



Training Update



CEO update

GP training arrangements

As you may be aware, the Commonwealth has stated that the two colleges, the Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), are to assume control of the AGPT program from 2022 forward.

From next year, we enter a transitional period (2019 to 2022) as program governance is progressively transitioned from the Department of Health to the colleges. I am pleased that both colleges and the Department of Health (DoH) have reinforced that the Regional Training Organisations (RTOs) will be retained to deliver AGPT into the future. The RACGP is in discussion with RTOs to deliver a national Practice Experience Pathway (PEP), a program designed to support non-AGPT Overseas Trained Doctors towards fellowship.

This continued investment into the national RTO infrastructure and growth is welcome news. It ensures continued stability for registrars and practices through and beyond transition and signals continued growth in general practice training to meet the health workforce needs of our community.

The DoH has since established a Transition Working Group consisting of key stakeholders, including RTO representatives. The group is focussing on communication strategy and key milestones. We will continue to deliver high quality general practice education and training and work closely with the colleges, DoH and our key stakeholders throughout the transition phase.

2019 AGPT recruitment and rural training pipeline priority subregion preferencing

With applications now closed for the 2019 Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program intake, we are hoping to repeat last year's success in which we exceeded our original rural pathway GP training intake quota and filled 99% of our general pathway positions.

For 2019, we have been allocated over one third of training places available nationally – 2.5 times the number of training places offered by any other Regional Training Organisation (RTO) as shown in the graph.

This year we are pleased to introduce a new subregion priority preferencing scheme to support rural pathway applicants who demonstrate significant commitment to a subregion. Whilst this initiative does not overcome merit-based entry into the program, it is an important step towards ensuring the rural training pipeline is maintained for doctors within their shortlisted GP Synergy training region.



Supervision for GP registrars undertaking advanced rural skills posts

The issue of supervision for GP registrars who have undertaken procedural skills training as part of the AGPT program in disciplines such as obstetrics and anaesthesia is complicated and involves a number of stakeholders from across the clinical spectrum. To seek clarity around the issue, last month we held a meeting with a broad range of stakeholders from across the sector including local health districts, GP proceduralists and the colleges of general practice.

The meeting demonstrated a number of policy and process failures that affect procedural GP registrars when transitioning to community based general practice and exercising their advanced skills. The content of the meeting is being considered by a panel of relevant and experienced persons who will provide GP Synergy with some direction on the matter. We expect this work will provide recommendations for GP Synergy and other stakeholders to improve systems and clinical governance arrangements.

Mr John Oldfield | Chief Executive Officer

Exam preparation resources for registrars

GP Synergy provides a range of different resources to help you prepare for fellowship assessments.

Where to find details of exam resources

A brief summary of some key exam preparation resources is below. For full details, head to GPRime2.

To access exam resources:

1. Go to GPRime2
2. Got to 'Forms, Documents and Links' – top toolbar
3. Search 'exam'.

Exam preparation for all GP registrars

- **Google exam resources drive:** This resource is available to all registrars at any stage of training. It has several resources including the Exam Resource Spreadsheet which lists relevant resources (i.e. Check, How to Treat, guidelines, etc) in a matrix based on the BEACH data.
- **Self-assessment grid:** This tool allows you to assess the areas which you need to improve on relevant to Australian General Practice. This table has been developed from the WentWest Confidence Self-Assessment Grid.
- **GP Synergy Youtube playlists.**



Exam preparation for RACGP registrars

- **KFP symptom template:** This template has been designed as a study aid when preparing for the KFP exam. Similar to a mind map, the idea is to organise your thoughts based on a presenting symptom incorporating Murtagh's safe diagnostic strategy.
- **GP Synergy AKT and KFP mock assessments:** Every six months, GP Synergy registrars sitting the RACGP written exams can participate in a mock AKT and KFP exam, and a KFP answer workshop/webinar. Registrars must be sitting the exam in the coming term to participate.
- **GP Synergy OSCE workshop and mock exam:** Every six months, GP Synergy registrars sitting the RACGP OSCE exam can participate in two extensive OSCE preparation workshops. This includes a full OSCE prep day, and an OSCE mock exam. Registrars must be sitting the exam in the coming term to participate.
- **Mock patients:** If you're not currently sitting your assessments, but would like some early insight, volunteer to be a mock patient at one of the OSCE workshops.
- **RACGP exam DVDs:** GP Synergy has copies of the RACGP exam DVD which can be loaned to GP registrars.

Please note: Registrars will be sent an invite to participate in GP Synergy workshops and must RSVP within the specified timeframe to be eligible to attend.

Exam preparation for ACRRM registrars

- **Mock MCQ online:** A mock online exam for registrars who have enrolled to sit the current exam cycle MCQ.
- **Mock Primary StAMPS:** Registrars who have enrolled to sit the current exam cycle Primary StAMPS or ED StAMPS will be invited to participate in the GP Synergy Mock Primary StAMPS.
- **Mock Case Based Discussion (CBD):** One on one videoconference with a medical educator reviewing two cases. Registrars enrolled in CBD for the semester can participate.
- **ACRRM exam workshops/initiatives:** GP Synergy provides financial support for registrars enrolled in the current exam cycle to participate in ACRRM StAMPS study groups. Registrars should check with their rural support officer to see if they are eligible for subsidised attendance at the ACRRM StAMPS mock exam workshop.

Please note: Registrars will be sent an invite to participate in GP Synergy workshops and must RSVP within the specified timeframe to be eligible to attend.

For further information or assistance (for registrars)

- view the '[Exam Preparation Resources](#)' page on GPRime2
- contact your medical educator
- contact the relevant event coordinator for workshop queries:
 - Nicole Tooma for GP Synergy RACGP exam workshop queries on nicole_tooma@gpsynergy.com.au
 - Claire Doyle for GP Synergy ACRRM exam workshop queries on claire_doyle@gpsynergy.com.au.

2018 Academic applications open 21 May - 2 July

During GP training registrars have the opportunity to build their skills in the areas of research and critical thinking through 12-month academic post training terms. The post aims to provide exposure to research and the academic environment and encourages registrars to incorporate academic work into their careers.

The posts are funded through the Department of Health and administered and managed by the two colleges of general practice.

How to express your interest

Expressions of interest are now open for RACGP registrars considering undertaking an academic post as part of their GP training:

- RACGP EOI open from 9 April 2018 and close on 20 May 2018
- ACRRM registrars can contact ACRRM to express their interest on training@acrrm.org.au.

How to apply

Formal applications will open from 21 May - 2 July 2018.

Registrars considering academic posts are strongly encouraged to contact GP Synergy's Research and Evaluation Unit Director, Prof Parker Magin as soon as possible on parker_magin@gpsynergy.com.au.

Webinar and useful information

Webinar: GP Synergy will be hosting a webinar featuring representatives from each of the NSW and ACT universities to share information about their academic post opportunities:

Date: Tuesday 22 May

Time: 7.00pm to 9.00pm

To register: https://gpsynergy.zoom.us/webinar/register/AVN_Vpz9ecOeS52MOxKPIt0XXQ

Policy and useful information: To find out more about academic posts visit the '[Academic Post Policy and Useful Information for Registrars](#)' page on GPRime (under Forms, Documents and Links on GPRime).

Alum Sheila Uyirwoth

The University of Notre Dame
Australia



Research topic: I am researching the information provided on Australian non-surgical cosmetic practice websites, and if that information is provided in an ethical manner that aligns with current medical guidelines.

Rationale: Cosmetic medicine is an increasingly prevalent area of clinical practice that general practitioners will invariably be asked about by their patients. I have an interest in this fairly new, and fast growing, surgical and non-surgical industry, and more troubling the increased rate of procedure-related complications in some of the facilities offering these procedures.

Why I did the post: I was attracted by the opportunity to investigate a topic I have an interest in. The benefits of undertaking an academic post in GP training allows for a gentle introduction into research with the scope to extend it further. This post also provides exposure to the culture of research and evidence-based medicine which underpins our clinical practice.



Melinda Choy

The Australian National University



Research topic: My project is based around understanding how the introduction of eCHAT (Electronic Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool) affects the therapeutic relationship at a general practice servicing a vulnerable population.

eCHAT is an in-depth online assessment of an individual's health symptoms and history, the tool publishes a summary with recommendations for care plans.

Rationale: This project is in part a branch of the eCHAT project that started in New Zealand. However, this research is the first of its kind in Australia, and the first research into the use of eCHAT with a vulnerable population.

Why I did the post: The appeal of this project is the opportunity to research the therapeutic relationship using qualitative and quantitative methods. My post has provided a wonderful opportunity to meet interesting people, learn useful teaching and research skills, as well as explore the academic general practice lifestyle balance for myself.



Rachel Turner

The University of Newcastle

Research topic: I'm looking at contraception prescribing by GP registrars and attitudes towards different contraceptive methods.

Rationale: Australia has one of the highest rates of both unplanned pregnancy, and terminations in the developing world. This seems at odds with the number of contraceptive options that are available to women. I want to see what influences the prescribing behaviours of GP registrars in relation to contraception.

Why I did the post: Being an academic registrar has allowed me to improve my research skills and become part of a research community. I hope to have the opportunity to present my research across the country at academic conferences this year. I've also been able to start a Graduate Certificate in Clinical Epidemiology at The University of Newcastle with the professional development funds awarded to me as part of this post.



Clinical pearl: Management of chronic pain – an extremely limited role for opioids.



From 1992 to 2012 there was a 15-fold increase in opioid analgesic prescribed in Australia. With this has come escalating hospitalisations and deaths from non-heroin opioids. The increase in opioid prescriptions has been underpinned by increasing use of opioids for chronic non-cancer pain. Reflecting this, in an analysis of GP registrars' practice, only a minority of opioid prescriptions were for the main opioid indications of acute pain (29%), cancer or end-of-life care (3%).

This is despite there being abundant evidence for considerable morbidity and mortality associated with opioid use in chronic non-cancer pain and no convincing evidence for medium- or long-term efficacy. Recently published research suggests non-opioid pain medications are as efficacious as opioids (if not more efficacious) in chronic non-cancer pain over a 12-month period.[1]

There is stronger evidence for the efficacy of non-pharmacological management of chronic non-cancer pain. This is something that registrars can utilize in their chronic pain patients. Focussed psychological strategies (able to be employed by GPs or by psychologist referral) can be very useful, but other lifestyle strategies are also of benefit. See:

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_3phB93rvI
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ml1myFQpdCE
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlwn9rC3rOI

[1] Krebs EE et al Effect of Opioid vs Nonopioid Medications on Pain-Related Function in Patients With Chronic Back Pain or Hip or Knee Osteoarthritis Pain: The SPACE Randomized Clinical Trial. JAMA. 2018 319(9):872-882. doi: 10.1001/jama.2018.0899



Are you interested in becoming a mentor for a budding rural GP?

We are piloting a new mentoring program to help prevocational doctors and final year medical students access information and support about rural general practice during their formative career decision making years.

How does it work?

Under the program, prevocational doctors and final year medical students can contact GP Synergy and request a rural GP mentor. They will then be matched with a suitable registrar or supervisor who will contact them, offering advice and answering any questions they may have.

Is it paid?

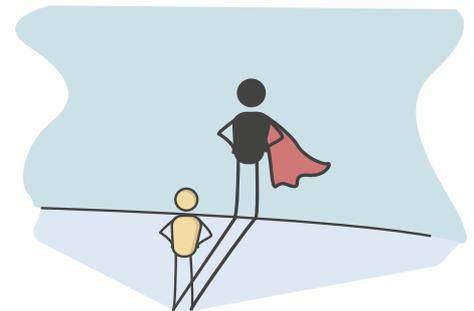
Yes! Participating registrars will be paid a one-off payment of \$70 per doctor/student they are allocated to mentor.

What's involved?

At minimum, GP Synergy requires mentors to respond to the mentee's enquiry in a timely manner and provide practical advice and information (as appropriate) to their queries. Anything above and beyond that is up to you.

How can you get involved?

If you are interested in signing up to be a mentor, please contact Kate or Paula on applicant@gpsynergy.com.au

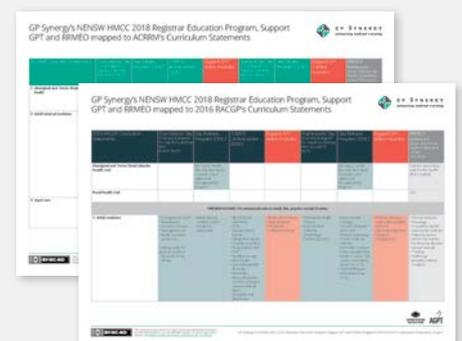


Curriculum maps

To help GP registrars and supervisors plan their learning and teaching, GP Synergy has mapped the GP Synergy education program to the RACGP and ACRRM curriculums. This allows registrars and supervisors to identify which areas of the curriculum are covered by GP Synergy and which aspects require additional self-directed and/or in-practice learning.

To access:

1. Login to GPRime
2. Go to 'Forms, Documents and Links' – top toolbar
3. Search 'curriculum'.



College fellowship assessment enrolment*

ACRRM fellowship assessments:

- 2018.1: Enrolments closed
- 2018.2: Assessment enrolment closes 4 June 2018.

For more information visit the [ACRRM website](#)

RACGP fellowship assessments:

- 2018.1 AKT/KFP: Enrolments closed
- 2018.1 OSCE: Enrolments closed 29 March 2018
- 2018.2 AKT/KFP: Enrolments open 19 March – 18 May 2018
- 2018.2 OSCE: Enrolments open 19 March – 7 September 2018.

For further information visit the [RACGP website](#)

*Dates are subject to change. Always check the RACGP and ACRRM websites for the most up-to-date information.

Award nominations now open for ACRRM and RACGP

ACRRM awards

ACRRM is now accepting nomination for the following awards:

- Life Fellowship
- Honorary Fellowship and Honorary Membership
- The Peter Graham 'Cohuna' Award
- RDAA-ACRRM Rural Registrar of the Year award
- Distinguished Service Awards
- RDAA Rural Doctor of the Year Award
- ACRRM President's Prize.

Nominations close: Monday 2 July 2018.

Further information: [ACRRM website](#)

RACGP awards

RACGP is now accepting nomination for the following awards:

- [NSW and ACT awards:](#)
 - General Practice of the Year Award 2018
 - General Practice Supervisor of the Year Award 2018
 - General Practitioner of the Year Award 2018
 - Registrar of the Year Award 2018
 - **Nominations close:** 18 May 2018.
- [Rural awards:](#)
 - 2018 Brian Williams Award
 - 2018 Rural Registrar of the Year Award
 - **Nominations close:** 18 May 2018.
- [RACGP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health awards:](#)
 - Growing Strong Award
 - Standing Strong Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Award
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Student Bursary Award
 - **Nominations close:** 11 June 2018.

External activities of interest

- STEMI ACLS Program | 19 May | Sydney | [More information](#)
- Medcast and NB Medical | 19 May | Sydney | [More information](#)
- The University of Newcastle (UON) - Advanced Training in Suicide Prevention | 19 May | Scone | [More information](#)
- DHM Pathology - Thyroid Surgery in Rural Practice | 22 May | Armidale

For further information please see the [External Education Activity Noticeboard](#).

ACRRM courses

ACRRM offers a range of covers open to all registrars to attend. Registrars training in rural areas are reminded subsidies are available for emergency skills courses. Please see the Support Guidelines for GP Registrars for more information.

Rural Emergency Skills Training (REST)

REST provides a hands-on and structured approach to learning that provides doctors with a sense of calm when dealing with stressful situations. This course covers Basic Life Support, as well as more advanced techniques to assist with managing life-threatening injuries and multi-trauma situations.

- Coffs Harbour: 7 – 8 July 2018 – [Register](#)
- Sydney: 15 – 16 September 2018 – [Register](#)

Advanced Life Support (ALS)

ALS provides a peer-to-peer and laid-back learning environment with no assessments required. Topics discussed are in-depth and specific to managing life-saving.

- Newcastle: 14 July 2018 – [Register](#)
- Sydney: 24 November 2018 – [Register](#)

Ultrasound

ACRRM's Ultrasound workshop has been designed to assist rural generalists, general practitioners, nurse practitioners, and others who may require an introduction to the use of Ultrasound in emergency practice.

- Sydney: 18 August 2018 – [Register](#)

Rural Emergency Obstetrics Training (REOT)

This is a one-day workshop designed to equip non-obstetric practitioners with vital emergency obstetric skills. This course covers normal birthing procedures as well as common birthing emergencies.

- Newcastle: 15 July 2018 – [Register](#)

Key dates

21 May: Competency Assessment due for registrars in first, second and third GP terms and Extended Skills in GP.



22 Jun: Deadline for Medicare provider number paperwork.

22 Jun: Deadline for Medicare provider number paperwork for 2018.2 term.

16 July: Competency Assessment due for registrars in first, second and third GP terms and Extended Skills in GP.

5 Aug: End date term 1 2018.

For a list of important training dates, see the new key dates calendar on our [website](#).

Upcoming GP Synergy events

Registrars in their first or second GP term workshops

- Western NSW Node 1 – Western NSW | Fusion Workshop – 20-22 June | Sydney
 - Western NSW Node 2 – Murrumbidgee and Riverina | 24 May | Half day - Various sites
 - Western NSW Node 3 – Sth Eastern NSW & ACT | 24 May or 25 May | Half day - various sites
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- Lower Eastern NSW Node 1 – Central, Eastern and South Western Sydney | 9 May | Little Bay
 - Lower Eastern NSW Node 2 – Sth Eastern NSW and Wollongong | 10-11 May | Wollongong
 - Lower Eastern NSW Node 3 – Sth Eastern NSW and ACT | 24 May or 25 May | Half day - various sites
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- North Eastern NSW Node 1 – North Coast | 11 May (only some registrars) | Coffs Harbour
 - North Eastern NSW Node 2 – New England/Northwest | Fusion Workshop – 19-22 June | Sydney
 - North Eastern NSW Node 3 – Hunter, Manning and Central Coast | 1 June | Newcastle
 - North Eastern NSW Node 4 – Nepean, Western and Northern Sydney | 23 May | Little Bay

Exam preparation workshops

- GP Synergy RACGP exam preparation workshops are now being planned for registrars sitting the exams in 2018.1 only. Please email Shirleen Chand for further information: shirleen_chand@gpsynergy.com.au
- GP Synergy ACRRM assessment preparation workshops are currently being planned for registrars sitting ACRRM assessments. Please email Claire Doyle for further information: claire_doyle@gpsynergy.com.au

Need some help?

Education Coordinators

- **Central, Eastern and South Western Sydney:**
Tia Dickson - 02 8321 4101
tia_dickson@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Hunter, Manning and Central Coast:**
Heidi Heinz - 02 8321 4238
heidi_heinz@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Nepean, Western and Northern Sydney:**
Kym Cashen - 02 8321 4112
kym_cashen@gpsynergy.com.au
- **New England/Northwest:**
Sally Lucas - 02 8321 4015
sally_lucas@gpsynergy.com.au
- **North Coast:**
Joanne Sayer - 02 8321 4128
joanne_sayer@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Western NSW:**
Rachel Harris - 02 8321 4212
rachel_harris@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Murrumbidgee and ACT:**
Catherine Daly - 02 8321 4149
catherine_daly@gpsynergy.com.au
- **South Eastern NSW:**
Amanda Piatek - 02 8321 4164
amanda_piatek@gpsynergy.com.au

Registrar Liaison Officers (RLO)

- **Western NSW:**
Currently vacant. Please contact another RLO.
- **Nepean, Western and North Western Sydney:**
Sama Balasubramanian – RLO_NESydney@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Hunter New England Central Coast:**
Bob Vickers - RLO_HNECC@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Central, Eastern and South Western Sydney:**
Rebecca Chan - RLO_LESydney@gpsynergy.com.au
- **South Eastern NSW:**
Jessica Swan - RLO_SouthEastern@gpsynergy.com.au
- **North Coast:**
Currently vacant. Please contact another RLO.
- **Murrumbidgee and ACT:**
Jessica Tidemann - RLO_MurrumACT@gpsynergy.com.au

Rural Support Officers (RSO)

- **New England/Northwest | North Coast | Hunter Manning & Central Coast:**
Kerry Robins - kerry_robins@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Western NSW:**
Maria Logan - maria_Logan@gpsynergy.com.au
- **Murrumbidgee:**
Sue Hefren - sue_hefren@gpsynergy.com.au
- **South Eastern NSW:**
April McFadden - april_mcfadden@gpsynergy.com.au