





Dr Nicole Higgins

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 [Dr Nicole Higgins for RACGP President 2022](#)

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RACGP 2022 Presidential Campaign Candidate Statement

Be the Change

Our health system is in crisis

GPs have had enough

We can no longer absorb the financial and emotional cost of subsidising a broken health care system

I love being a GP. I believe in what we can be

The membership is the RACGP & neither one has any real power without the other

I want you to be part of that change with me

The Australian public can't afford coal-face GPs being burned out, undervalued and underpaid.

For too long, our role in the nation's health system has been ignored, oversimplified, denied, demeaned and defunded.

We need to shift the discussion away from expensive hospitals to how general practice saves lives and money. We are a worthy investment for the Health of the Nation, not a cost to be contained.

It's time for a re-set

A funded general practice is the solution to the healthcare crisis. Using other health providers has been an expensive failure.

This is time for strong and bold leadership from a proven leader who understands general practice, governance, business, training and negotiation with government and stakeholders

As a grass roots GP, practice owner, supervisor, working parent and primary caregiver, I understand the stressors that GPs face. As a business owner I know the economic challenges of maintaining practice viability in an environment where what we do as GPs, isn't valued by our politicians and governments.

As the Chair of GP Supervisors Australia, a peak GP representative body, I have shown myself to be a collaborative, strategic and progressive leader. I do not shy away from challenges. I have shown that I am an effective advocate and negotiator on issues such as the NQ Pharmacy Pilot and calling out poor governance in organisations. I am a member of RACGP Queensland faculty and regularly present in the media. I have been involved in GP training for the last 20 years.

I will ensure that RACGP is accountable and transparent to its members

If elected as president of the RACGP, I will ensure the College steps into the future as;

1. Member Centered

RACGP will put members at the center of every decision

2. Profession First

Through RACGP, you will be at the decision-making table - represented at every level of government to ensure our profession remains viable and sustainable

3. Respect and Reward

Our patients value what we do, we know what we do, and we need to improve the health literacy of government through our advocacy on the critical role of general practice in the health system.

Policies:

Member Centered - RACGP will put members at the center of every decision.

1. Accountable

Members Charter – RACGP Board and CEO to be accountable to members through agreed KPI's.

2. Engagement and Empowerment

GP's are leaders and change makers in their own communities. Education, advocacy, networking and GP training to be locally supported and delivered. RACGP to empower local GP's to engage with their local decision makers, hospitals, PHNs and MP's on issues that are locally relevant.

3. General practice is viable and sustainable

Until the bulk billing rate is reduced the government will not need to address the Medicare failure. Continued support to GP's who wish to review their model of billing.

General practice to be an attractive option for new graduates through review of employment models/portability of entitlements.

Rewarding and valuing longer consults - F2F and telehealth.

Education and support of the business of general practice including practice managers

4. Portability of entitlements – Registrars to have paid parental leave and study leave. Review of the models could include an overarching industry fund (like building contractors). Long term could include long service leave and a whole of industry fund.

5. Value for membership – RACGP is a membership organisation and members want a return on their investment. Members want to know how their membership dollar is being spent on them and their profession and increased transparency to form part of members charter.

Members services to support programs that are aligned with the values of general practice such as mental and physical wellbeing

6. Inclusive:

CALD Special Interest Group - 40+% of the RACGP membership gained their medical qualification overseas. We must give a voice to a diversity of opinion to inform RACGP policy, training and delivery of care.

LGBTIQ+ Special Interest Group - to provide advice and support for LGBTIQ+ GPs and patients

7. Climate change and healthcare – this is elevated as a core RACGP policy. Members supported to make their practices greener, educate their community on impact of climate change and health.

8. Past Presidents Council – The President represents the members. The Past President Council to provide advice and guidance to college, board and president on challenging issues facing the college.

9. Practice Managers as Associate members to access RACGP resources and education.

We must invest in General Practice.

General practice is an investment, not a cost that needs to be managed

In 10 years we will have a shortfall of 1/3 of our workforce (Deloitte/Cornerstone)

Not only must we train more GP's but we have to value and look after the GP's that we already have

Profession First

1. Advocate to government at Federal, State and local level.

You, through the RACGP, will have a seat at every table where there is a discussion on primary care.

2. Medicare which is fit for purpose, adequately funded

3. Funding for Primary Care - through implementation of the 10yr Primary Health Care Plan and evidenced based funding

4. Rural Doctors in Training – to receive equitable government funding. Currently RACGP Fellowship Support Program (FSP) DiT are not funded or subsidised by government. *Rural doctors in training in MM2-7 deserve equity with AGPT trainees.*

5. RACGP is the **voice** of general practice.

6. Transition of GP Training - I have been involved with Profession Led Training since the start and I will see it through until the end

7. Quality education and standards remain the cornerstone of RACGP

Thank you for your service as GPs. If elected as your president, I commit to serving you and our profession. Nicole