award will be presented each year at the RACGP annual conference with the recipient receiving support to attend the conference (including airfares, accommodation and registration); all residual funding goes towards the recipient’s examination fees.

The Growing Strong Award is aimed at supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registrars, and complements the RACGP’s existing Standing Strong Together Award which is open to Fellows who are working to improve the health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Visit racgp.org.au and search “Growing Strong Award” for further information.
You can become involved in research during your general practice training by applying for an academic term as part of your FRACGP. Working part-time in a university department and in general practice offers significant advantages for your career aspirations.

General practice research
Research in general practice is essential for the improvement of patient health outcomes. It is important for GPs to understand how to access and apply research evidence to their clinical work as all GPs are research users.

It is equally important that clinical questions arising from general practice are answered by research undertaken within the general practice setting. Getting involved in supervised research early in your career enables you to develop valuable skills to take into your clinical work and can act as a stepping stone towards an academic career.

GPs can be involved in research at various levels, from recruiting patients for projects undertaken by others, to actively engaging in the research process as a co-investigator of leading research projects. There is a wealth of opportunities to help you find the right level of research for you during your general practice training.

You can become involved in research during your general practice training by applying for an academic term as part of the RACGP training pathway and working part-time in a university department. An academic term can be completed as either an extended skills post or as optional additional training time and can occasionally count toward a higher degree (e.g. Master of Medicine or a Doctor of Philosophy [PhD]). Involvement in research will equip you with skills you can use throughout your medical career.

You can also become involved in a research project by contacting your local university department of general practice, rural clinical school, or seek funding to conduct research through the RACGP Foundation.

RACGP Foundation
The RACGP Foundation was founded in the 1950s to support GPs and general practice registrars to conduct medical research into primary healthcare and develop research career pathways. We do this by raising funds to support a diverse range of research grants, scholarships, fellowships and awards that provide our members with opportunities to undertake this valuable research.

The RACGP believes strongly in the importance of research in general practice. Our research grants acknowledge the vital contribution GPs make in furthering medical advancements within the community.
By participating in research, GPs are building the evidence that is necessary to deliver the highest quality care and best health outcomes to all Australians. Around 86% of all Australians visit a GP each year and how patients are treated in general practice must be based on sound research. Much of this evidence can only be acquired from research in the general practice setting, making continued investment in this worthwhile cause vital.

Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘foundation grants’ or email research@racgp.org.au for further information.

Specific interests

A career in general practice allows you to pursue many areas of specific interest. For example, if you have a clinical interest in dermatology, sports medicine, diabetes, paediatrics or palliative care, you can choose to develop specific skills in that area after attaining FRACGP by undertaking further formal studies to expand on these skills.

This can be done by applying to complete postgraduate qualifications in your specific interest area; for example, the Diploma of The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (DRANZCOG) via RANZCOG, or the Certificate of Primary Care Dermatology through the RACGP’s partnership with the Australasian College of Dermatologists.

RACGP Specific Interests is a national faculty established by the RACGP in order to help recognise the additional interest and expertise held by GPs in selected areas of general practice. The faculty includes a number of networks that are defined by a clinical, educational, contextual or organisational aspect of general practice. Members of RACGP Specific Interests have the opportunity to share knowledge and develop educational materials with other like-minded GPs.

Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘specific interests’ for further information.

Australian Defence Force

Australian Defence Force (ADF) doctors provide quality healthcare to those serving as a distinct field of practice, with GPs working in an ADF environment largely serving a younger, fitter, healthier patient population than they would in a civilian population. As an ADF GP, you may work in difficult environments requiring a broad range of skills, and a flexible and adaptable approach to providing quality care in order to optimise outcomes for your patients. This may require careful management of resources and effective triaging in environments with limited access to complex investigations and specialist care; it may include mass casualty triaging in war zones and disaster recovery environments.

Another key aspect of military general practice is preventative health: immunisation, health education and chemoprophylaxis programs, prevention of heat exhaustion, mitigation of acute and chronic musculoskeletal injuries, prevention of physical and mental fatigue, and identification of individuals at risk of acute and chronic mental health disorders are all components of preventative healthcare.
The DoctorConnect website has useful information regarding training options especially for doctors trained overseas. Another useful resource is General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) website.
The attainment of FRACGP signifies a GP as competent to deliver safe, specialised and high-quality general practice care in Australia’s urban, regional, rural, remote and very remote communities.

About FRACGP
The attainment of FRACGP is an important recognition from the profession of general practice and represents excellence in general practice. Obtainment of FRACGP demonstrates that a GP can practise, unsupervised, in any Australian general practice setting – urban, regional, rural, remote or very remote. FRACGP additionally confers the ability to access specialist medical registration and A1 rebate rates under Medicare legislation.

Furthermore, achievement of FRACGP gives reciprocal recognition in New Zealand, Ireland and Canada.

For GPs wishing to develop advanced rural skills and give their rural community an advantage, the RACGP offers the FARGP.

The pathway to awarding FRACGP encompasses recognising differences in experience, formal and informal learning, required general practice experience and assessment processes, including formative and summative activities and examinations. It is underpinned by a comprehensive suite of RACGP educational documents, including the Competency profile of the Australian general practitioner at the point of Fellowship, the RACGP’s Curriculum for Australian General Practice 2016 and Standards for general practice training. FRACGP is accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC).
Why choose FRACGP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>The RACGP supports 9/10 Australian GPs, including 5600 registrars working towards RACGP Fellowship.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>With more than 16,600 rural members, RACGP rural registrars benefit from an established, well-supported program that meets their specific needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>RACGP registrars have flexibility with the option to complete their training over a two to three year period (subject to RPL). They have the option to undertake a further year in advanced rural skills and receive the additional FARGP qualification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>With more than 35,000 members, the RACGP has a powerful voice to advocate for registrar members at the highest levels of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce</td>
<td>The RACGP provides dedicated support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registrars working towards RACGP Fellowship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Journey to FRACGP

There are a number of pathways you can take toward your RACGP Fellowship.

The most common pathway to FRACGP is through the Vocational Training Pathway (VTP). There are two entry points into the VTP: The Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program via the RACGP and the Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS).

Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘Fellowship of the RACGP’ for further information.
About FARGP

GPs are an integral part of rural communities – the skills practised depend on the context in which they work and the specific needs of their community.

The FARGP intends to develop additional skills and broaden options for safe, accessible and comprehensive care for Australia’s rural, remote and very remote communities.

The FARGP pathway offers the greatest benefits when completed over the full period of the training program, well before you start preparing for your final FRACGP exams.

FARGP pathway offers:

- the FARGP learning plan and reflection activity
- 12 months in a rural general practice setting
- 12 months of advanced rural skills training in an accredited procedural or non-procedural training post
- a six-month ‘working in rural general practice’ community-focused project
- an emergency medicine module, which includes a series of case studies, skills audit and satisfactory completion of two advanced emergency skills courses.

The FARGP is completed on an interactive learning platform accessed via gplearning.

Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘FARGP’ for further information.

Why not combine FRACGP and FARGP over a four-year program and achieve dual Fellowship?
Beyond medical school

**General practice training through VTP**

So you have finished your medical school training, completing either a postgraduate or undergraduate degree, and have chosen to undertake a career in general practice.

---

You can apply to either the AGPT or RVTS. Please see below for further information on each.

**What’s next?**

The VTP is a three-year full-time (or part-time equivalent) program.

An optional fourth year is available for additional skills and qualifications in rural general practice with a FARGP.

There is flexibility regarding when and how the essential components of training can be completed, such as the ability to complete the training on a part-time basis.

The essential components of vocational training towards FRACGP are described on the next page.
Applying to specialise in general practice

AGPT Program

The AGPT Program is the leading training program for medical graduates who wish to pursue a career as a GP in Australia. The program, with the RACGP, takes three years1 with an additional fourth year available to those who undertake the FARGP2. Training is undertaken with a regional training organisation (RTO).

The program is a combination of self-directed and face-to-face training within accredited medical facilities by accredited supervisors. AGPT training with the RACGP is based on the RACGP’s educational framework.

Training locations vary for AGPT general practice registrars, including teaching hospitals, rural and urban practices. Experience in advanced specialised training is also encouraged as is the pursuit of other areas of relevant interest, such as procedural general practice and academic posts.

There are approximately 1500 AGPT Program training places available annually with 50% of training undertaken via the general pathway and 50% via the rural pathway.

There are two pathways – general and rural. Training under the general pathway is undertaken in geographical regions 1–5. Training under the rural pathway is undertaken in geographical regions 2–5. Post training, unless s19AB of the Health Insurance Act 1973 applies, you can practice in any geographical region.

For further information on geographical regions, please visit the doctorconnect.gov.au website.

Undertaking the AGPT Program through the RACGP will provide you with the highest level of support from the RACGP and your chosen RTO.

Upon completion of your medical degree, you will receive your provisional registration allowing you to work as an intern or postgraduate year one (PGY1) doctor. This training is usually undertaken in a public hospital setting and has a duration of 47 weeks full time.

You can apply to the AGPT Program any time from intern year onwards.

Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘AGPT’ for further information.

Hospital training (12 months)

General practice registrars must complete 12 months of hospital rotations in their first year of the program. In addition, before being able to start in their first general practice term in the second year of the program, registrars need to have completed terms in medicine, surgery, emergency medicine, paediatrics, and other rotations appropriate to the discipline of general practice. Some of these rotations may have been completed before joining the program, but it is not necessary to have completed them all before applying to join.

The first year of the AGPT Program is spent in hospital which can be completed anywhere in Australia, not necessarily in your training organisation region.

Paediatric terms can be difficult to access, so this training may be obtained via other hospital experience, such as a variety of emergency medicine rotations.

Visit RACGP paediatric term requirements document for further information.

1 Full-time equivalent.
2 Part-time training options are available.
Recognition of prior learning

In certain circumstances, you may be eligible to apply for recognition of your previous training as credit toward the requirements of VTP. This is called Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

There are certain requirements needed in order to be granted RPL by the RACGP. It is important, therefore, to not assume that you will receive RPL, but to get advice from your training organisation regarding your eligibility. In addition, if you have not completed all the required hospital experience, this should be completed before starting a general practice term irrespective of how much credit for the hospital year you may be eligible to apply for.

Please see the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy on the RACGP website.

General practice placements (18 months)

Following the hospital year, general practice registrars are required to complete three six-month general practice terms, plus a fourth six-month extended skills term. General practice placements need to be completed in RACGP accredited training practices. Your training organisation will have a list of these for you once you join the program. While in practice, you will receive supervision and teaching from GP supervisors. You will also receive support and education from your RTO.

General practice registrars training through the AGPT Program in the general pathway are required to complete at least 12 months in outer metropolitan, rural or Aboriginal Health posts during their training. Registrars in the rural pathway must complete their training in ASGC–RA 2–5 locations. For further information on training locations, please visit the DoctorConnect website.

Extended skills term (six months)

Six months of the program is spent developing extended skills. This is an opportunity to extend or develop skills in an area of interest. Some registrars choose to do this as an additional six months of general practice, while some choose from a range of options, such as palliative care, sports medicine, skin cancer medicine or sexual health.

Taking leave from general practice training

There are various forms of leave available to registrars in the training programs. Please refer to AGPT's Program Leave Policy or the RVTS Handbook (please note both these publications are updated annually).

General practice registrars may suspend RACGP membership during periods of approved leave that are three months or more in duration on provision of appropriate supporting evidence. It should be noted, however, that access to all RACGP member benefits (including eligibility to sit exams) is suspended during approved periods of leave.

Visit racgp.org.au and search ‘registrar membership policy’ for further information.
Cardiopulmonary resuscitation

During training, registrars need to complete further skills in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and advanced life support. Before being able to start in their first general practice term, they will need to have completed a CPR course in the previous 12 months. All courses need to meet RACGP criteria – please refer to Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Advanced Life Support Courses document on the RACGP website.

AGPT Program eligibility

The DoH evaluates a candidate’s eligibility to undertake training with AGPT. The DoH have some great resources available to help you determine your eligibility. These guides can be found on the AGPT eligibility guide, which is updated annually.

Visit agpt.com.au, email AGPTeligibility@health.gov.au or call 1800 372 478 for further information.

Applying for the AGPT Program

To undertake the AGPT Program, you need to submit your application through the RACGP website. The RACGP will be supporting you every step of the way, from the application and selection process right through until after Fellowship.

When applying, you can select up to four training preferences. Training preferences can be a combination of training regions and can include rural and/or general pathways. The majority of training regions offer both general and rural pathways allowing candidates to make two nominations for the same training region.

Applications into the training program open during April each year with applications open for approximately four weeks.

Please refer to AGPT with the RACGP for regular updates.
Regional training organisations

An RTO is an organisation that delivers education and training within a specific geographical region. Funded by the DoH, RTOs are accredited every three years against the RACGP’s Standards for general practice training through the bi-college accreditation process. Your RTO will be with you every step of the way throughout your GP training.

General practice registrars in the AGPT Program will complete their training at one of the RTOs listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Eastern NSW</td>
<td>GP Synergy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gpsynergy.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 477 963 or +61 2 8321 4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:applicant@gpsynergy.com.au">applicant@gpsynergy.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Eastern NSW</td>
<td>GP Synergy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gpsynergy.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 477 963 or +61 2 8321 4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:applicant@gpsynergy.com.au">applicant@gpsynergy.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western NSW</td>
<td>GP Synergy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gpsynergy.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 477 963 or +61 2 8321 4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:applicant@gpsynergy.com.au">applicant@gpsynergy.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>Northern Territory General Practice Education (NTGPE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ntgpe.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61 8 8946 7079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:reception@ntgpe.org">reception@ntgpe.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Western Queensland</td>
<td>Generalist Medical Training JCU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gmt.edu.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 823 874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:gmt.communications@jcu.edu.au">gmt.communications@jcu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Eastern Queensland</td>
<td>General Practice Training Queensland (GPTQ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gptq.qld.edu.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+61 7 3552 8100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:applicant.enquiries@gptq.qld.edu.au">applicant.enquiries@gptq.qld.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>GPEX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gpex.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 473 972 or +61 8 8490 0400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:admin@gpex.com.au">admin@gpex.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>General Practice Training Tasmania (GPTT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gptt.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+61 3 6215 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:enquiries@gptt.com.au">enquiries@gptt.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Victoria</td>
<td>Eastern Victoria GP Training (EVGP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evgptraining.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 851 753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:enquiry@evgptraining.com.au">enquiry@evgptraining.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Victoria</td>
<td>Murray City Country Coast GP Training (MCCC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mccc.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1300 622 247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@mccc.com.au">info@mccc.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>Western Australia General Practice Education and Training (WAGPET)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wagpet.com.au</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+61 8 9473 8200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:gpcareers@wagpet.com">gpcareers@wagpet.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RVTS Program

RVTS, an independent Commonwealth-funded program is an alternative to the AGPT Program. For GPs practicing in areas where availability to conventional training is not feasible or is impossible, RVTS provides educational alternatives.

Training is offered via distance education and remote supervision, thus enabling registrars working towards Fellowship through the RVTS Program to practice in some of Australia’s most remote locations.

Further information on RVTS training can be found on RVTS training.

RVTS has two streams available for training. Locations are determined by the Modified Monash Model (MMM), the remote stream for doctors working in rural and remote Australia in MMM 4, 5, 6 or 7, and the AMS stream where the location must be in an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service.

The locations can be found on DoctorConnect.

RVTS Program eligibility

Eligibility to enter this program is determined by RVTS. If you would like further information on eligibility, please check your eligibility or call the RVTS office on +61 2 6057 3400.

Applying for the RVTS Program

Applications into the training program are open between May and June each year with applications open for approximately four weeks. The intake is limited to 22 doctors for the remote stream and 10 doctors for the AMS stream per year. Applications are made through the RVTS website.

RACGP exams

The RACGP Fellowship exams consist of three segments:

- a multiple choice exam called the Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) – online segment
- a short answer written exam or Key Feature Problem (KFP) – online segment
- the Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) – clinical segment.

Registrars need to have met the eligibility requirements in order to sit the exams. For further information, please visit RACGP vocational training pathway exam eligibility.
Terms and conditions, remuneration and incentives

Terms and conditions of employment during training

The terms and conditions of employment are contained in the National Terms and Conditions for the Employment of Registrars (NTCER), an agreement negotiated every two years by General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA) and General Practice Supervisors Australia (GPSA). Registrar liaison officers, your RTO or the GPRA are available to provide advice to general practice registrars who are seeking assistance regarding employment arrangements before approaching practices. The NTCER applies to all registrars with the exception of those in community-controlled health or the ADF.

You are encouraged to access the NTCER on either the GPRA website gpra.org.au or the GPSA website gpsupervisorsaustralia.org.au

Remuneration

Remuneration in general practice varies depending on the practice’s cost structure and the value the individual GP brings to the practice, financially and non-financially. Cost structures also vary depending on the commitments of the practice.

As trainees, general practice registrars must be employed according to the NTCER and can expect to be paid a base salary. This base salary is topped up with the difference between the general practice registrar’s base salary and a percentage of billings or receipts.

GPRA has a gp-earnings-calculator which you can use to get an indication of earnings based on various factors.

Incentives

There are incentives to promote general practice registrars to consider careers in outer-metropolitan, rural and remote areas. Visit health.gov.au and search ‘GPRIP’, or call the Medicare Helpline on 1800 010 550 for further information.
RACGP membership

RACGP membership joins you to a vibrant community of more than 35,000 members dedicated to supporting you throughout your general practice journey. Membership provides you with tailored offerings based on the guiding principles of *education, advocacy, support* and *collegiality*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Tailored education to suit your professional needs and to learn in a format that suits you.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>The RACGP strongly advocates on behalf of GPs and future GPs to enhance the quality of patient care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Access guidelines, tools and resources to assist in your medical studies, exam preparation or daily practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegiality</td>
<td>Connect with peers through networking, online forums, events and conferences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Membership tailored to you

Types of memberships and associated benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership type</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Student         | *Australian Medicines Handbook* – Members receive $30 off this prescribed guide  
Discovery tool – Unified search across RACGP library databases and resources |
| Resident/intern | *gplearning* – More than 300 hours of interactive online activities  
*check* – Case studies comprising multiple-choice questions and answers |

Visit [racgp.org.au](http://racgp.org.au) and search ‘membership’ for further information.

Membership requirements

General practice registrars must be financial RACGP members prior to their first day of training in the AGPT Program and throughout their candidature. Training undertaken while not a financial RACGP member will not be recognised towards FRACGP.

The RACGP strongly encourages maintaining membership from medical school onwards, as the resources and benefits are specifically designed to support members on their general practice journey.

Visit [racgp.org.au](http://racgp.org.au) and search ‘registrar membership policy’ for further information.
Healthy Profession.
Healthy Australia.