

RACGP Expert Chairs and Expert Committees Terms of Reference

1. Objectives

The RACGP is registered as a charity with the purpose to 'advance health' by improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities through our activities. This includes setting and maintaining standards for high quality patient care, clinical practice, research, education and training and continuing professional development programs. Core to our activities is ensuring general practice has a proactive healthcare strategy that goes beyond maintaining good health by addressing the determinants of disease and ill-health before they manifest and require medical intervention, and thus reduce chronic disease in our Australian community.

The RACGP Board has established the RACGP Expert Committees in those areas of expertise required to achieve the purpose of the RACGP. The RACGP Expert Chairs Committee (REC-Chairs) brings together the chairs of the expert committees with representatives of the Board to oversee the activities of the five expert committees, to ensure there is alignment for delivery of the organisational strategy and reporting to the Board. Expert committees have been established in the following areas:

- RACGP Expert Committee – Funding and Health System Reform
- RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care
- RACGP Expert Committee – Research
- RACGP Expert Committee – Standards for General Practices, and
- RACGP Expert Committee – Practice Technology and Management.

2. Duties and Responsibilities

2.1 RACGP Expert Chairs Committee

The REC-Chairs assists the College in achieving its charitable purpose in relation to the Committees' areas of expertise as follows:

1. supporting a consistent and unified approach to policy and strategy across the RACGP.
2. advising on the implementation of the RACGP's strategic plan initiatives.
3. establishing links where appropriate with relevant state, national and international groups to monitor trends and incorporate innovations into RACGP programs.

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4. supporting close working relationships between GPs, GP organisations and the Commonwealth Government and departments.
 5. supporting the development of consistent resources, responses and submissions in line with the RACGP Board and RACGP strategic direction.
 6. providing assistance and strategic advice to the RACGP Board as requested, including input into the annual report, and acting in good faith in the RACGP's interests and working to positively influence and shape the Australian health system so that it meets the needs of all Australians, especially its 'priority populations', and works to address the broader determinants of disease and ill health.

2.2 Expert Committees

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

- provide expert and informed advice on health system reform, health funding, workforce issues, business viability and patient access to care in ways that promote equity of access to GP services, especially for our most at risk populations and, that enable GPs to practice to their full scope of practice, including in population and preventive health.
- provide input into guidelines, position papers and RACGP responses to submissions related to health system funding, regulatory structures, and health reforms.
- support GPs and practices to provide safe, sustainable and high-quality general practice services through providing advice on workforce issues, remuneration, and equity of access.
- develop and maintain member-focussed tools and resources as needed.
- provide representatives on external advisory and consultation groups.

The **RACGP Expert Committee – Quality Care** is established to:

- provide expert and informed advice and policy 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 to support a high functioning, evidence based Australian health system that is effective in treating but also in preventing ill health.
- develop and maintain high-quality, evidence-based tools and resources in preventive care, chronic disease management, and population health, to support the delivery of care in general practice and improve individual and population level health outcomes.
- ensure the Committee represents key portfolios in the areas of preventive health; chronic disease management; safety, quality; aged and palliative care; mental health; family and domestic violence.
- assist in sourcing of GPs to represent the RACGP on external committees.

The **RACGP Expert Committee – Research** is established to:

- provide expert and informed advice on research related issues in general practice and its role in the health system to inform RACGP research strategy, and policy.
- 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.
- provide input into guidelines, position papers and RACGP responses to submissions related to health and medical research, ethics and data to support the development of an evidence base that addresses issues specific to the general practice environment and patient population.
- Foster networks with GP academics nationally and internationally to support RACGP activity.
- work with key research stakeholders to increase engagement of medical students, registrars, GPs in training, in research and critical thinking.

- support the work of the RACGP Foundation, the National Research and Evaluation Ethics Committee and other research related initiatives.
- Provide advice on advocacy and support priorities for regional and national general practice research agendas and advocate for and support GP-led research and translation that contributes to improving the health outcomes of all Australians.

The **RACGP Expert Committee – Standards for General Practices** is established to:

- develop and maintain standards and associated resources for general practice with the purpose of protecting patients from harm by improving the quality and safety of health services and that include support for health promotion and preventive care.
- 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.
- ensure adequate communication about standards for general practices within the RACGP, its members, the medical profession, government and the Australian community.

The **RACGP Expert Committee – Practice Technology and Management** is established to:

- provide expert and informed advice on digital and e-health developments, information management, e-health standards, disaster management and other areas of development that impact on the future operation of Australian general practice and contribute to efforts to improve the health outcomes of Australians.
- provide input into guidelines, position papers and RACGP responses related to the committee's area of expertise.
- develop and maintain tools and resources to support general practitioners and general practice.
- support and promote the uptake of technology in general practice.

3. Membership

3.1 REC-Chairs Committee

The REC-Chairs Committee membership is a minimum of 8 members, as follows:

- One of more Board Directors appointed by the Board, one of whom will be appointed Chair by the Board.
- President or their delegate.
- National Director of Training.
- Chair from each of the RACGP Expert Committees.

The Chief Advocacy Officer and Program Managers who support each of the Expert Committees will be regular observers to support the activities of the Chairs Committee.

3.2 Expert Committee

Each Expert Committee is up to 11 members, as follows:

1. a Chair, approved by the RACGP Board every three years.
2. up to seven members approved by the RACGP Board from amongst the RACGP's financial members, from whom a Deputy Chair is nominated by the Expert Committee.

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3. up to three members co-opted by the Committee and approved by the RACGP Board, who are either:
 1. general practitioners and RACGP financial members, or;
 2. 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 complementary discipline (for example, a consumer representative, practice manager, practice nurse, specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector expertise, member of the GPs in Training Faculty, Ethics Committee or education and/or training representative).
 4. Expert Committees may draw on the expertise of staff to support their activities as required.

3.3 Terms of Office

Chair:

1. Any term of a Chair's Master Services Agreement will not exceed three years, and each such term must expire at the close of first RACGP Board meeting following the close of the third RACGP Annual General Meeting following the term's commencement.
2. Each Chair term renewal is approved by the Board. The Chair cannot be appointed for more than three consecutive terms as Chair, or 9 years, except with RACGP Board approval as its recognised that a longer term is required to retain the skills and expertise to meet business needs.
3. Each RACGP Expert Committee Chair is appointed to be a member of the RACGP Board's subcommittee - RACGP Expert Chairs Committee.

Committee members:

1. Any term of a member's Master Services Agreement will not exceed three years, and each such term will expire at the close of the third RACGP Annual General Meeting following the term's commencement.
2. The RACGP will retain the right to renew or extend the RACGP Master Services Agreement.
3. Members cannot be appointed for more than three consecutive terms, or 9 years, unless otherwise approved by the Board.
4. The terms of any member's engagement by a Committee is applicable only to that Committee. Accordingly, a member may be engaged through another Committee, in which case Term of Office will apply in isolation to any member engagement on any other Committee.

Co-opted members:

1. Any term of a co-opted member's Master Services 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. Co-opted members cannot be appointed for more than three consecutive terms, unless otherwise approved by the Board.
2. The terms of any co-opted member's engagement by a Committee is applicable only to that Committee.

3.4 Chair Selection and Induction

1. Expressions of interest (EOI) will be called for the relevant Committee Chair through RACGP publications. The EOI will detail the selection criteria on which the applications will be assessed.
2. Selection criteria for Chairs will be developed by RACGP management with consideration of the optimal skills mix for the Committee.
3. Where more than one nomination is received for a Committee Chair, recommendations for the Committee Chair will be made by a panel comprising the Chair of the REC Chairs Committee, a member of the People, Culture, Remuneration and Nominations Committee (PCNR) and the Chief Advocacy Officer.
4. Nominations will go for endorsement by the PCNR Committee for recommendation to the RACGP Board, according to the selection criteria included in the EOI.

5. All Chairs must have signed and returned to the RACGP Chief Executive Officer a fully executed RACGP Master Services Agreement before they are entitled to sit on or participate in a Committee.

3.5 Member Selection and Induction

1. Expressions of interest (EOI) will be called for the relevant Committee through RACGP publications. The EOI will detail the selection criteria on which the applications will be assessed.
2. Selection criteria for new members will be developed by the Chair and RACGP management with consideration of the optimal skills mix for the Committee.
3. Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies on a particular Committee, the REC Committee Chair will work with RACGP management to identify suitable applicants for endorsement by the People, Culture, Remuneration and Nominations Committee and recommendation to the RACGP Board, according to the selection criteria included in the EOI.
4. All members must have signed and returned to the CEO a fully executed RACGP Master Services Agreement before they are entitled to sit on or participate in a Committee.

Co-opted members:

1. Co-opted members will be appointed by the Committee according to the objectives and workplan of the Committee.
2. Co-opted members cannot fill the position of Chair or Deputy Chair.
3. Co-opted member appointments must be approved by the Board in order to have voting rights.

Casual Vacancies:

1. The RACGP may fill casual vacancies using the process outlined for member selection.
2. 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).

4. Remuneration

The Budget provision for Committee member fees is managed by the Advocacy, Policy and Research Business Unit. Each Committee must ensure they have Budget provision before recommending any appointment to the Board.

Members are:

1. paid in accordance with their relevant member's Master Services Agreement.
2. reimbursed for incidental expenses incurred in accordance with *RACGP Member Expenses Claims Guidelines*, and providing they have the relevant RACGP National Manager prior approval.

The RACGP must ensure members are aware, such as by its inclusion in the relevant Master Services Agreement, it does not retain any pay as you go withholding tax or superannuation guarantee contributions from fees paid.

RACGP Board directors appointed to the REC Chairs Committee are not entitled to additional remuneration.

5. Committee Processes

5.1 Meetings

Each Committee meets at least four times per year or as required, using any means of audio or audio-visual communication, as long as each Committee Member can hear and be heard by each other Committee members participating.

The Chair is expected to conduct meetings and is responsible for approving the agenda and minutes and for any reporting that is required. When the Chair is not present the Deputy Chair, will fulfill their meeting responsibilities.

Committee members are required to fully prepare for each meeting, read the documentation in advance, and make every reasonable effort to attend each meeting.

While various perspectives are important and may be articulated during discussion, ultimately committee members are expected to act in good faith and in what they honestly believe to be the RACGP's best interests.

Quorum is a majority (>50%) of the members in attendance.

The secretariat function is provided by the program manager for each corresponding team in Advocacy, Policy and Research business unit. The REC Chairs Committee is supported by the Executive Assistant to the Chief Advocacy Officer.

The EOI process is the responsibility of the Advocacy Policy and Research business unit and supported by the People and Capability business unit.

5.3 Meeting papers

The agenda along with the relevant papers will be provided to Committee members five calendar days prior to the meeting (where possible). The papers will be distributed via email.

A complete set of Committee papers will be maintained on the RACGP drives.

5.4 Minutes

Minutes are taken by the Committee's secretary (usually the program manager) and record outcomes and actions. Expert Committees provide the REC Chairs Committee an update at each meeting.

5.5 Annual Workplan

Each Expert Committee is responsible for preparing an annual workplan of its activities, for endorsement by the REC Chairs, to ensure alignment to strategic priorities.

5.6 Reporting

The REC Chairs Committee reports formally to the RACGP Board by providing its minutes and a written report.

The Expert Committee Chairs will provide an update to the RACGP Board on its activities through a written quarterly report and presentation to the Board at least annually, and more frequently as invited by the Board.

6. Authority and responsibilities

The REC Chairs and Expert Committees will conduct its business in accordance with its terms of reference, the *RACGP's Constitution*, the Board approved *Delegations Policy* and any other policies approved by the Board.

The REC Chairs and the Expert Committees are advisory and may recommend that the RACGP Board adopt policy positions, clinical guidelines and standards to achieve the objectives and purpose of the RACGP.

The establishment or dis-establishment of an Expert Committee is approved by the Board on the recommendation of the REC Chairs.

Expert Committee's may establish sub-committees, whether or not call a sub-committee, taskforce or working group based on the Committee workplan to exist for the duration of the Committee's term of office.

7. Confidentiality

Committee members will receive or have access to confidential, sensitive and personal information. They acknowledge they must only use or disclose such information to the extent necessary to satisfy their duties and responsibilities.

If there is uncertainty as to whether any information is confidential, such information is deemed confidential and not within the public domain.

Committee members must safeguard the confidentiality of any information received by adopting and maintaining reasonable precautions.

Committee members must not make any press or other announcements or releases in connection with any deliberations, outcomes or decisions of the Committee.

8. Conflicts of Interest

Committee members must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including any financial or other interest, to the Chair as soon as they become apparent.

Committee members must comply with the RACGP *Conflict of Interest Policy*.

9. Review

The REC-Chairs Committee will review its performance and that of the Expert Committees and its terms of reference annually, and recommend any changes required to the Board.

10. Related Documents

- RACGP Constitution
- *Working at the RACGP, Our Code of Conduct*
- *Board Delegations Policy*
- *Conflicts of Interest policy*
- *RACGP Spokesperson policy*
- *Letter of Engagement/SOW*

Version History

Release Notice			
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