



RACGP

*Royal Australian College
of General Practitioners
Rural Generalist Fellowship*

Guidelines for the RACGP Rural Generalist Fellowship



Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Rural Generalist Fellowship: Guidelines

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The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Ltd
100 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002 Australia

Tel 03 8699 0510
Fax 03 9696 7511
www.racgp.org.au

ABN: 34 000 223 807

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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future

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Introduction

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Rural Generalist (RG) Fellowship is a qualification awarded by the RACGP.

As defined by the Collingrove Agreement, an RG is ‘a medical practitioner who is trained to meet the specific current and future healthcare needs of Australian rural and remote communities, in a sustainable and cost-effective way, by providing both comprehensive general practice and emergency care and required components of other medical specialist care in hospital and community settings as part of a rural healthcare team.’

RGs work to an extended scope of their practice with skill sets informed by the needs of the community they serve. This includes the skills typically associated with urban general practice along with emergency medical care and procedural and non-procedural services across primary and secondary healthcare settings, which are generally delegated to separate specialities in urban practice. RGs play a central role in providing high-quality healthcare and supporting Australia’s rural, remote and very remote communities.

RGs often face challenges quite different to those of their urban GP colleagues, such as geographical and professional isolation, lack of or outdated resources, harsh environments, and lack of professional support. They’re required to be creative, flexible, skilful and resourceful in the face of situations they encounter in rural, remote and very remote areas. RGs need diverse skills to deal with situations in which they might be the only person able to provide the level of care a patient needs.

These guidelines will give you an overview of the RG Fellowship and should be read along with the associated curriculums of the various components of the RG Fellowship and RACGP education policies and procedures.

Overview

The RG Fellowship gives you the chance to develop your knowledge, skills and experience to best meet the challenges that rural generalist practice brings. It also broadens access to safe and comprehensive care for Australia's rural, remote and very remote communities.

The RG Fellowship features the following training requirements:

- 12-month full-time equivalent (FTE) hospital term (can be postgraduate year 2 [PGY2] or above)
- 18-month FTE community-based general practice term (including a minimum of 12 months FTE in a rural Modified Monash Model [MMM] 3–7 location)
- 12 months FTE of Additional Rural Skills Training (ARST)
- Six months of core emergency medicine training (core EMT)
- *(optional)* Six-month extended skills term in either a hospital, community general practice or community non-general-practice setting

By choosing the RG Fellowship, you'll get access to extra training benefits, including an additional 52 FTE weeks to allow for leave and extensions of training time, if required.

You can find more details about each of these components in the 'Training experience requirements' section.

Structure

The RG Fellowship is a flexible, four-year FTE program.

The following table compares the structures of the RACGP Fellowship and the RACGP RG Fellowship.

RACGP Fellowship	RACGP RG Fellowship
12 months of hospital training time	12 months hospital training time
18 months of general practice terms	18 months of general practice terms (minimum of 12 months in MMM3–7 location)
Six months of extended skills training (hospital, community general practice or community non-general-practice setting)	Core EMT
	12 months ARST
	Optional six months of extended skills training (hospital, community general practice or community non-general-practice setting)

After finishing your 12 months of hospital training time, you can complete the remaining requirements in any order you choose.

Training experience requirements

This section outlines the training experience requirements for each of the three components of the RG Fellowship.

- Comprehensive general practice training with a rural focus, including:
 - 12 months of hospital training time
 - 18 months of general practice training.
- ARST
- Core EMT

12 months of hospital training time

You must complete your first year of the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program completing rotations in an accredited hospital. Hospital training provides a foundation in a range of clinical disciplines relevant to general practice and enables you to develop a full understanding of the integration of primary and secondary levels of care. Before you begin your general practice terms, you must be able to demonstrate safe practice in some core areas relevant to general practice, including medicine, paediatrics, surgery and emergency medicine.

You can view the requirements to demonstrate safe practice on the [RACGP website](#).

18 months of rural general practice training

You need to complete a minimum of 18 months' general practice experience in an RACGP-accredited general practice training site under the guidance of an RACGP-accredited supervisor. And you must complete at least 12 months of this training in an MMM3–7 location. These 12 months need to be completed either in one continuous block or in two six-month terms, and must also:

- involve exposure to a diverse range of patient presentations in terms of age, gender, socioeconomic status, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- ideally provide exposure to at least two different general practice supervisors and two different general practice management systems (for more information on meeting practice diversity requirements, see the [practice diversity guidance document](#))
- provide one or more of the following opportunities in order to experience:
 - GPs providing emergency/trauma services at the local hospital or similar healthcare facility
 - GPs providing other procedural and/or non-procedural services at the local hospital or similar healthcare facility
 - limited local access to specialists, including hospitals with salaried medical specialists and inpatient–outpatient allied health services
 - GPs providing after-hours services based on community needs.

12 months Additional Rural Skills Training (ARST)

RGs provide additional healthcare services to their community in at least one area of non-general-practice specialist skill or advanced general practice. As such, a core component of the RG Fellowship is the completion of 12 months FTE ARST in an accredited training post.

This training augments core general practice training by providing an opportunity for you to develop additional skills and knowledge to help better meet the needs of your community.

You can select one of the following approved discipline areas for your ARST. We recommend you consider both your own interests and the needs of your community when selecting an ARST discipline.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- Adult internal medicine
- Anaesthesia
- Child health
- Emergency medicine
- Mental health
- Obstetrics
- Palliative care
- Surgery
- Academic post

All ARST must be completed over a period of at least 12 months FTE in an accredited training post that provides the experience and supervision necessary to meet the criteria of the chosen ARST curriculum. When possible, you should complete the training in a regional or rural location; however, urban posts will be accepted depending on the availability of training posts.

When a genuine community need is identified, you may develop an ARST discipline outside the list of recognised disciplines to meet this need. This must meet the requirements of ARST and be approved by the RACGP Rural Censor before you start training.

Visit our [ARST webpage](#) for more information and to download copies of each curriculum.

Core EMT

Core EMT is designed to strengthen your general practice training by providing you with the skills, knowledge and confidence to manage emergency situations in rural and remote environments. You'll be able to address unique rural challenges, provide high-quality emergency medical care and lead healthcare teams in your community.

Core EMT generally requires a minimum of six months FTE in an accredited training post, in line with the vocational standards and requirements published by the RACGP. You need to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of outcomes outlined in the [core EMT curriculum](#). We recommend you complete core EMT as your extended skills (ES) term requirement. However, if you want to complete an ES term other than emergency medicine, you have the option of completing an extended skills term in addition to core EMT.

You can choose to complete core EMT immediately after your hospital training time,

which enables you to contribute to the emergency roster in a rural hospital while training in a rural general practice. Or you could choose to complete core EMT after, or even concurrently with, your rural general practice terms, which will give you an understanding of the context in which the emergency services will be provided.

The RACGP recommends you work closely with your training organisation to plan the best training pathway for your individual circumstances.

Six months of ES training

You have the option of completing ES training, which gives you the chance to further develop your general practice skills in a range of RACGP-accredited settings. You have many options for ES training, including palliative care, sports medicine, sexual health and skin cancer medicine.

As an RG Fellowship trainee, you have the option of completing your core EMT as your ES training or completing an ES term in addition to the core EMT.

Learning plan and reflection activity

Learning planning is part of the ARST program. You're required to review the curriculum and discuss your learning needs with your supervisor. Your individualised learning outcomes should be reviewed with your supervisor or medical educators regularly to make sure your learning needs are met throughout the training term.

Training commitments

As an RG Fellowship trainee, you're expected to achieve Fellowship within six years FTE from the start of your training. This cap includes all training terms, including an additional 52 weeks FTE to complete your ARST and another 52 weeks FTE to allow for leave and extensions of training time, if required.

If you start training on the RG pathway but then your circumstances change, you can opt out of training as an RG but continue to train towards the RACGP Fellowship. However, you'll need to remain on the rural pathway and continue to work in an MMM2–7 location.

You may opt in to the RG pathway at any point while completing the AGPT program, from either the general or rural pathways.

Community project

If you select the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health ARST, you'll need to complete a rural general practice community-focused project. You'll need to:

- demonstrate the ability to complete a community needs assessment
- identify needs or gaps in the community
- demonstrate skills in planning, carrying out, evaluating and presenting a 'project concept'.

You can find more information, including case studies from previous trainees, on the [community project webpage](#).

Practising GPs

Eligible GPs who hold the RACGP Fellowship and the Fellowship of Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) will be invited to obtain the RG Fellowship via a recognition-of-prior-learning (RPL) process. Similarly, we encourage RACGP Fellows who don't hold the FARGP but have significant rural general practice experience and procedural or non-procedural skills to contact RACGP Rural for RPL guidance.

RPL is determined following assessment of the candidate's level of existing knowledge, skills and experience. The RPL process is a formal yet straightforward process completed by submitting an application to the RACGP Rural Censor. You can find more information on the [RACGP Rural webpage](#).

Contact RACGP Rural at rg@racgp.org.au or 1800 636 764 for further guidance and information.

Non-GP specialists

If you're a non-GP specialist and are interested in contributing to community general practice by becoming a rural generalist, contact our team to discuss your options.

Support and information

The RACGP Rural team is available to answer your questions about the RG Fellowship.

RACGP Rural
Level 7, 410 Queen St
Brisbane QLD 4000

P: 1800 636 764
E: rg@racgp.org.au
W: racgp.org.au/rg



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