

Australian General Practice Training  
**Guide for GP Registrars**



## Acknowledgments

The Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program is an Australian Government initiative.

General Practice Education and Training Limited (GPET) is a wholly owned government company established by the Commonwealth Government.

GPET thanks the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and General Practice Registrars Australia Limited for their contributions to this document.

### **Published by:**

GPET Limited  
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Canberra, ACT 2601  
Telephone: (02) 6263 6777  
[www.agpt.com.au](http://www.agpt.com.au)

© GPET 2009  
ACN: 095 433 140  
Date of publication: 4 December 2009

### **Design and Layout:**

Lovedesign Group  
[www.lovedesigngroup.com](http://www.lovedesigngroup.com)

## Welcome

Welcome and congratulations on being selected into the 2010 cohort of the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program.

The AGPT program aims to give you a world class education that is delivered regionally, is innovative, and is integrated with other educational activities and institutions.

In this Guide you will find information about planning your training, links to policies relevant to your time within the AGPT program, and other useful information to be aware of throughout your period as a GP registrar.

Your training is delivered by a regional training provider whose role is to provide a personalised, regional experience to ensure you are supported throughout your training in an environment conducive to lifelong learning.

The role of the regional training provider is enhanced by the support and cooperation of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, divisions of general practice, universities and other important stakeholders.

I trust that you will have a fruitful and rewarding experience as a GP registrar in the AGPT program as you train to become a confident general practitioner, well equipped to meet the diverse needs of Australian communities.

All the best,



Associate Professor Simon Willcock  
Chairman of the Board  
GPET Limited



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## How to use this *Guide*

The AGPT *Guide for GP Registrars* 2010 is an online PDF document available on the AGPT website [www.agpt.com.au](http://www.agpt.com.au) within the 'Registrars' and 'Policies/Publications' sections of the site.

For any queries regarding this *Guide* please contact [lauren.kennelly@gpet.com.au](mailto:lauren.kennelly@gpet.com.au)

Visit the AGPT website at [www.agpt.com.au](http://www.agpt.com.au)

## Background information

For information about the relationship between General Practice Education and Training Limited (GPET), the AGPT program and other stakeholders, we suggest you read the GPET corporate brochure.

<http://www.agpt.com.au/GPETtheCompany/AboutGPET/>

# 01

## Introduction

Successful completion of the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program, leads to fellowship of one or both Colleges – the Fellowship of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (FACRRM) and/or the Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP).

For GP registrars enrolled in the AGPT program this means that you can choose to train towards the FACRRM or the FRACGP qualification, or both, for vocational recognition. Registrars training towards the FRACGP can also choose to undertake the RACGP Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) as an additional rural (but beyond vocational recognition) qualification.

New registrars were asked to nominate their preferred vocational recognition qualification/s when they applied for training. Existing registrars who wish to undertake the FACRRM, FRACGP, or both qualifications, can do so.

### Staying up to date

From time to time policies that affect the AGPT program will be revised and posted on the AGPT website. These may or may not directly affect GP registrars, however, it is good practice to occasionally visit the links below to keep yourself up to date and well informed.

Queries should be directed to your regional training provider (RTP) in the first instance.

A few web links you may wish to keep handy include:

<http://www.agpt.com.au/>

<http://www.agpt.com.au/Registrars/GeneralInformation/>

<http://www.agpt.com.au/PoliciesPublications/RecentPolicyChanges/>

### How does this *Guide* help?

Much of the information you need will be in this *Guide*, however if you require more information the *Guide* will direct you to the appropriate locations on the ACRRM, RACGP and AGPT program websites.

## Your training for general practice

General practice training provides you with a variety of opportunities for a rewarding and satisfying career. Achieving what you want in your career begins with the commitment you make to your vocational training and the critical decisions and choices you make in planning your professional development during training.

The AGPT program gives you a range of opportunities to undertake your training in a variety of locations, with your chosen regional training provider (RTP) or in related areas in the pathway in which you have accepted a place.

Training is based on the curricula prescribed, in the specialty of general practice and/or rural and remote medicine, by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM). These curricula are documented extensively by each college and details are available on their respective websites as outlined below.

### RACGP

For up to date details regarding the FRACGP and FARGP education and training components and curriculum, and assessment, visit the 'Education' section of the RACGP website [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au), which includes sub-sections on:

- › Vocational training' – for information regarding FRACGP education and training go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/vocationaltraining>
- › 'Curriculum for Australian General Practice' – for information regarding the RACGP curriculum go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/curriculum>
- › 'Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice' – for information regarding FARGP training and curriculum go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/fargp>

Educational support and resources also available on the college website [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au) include:

- › 'Library/Research' – to access the RACGP John Murtagh Library go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/library>
- › 'Products and Services' – for links to publications and guidelines go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/publications/>
- › The RACGP's online education platform gpLearning is available at <http://www.gplearning.com.au/>
- › The RACGP portal to clinical decision-making and practice management support tools is available at [www.mygeneralpractice.org.au](http://www.mygeneralpractice.org.au)

## ACRRM

For up to date details regarding the FACRRM education and training components and curriculum, assessment, and educational support and resources visit the 'Vocational Training' section of the ACRRM website [www.acrrm.org.au](http://www.acrrm.org.au), which includes sub-sections on:

- › 'Vocational Training' – for information regarding FACRRM training and curriculum go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/vocational-training>. This webpage includes direct links to the 'Fellowship Vocational Training Handbook' and the 'Primary Curriculum' Third Edition.
- › 'Assessment' – for information regarding assessment and examination requirements go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/assessment>
- › 'RRMEO – Online Learning' – for information about the online education platform and telemedicine program 'Rural and Remote Medical Education Online (RRMEO)' and associated resources go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/rrmeo> or go directly to [www.rrmeo.com](http://www.rrmeo.com)
- › 'Clinical Guides for PDA' – for information about handheld decision support for PALM and Pocket PC PDA systems go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/clinical-guidelines-for-pda>

Your RTP is responsible for delivering the curricula, and both the RACGP and ACRRM provide guidelines for RTPs in their respective curricula.

Those of you who commence training in the hospital setting will be encouraged and given advice by your RTP to undertake rotations in disciplines of most use in general practice. There are some mandatory hospital rotations to ensure appropriate preparation for the general practice placements that follow.

After successful completion of your hospital year you will commence your training. This will be undertaken in an accredited training practice/post with experienced medical practitioners who are accredited supervisors. The training provided by your supervisor is augmented and extended by medical educators and other staff attached to your RTP. This education and training system has been well tested and proven over many years and you can be confident of the success of such a system in providing you with the guidance and support required. Notwithstanding this, you have a responsibility to play an active role in determining your own learning needs and goals within the broad framework of the training curricula and you should discuss these with your chosen RTP as early as possible.

See Chapter 9 for information on Australian Government requirements for general practice training.

# 02

## Setting your directions

The AGPT program gives you the opportunity to complete your training with a chosen regional training provider (RTP). Once you have accepted an offer of a place, then with your RTP you have the opportunity to plan your training for your future career in general practice.

You will have access to experienced medical educators and GP supervisors and mentors as well as registrar liaison officers to assist, and inform you as you plan the directions you wish to take, both during training and after.

The structure of the training includes opportunities for options to be taken up at certain points. These opportunities allow registrars some degree of flexibility consistent with their educational objectives, and the overall training requirements (see Chapter 4 for more information about flexible training).

To help with developing your training plan you will need to understand the obligations around the general pathway and rural pathway structures. It is also necessary to be familiar with the geographical boundaries that affect these pathways.

### Geographical classification system

**(This information is current as at the publication date of this document.**

**Updated information for GP registrars can be sourced from**

**<http://www.agpt.com.au/Registrars/GeneralInformation/>)**

From 1 July 2010, the existing Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas (RRMA) system will be replaced by the Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Areas (ASGC-RA) system.

The ASGC-RA has been developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and uses 2006 Census data, and is widely used by Commonwealth and state agencies. Moving to the ASGC-RA will improve structures for attracting health services to areas of genuine need. The ASGC-RA has been developed as part of broader health reforms supporting the notion that 'the more remote you go, the greater the reward'.

The ASGC-RA groups regions that share remoteness characteristics into RA groups.

RA 1 is major cities and can be defined as urban locations; RA 2 to 5 are grouped in progressively more remote locations, and can be defined as regional, rural or remote.

## General Pathway RA1–5

From 1 January 2010 general pathway registrars will now be able to fulfil their 12 month training pathway obligation by electing one of the following options:

- › 12 months training in a RRMA 3–7 or RA2–5 location or
- › 12 months training in an outer metropolitan location or
- › 6 months training in a RRMA 3–7 or RA2–5 location plus 6 months training in an outer metropolitan location.

Continuing general pathway registrars (2009 cohort and earlier) and 2010 cohort entry registrars that are (or will be) training with a non-capital city RTP that previously had only a 6-month pathway obligation (i.e. no outer metropolitan requirement) will still only have a 6-month obligation. All general pathway registrars entering the AGPT program from 2011 onwards will have a 12-month pathway obligation that can be fulfilled in one of three ways as outlined above.

## Rural Pathway RA 2–5

Rural pathway registrars will still be required to undertake all of their general practice and/or primary rural and remote training in a rural location, which will be RRMA 3–7 before 1 July 2010 and RA 2–5 locations from 1 July 2010.

**You are advised to refer to the online documents outlined below for detailed information. Your RTP may also be able to assist.**

With these options in mind you are in a position to set your career plans in place. Ideally, you should establish an education plan for the whole of training and then education plans for each phase of training.

Much of the training relies on self-directed learning and as an adult learner you are expected to set your plans and directions in keeping with the structure, curriculum and phases of training. These plans must always be negotiated with and endorsed by the medical educators within the RTPs, who will also offer advice based on their educational experience and expertise.

In the early phase of training you will be assisted to ensure that your plans are achievable. Evidence of these plans needs to be submitted on completion of your training for you to be eligible for Fellowship and vocational registration and for recognition of prior learning if you wish to obtain credit towards an advanced award offered by other professional colleges. This further highlights the importance of these documents.

While a major part of education and training in general practice takes place in an experiential manner in accredited training practices/posts with accredited supervisors, your RTP will augment this with other educational activities to satisfy your learning needs and curriculum content. This composite of in-practice and external-to-practice education and training has been well tested and found to meet the needs of registrars as they progress to unsupervised general practice and/or rural and remote medicine.

## Rural incentives program

The new General Practice Rural Incentives Program (GPRIP) will commence from 1 July 2010. It will replace the Registrars Rural Incentive Payments Scheme (RRIPS), which applies to GP registrars on the AGPT program, and the Rural Retention Program, which applies to general practitioners.

The new incentives program will provide a consistent set of incentive payments that applies on an equivalent basis for GPs and registrars practicing in rural locations. This new program will streamline the administration of incentive payments and provide parity between GPs and GP registrars.

Eligibility for GPRIP will be based on the Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Areas (ASGC-RA) classification system.

The RRIPS will be applicable for registrars commencing the AGPT program in eligible training terms at the start of the 2010 training year, for all training undertaken before 1 July 2010. From 1 July 2010 incentive payments will be made under the GPRIP. Training undertaken prior to 1 July 2010 will be recognised for calculating time spent in a rural location for the purposes of future payments.

For details on the RRIPS and GPRIP incentive payment scale visit <http://www.agpt.com.au/Registrars/GeneralInformation/> and click on 'Registrars Rural Incentive Payment Scheme (RRIPS)' and 'GPRIP Fact Sheet'

Under GPRIP registrars on both pathways are treated equally. If they provide services in a RA 2–5 location for the required period of time, they will be eligible to receive the relevant incentive payment.

Gaps of 12 months or more from rural training will result in the incentives reverting back to the lowest level; this is known as the 'continuity of service eligibility' requirement of the GPRIP.

All registrars, on both the rural and general pathway, will be eligible for GPRIP payments following their first 6 months in a RA 3–5 location or following 12 months in a RA 2 location.

A location's RA classification and attached incentives can be searched using the RA locator on the Australian Government's DoctorConnect website <http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/RA-locator>

**The above information is current as at the publication date of this document and liable to change over time due to changes in government policy and implementation.**

## Online resources

Up to date information for GP registrars can be sourced from the [www.agpt.com.au](http://www.agpt.com.au) website <http://www.agpt.com.au/Registrars/GeneralInformation/>

A location's RA classification and attached incentives can be searched using the RA locator on the Australian Government's DoctorConnect website <http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/locator>

For details on the RRIPS and GPRIP incentive payment scale visit <http://www.agpt.com.au/Registrars/GeneralInformation/> and click on 'Registrars Rural Incentive Payment Scheme (RRIPS)' and 'GPRIP Fact Sheet'

For more information about how the ASGC-RA categories are calculated, please refer to the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/lookup/0D204FD3DCD90564CA256F19001303A2?opendocument>.

## Achieving your training goals

Once you have defined your overall educational and training plan, and the endorsed specific plans for the phase of training that you are about to enter, you will find that there are well-established resources to provide the opportunities and support you need to succeed with your plans. Apart from the core elements of units of training there are funded courses and other activities sponsored by RTPs to augment the educational activities that you have chosen as part of your plan.

In achieving your goals you can expect to receive the required education, training, assessment and feedback throughout each phase of training. The important aspects of assessment and feedback will provide you with the necessary information on which you can reflect and act in your progress in that phase of your education. You will find that there are a number of methods to give feedback on your progress. Your RTP will advise you of the methods and resources used.

Working with other registrars will assist you, especially as you approach the assessment components of the FACRRM, FARGP, and FRACGP. Experience has shown that study groups constructed and run by registrars for the examination have been important in achieving success. RACGP faculty-run pre-examination courses are an excellent preparation for the examination. ACRRM provides excellent resources – including practice questions – to assist you in your preparation for its assessment components.

More information on assessment and examination requirements, and ACRRM and RACGP teaching and learning resources are available on their respective websites outlined on page 16 of this *Guide*.

## Laying the foundation for a rewarding career

With your decision to enter general practice vocational training you have taken the first of a number of steps towards a satisfying and rewarding career. The current arrangements for education and training are detailed in this *Guide*. Notwithstanding the necessity to undertake the whole of education and training in an essentially structured way, with some options throughout, you have the opportunity, with support, to form a longer-term view of your preferred position(s) in general practice in the years that lie ahead.

This opportunity to take a longer term view will allow you to plan and organise your education and training to meet not only the required end-point qualification, but also to meet your own goals and aspirations for a career in general practice.

The options within RACGP training allow registrars to spend some time focussing on specific areas of practice and also to take some elective time, if required, to gain essential knowledge and skills for future directions. RACGP training also provides up to 12 months of post-Fellowship advanced rural skills training as part of the FARGP.

The ACRRM program includes exposure to the broad scope of rural and remote medicine as well as one year of advanced specialised training in a number of disciplines.

Experienced medical educators, GP supervisors and mentors are a resource that you should use to the extent required in your educational and future plans for your career. In addition, through your education and training with regional training providers, you will have access to regional divisions of general practice, university clinical schools and workforce agencies to further assist you in planning and decision making for your career.

## Giving feedback on your training

### Involvement of registrars in accreditation of training providers

As part of assuring the quality of training for registrars, all RTPs must be accredited by General Practice Education and Training Limited (GPET) to be providers of the AGPT program. GPET conducts a periodic review and accreditation process for RTPs, which involves a visit to the RTP and to its various facilities, and training practices. The review team includes RACGP and ACRRM members, who ensure that college training standards are complied with as well. GPET regards feedback from registrars as a key part of the review and will want to meet with registrars. Your RTP may ask you to be involved. GPET and the colleges will be grateful for your input. This may require meeting with reviewers at your practice or with a group of your colleagues during a workshop or at the RTP. It is important to note that this review is not about checking up on registrars, nor is it another form of an external clinical teaching visit or an accreditation of the practice. The aim of the review is to check on how well the RTP is doing its job in supporting registrars, supervisors and practices. The review team will also meet with the registrar liaison officers (RLOs). See Chapter 6 for more information about RLOs.

## **Giving feedback to improve training – national survey and focus groups**

As part of its commitment to providing registrars Australia-wide with an opportunity to comment on their training experiences, GPET conducts an annual national registrar satisfaction survey. GPET is conscious that registrars are approached frequently for feedback and opinion about a variety of issues. However, GPET is the national body responsible for overseeing AGPT and it is one of the bodies able to take action on national issues identified by registrars, directly or through the RTPs. Registrars are therefore expected to participate in the national survey. Good response rates will allow GPET to act confidently on the feedback you provide. In addition to the national survey, registrars may have an opportunity to be part of an independent confidential focus group to explore issues of interest to registrars in more detail. The feedback from focus groups, the national survey, and interviews with registrars and RLOs during accreditation of providers offers registrars a suite of meaningful confidential opportunities to help shape future training experiences.

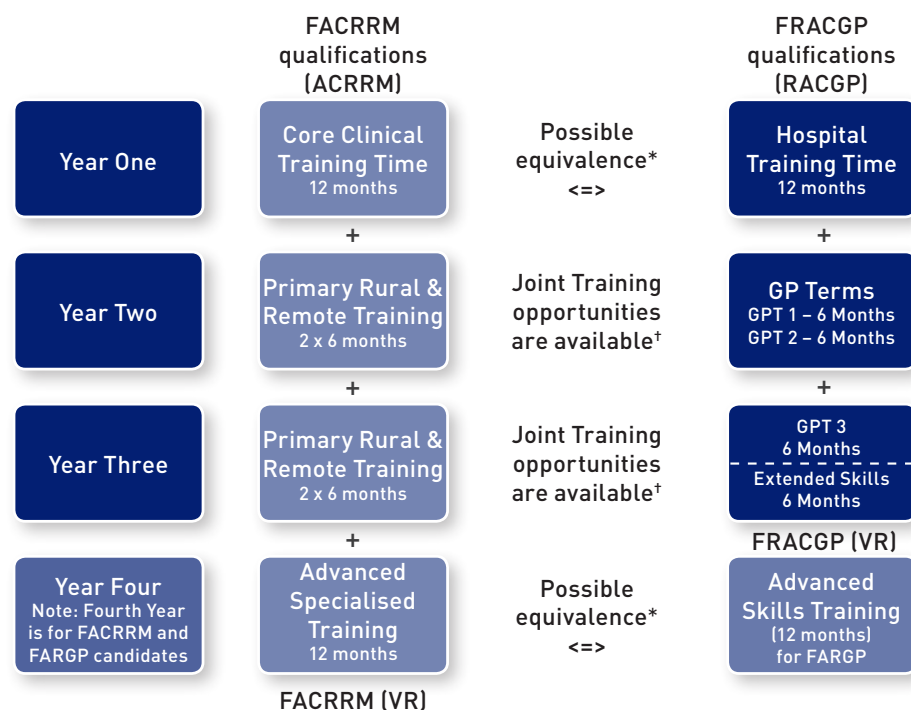
# 03

## Australian General Practice Training

### AGPT vocational training qualifications and training terms

The details of individual training programs and experiences will vary depending on regional contexts and community needs, on your learning needs, and on the fellowship qualification/s that you are undertaking for vocational recognition.

The Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program



\* Credit given for AGPT training already undertaken towards one fellowship, prior to undertaking a second or third fellowship.

† Can be achieved in dual accredited practices or posts.

Please note: although this table is presented in a linear format, both colleges have flexible training options to enable registrars to plan their training around their own needs and interests. See the college websites for more information.

Details of training for the FACRRM and the FRACGP are available on the respective college websites as outlined below.

## RACGP

For up to date details regarding the FRACGP and FARGP education and training components and curriculum, and assessment, visit the 'Education' section of the RACGP website [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au), which includes sub-sections on:

- › 'Vocational training' – for information regarding FRACGP education and training go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/vocationaltraining>
- › 'Curriculum for Australian General Practice' – for information regarding the RACGP curriculum go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/curriculum>
- › 'Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice' – for information regarding FARGP training and curriculum go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/fargp>

Educational support and resources also available on the college website [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au) include:

- › 'Library/Research' – to access the RACGP John Murtagh Library go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/library>
- › 'Products and Services' – for links to publications and guidelines go to <http://www.racgp.org.au/publications/>
- › The RACGP's online education platform gpLearning is available at <http://www.gplearning.com.au/>
- › The RACGP portal to clinical decision-making and practice management support tools is available at [www.mygeneralpractice.org.au](http://www.mygeneralpractice.org.au)

## ACRRM

For up to date details regarding the FACRRM education and training components and curriculum, assessment, and educational support and resources visit the 'Vocational Training' section of the ACRRM website [www.acrrm.org.au](http://www.acrrm.org.au), which includes sub-sections on:

- › 'Vocational Training' – for information regarding FACRRM training and curriculum go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/vocational-training> This webpage includes direct links to the 'Fellowship Vocational Training Handbook' and the 'Primary Curriculum' Third Edition.
- › 'Assessment' – for information regarding assessment and examination requirements go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/assessment>
- › 'RRMEO – Online Learning' – for information about the online education platform and telemedicine program 'Rural and Remote Medical Education Online (RRMEO)' and associated resources go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/rrmeo> or go directly to [www.rrmeo.com](http://www.rrmeo.com)
- › 'Clinical Guides for PDA' – for information about handheld decision support for PALM and Pocket PC PDA systems go to <http://www.acrrm.org.au/clinical-guidelines-for-pda>

## Training standards

There are some principal standards that impact on educational activities throughout training. They are the ACRRM *Standards for the Accreditation of Teaching Posts and Teachers in Rural and Remote Medicine and Standards for Regional Training Providers Recognition 2007*; and the 2005 RACGP *Standards for General Practice Education and Training: Programs and Providers and Standards for General Practice Education and Training: Trainers and Training Posts*. GPET requires RTPs to deliver training that complies with these overall standards to ensure the standards and quality of training are maintained.

Copies of the standards are available for perusal on the RACGP and ACRRM websites and at RTP offices:

RACGP: <http://www.racgp.org.au/vocationaltraining/standards>

ACRRM: <http://www.acrrm.org.au/regional-training-providers>.

## General requirements

During your time in the AGPT program, the general requirements of all registrars include:

- › To actively seek relevant experiences to achieve competence, both clinically and as an effective member of a practice team.
- › Attending meetings and making contacts with educational staff (medical educator/training adviser or rural coordinators) at least twice per year to:
  - review achievements from previous learning plan
  - review incoming formative assessment data
  - identify new learning objectives and learning needs
  - plan career and learning strategies
  - review log book entries for the preceding period
  - address issues of concern to the registrar.
- › Participating in educational activities as required by the RTP including any required additional rural educational activities.
- › Participating in such additional formative assessment as required by the RTP or the colleges.
- › Participating in any required assessment during training.

## Post-intern hospital training

Intern and post-intern (PGY2+) hospital training and experience allow registrars to progressively expand their knowledge and clinical skills, as well as gain a broader understanding of the roles and functions of various aspects of the health care system, and the interrelation of these to the overall health care of the community. The intern pre-registration year is a period of considerable further learning and growth for all doctors. In addition, doctors gain increased knowledge and skills in particular areas of medicine in far greater depth than any previous exposure, and they have the opportunity of further enhancing their skills in doctor-patient communication, dealing with families/relatives, gaining an understanding of the health care team approach to overall care and follow-up, and being part of a team approach to issues surrounding complex serious illnesses.

Junior medical officers who are in training have the opportunity to reflect on the processes of hospital care as they relate to general practice, and vice versa, as well as on the relationship and communication requirements between hospital specialists/ departments and referring general practitioners.

During this post-intern phase of hospital training, doctors may have the ability to focus on medical areas not previously covered in their earlier hospital training that directly relate to their future roles as general practitioners. In addition, mandatory training requirements can be certified as having been undertaken during this period.

## Mandatory hospital experience

Certain hospital rotations and experiences are considered mandatory preparation for the AGPT program and must be satisfactorily completed before commencement of the second year of training (see 'Year Two', in the AGPT flowchart on page 15). The following summary provides a guide for registrars but it is recommended that you refer to the relevant college websites for more specific information.

- › Medicine – preferably general medicine or a rotation that offers broad medical experience
- › General Surgery
- › Accident and emergency rotation
- › Paediatrics – the rotation in paediatrics must be undertaken in an approved post in an accredited hospital with child and adolescent health experience that includes a high proportion of paediatric emergency attendances with appropriate supervision.

**Note:**

Both colleges require certain hospital terms and particular courses be completed, the details of which can be found on the relevant college website.

Doctors who enter general practice training while employed in the hospital setting are required to:

- › meet and discuss their learning plans and future plans with a nominated medical educator/training adviser
- › participate in regional educational activities as permitted by their hospital commitments
- › maintain a log book of educational activities, training, procedural skills and certifications, as required, and any other relevant hospital-based (or general practice-based) activities.

## Recognition of prior learning

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) can reduce your overall time in the AGPT program. RPL should be negotiated between the registrar and their RTP, and applied for in the first year of training.

## Training in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health

This important aspect of training is being addressed by RTPs in consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) State Affiliate officers.

All registrars are required to satisfy the requirements of the Aboriginal Health Curriculum Statement (contained in the ACRRM and RACGP curricula) as a completion of training requirement.

Training is available in accredited Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) training posts throughout Australia in urban, remote, and regional settings. Special registrar salary funding arrangements are available to support these posts.

These posts may be accredited for any core general practice/primary rural and remote training term and in some cases are also accredited as advanced rural skills/advanced specialised training posts.

Registrars are able to temporarily transfer between RTPs to undertake training in AMS posts if appropriate experience is not available in their region.

# 04

## Flexible Aspects of Training

### Part-time training

It is possible to undertake AGPT training on a part-time basis. Further information specific to RACGP and ACRRM regarding flexible training arrangements is available at the respective college websites. Details regarding part-time training can also be found on the AGPT website in the 'Policies' section  
<http://www.agpt.com.au/PoliciesPublications/RecentPolicyChanges/>.

### Leave from training

Details of leave available to registrars are set out on the AGPT website in the 'Policies' section.

### Transfers

Details of eligibility for transfer are set out on the AGPT website in the 'Policies' section.

### Academic GP registrar posts

Academic general practice registrar positions enable registrars to gain training experience in an academic environment, contribute to the development of teaching and research in general practice, and improve the academic status of general practice.

Eligibility requirements, application dates and selection processes for academic posts are detailed on the AGPT website under 'Academic Training' in the 'Training Posts' section.

More information can be sought from RTPs or the Registrar Research and Development Officer (RRADO) at [rrado@gpet.com.au](mailto:rrado@gpet.com.au).

# 05

## Australian Defence Force Registrars

Australian Defence Force (ADF) registrars are required to meet the same general educational requirements as other registrars enrolled in training. ADF registrars are required to undertake a period of full-time civilian general practice training. Other training can be undertaken in a combination of civilian and military posts. Some exceptions do apply. Details are available on the AGPT website in the 'Policies' section.

Because of the service demands on ADF registrars, it is recommended that where possible they undertake a full-time civilian core general practice or primary rural and remote unit during their post-intern year (some exceptions do apply for ACCRM). Ideally, to meet the general service requirements placed on ADF registrars both in Australia and overseas, this unit would be in a rural setting to allow the registrar more exposure to rural general practice and the differing responsibilities that such practice entails.

Rural training presents the opportunity to be exposed to and learn the range of responsibilities, decision-making, leadership, autonomy, teamwork, and coordination skills that are fundamental in rural general practice. In addition, it provides opportunities to learn procedural skills commonly utilised in a rural setting that relate to procedural skills required for ADF deployments both within Australia and overseas.

As well as the normal leave entitlements available to all other registrars, ADF registrars are permitted to take discretionary leave while they undertake required ADF service that cannot otherwise be accredited towards training time.

ADF registrars deployed overseas, or within Australia, may apply in advance (when possible) to have all, or some, of their deployed medical experience approved as training time. This should be discussed with the responsible regional training provider/senior medical educator in the first instance.

For more information regarding general practice training in the ADF, contact:

Commander Nicole Curtis, RAN  
Staff Officer Medical Officers  
Directorate of Strategic Workforce Development  
Joint Health Command  
CP2-7-045A, Campbell Park Offices, ACT 2600  
Tel: (02) 6266 4176  
Email: nicole.curtis@defence.gov.au

# 06

## Educational Support and Resources

### Regional training providers

A variety of teaching and administrative staff are employed by regional training providers (RTPs) to ensure that the range of training needs and individual learning styles of registrars are met. In terms of in-practice general practice training, the principal providers of education are the GP supervisors who are supported by their RTP.

The Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program provides medical education using experienced GPs in the primary role of GP supervisors and mentors as well as medical educators.

The focus on regions in the AGPT program enables a variety of educational providers at differing levels of medical education to deliver education that meets the needs of local communities and responds to regional priorities in health care. Regional training providers are often able to articulate their activities with university Rural Clinical Schools, for instance, and with local divisions of general practice. Regionalised vocational training thus intensifies the richness of the educational experience available to the GP registrar, and maximises the availability of educational resources in the region.

### Registrar liaison officers and supervisor liaison officers

Regional training providers employ registrar liaison officers (RLOs) and supervisor liaison officers (SLOs). The liaison officers provide support and advice to registrars and supervisors on a wide range of issues related to training and education. They also help to address any issues or problems that registrars or supervisors wish to bring to the attention of the training provider.

GPET funds a network for RLOs (RLO Network) and a network for SLOs (GPSLO Network) to enable them to share information and meet regularly to provide professional development support to assist them in their roles. GPET also funds medical educators to get together regularly (Australian Medical Educators Network),

share ideas and work on common goals to enhance the training provided to registrars through the AGPT program.

## Training advisers

To assist registrars in developing their planned learning activities, experienced GPs, usually medical educators, are appointed in each region to act as training advisers. They help registrars to develop learning goals and plans to suit individual needs. They also advise on appropriate learning experience, review registrar performance and provide career and general counselling.

## Other personnel

A variety of personnel with specific and detailed experience in their particular fields are employed by RTPs to augment the educational activities. They include cultural mentors, other GPs, consultants and specialist general practitioners.

## Medical educators

Each RTP has a staff of medical educators, or access to medical educators, who are experienced GPs with educational experience. Their role is to help registrars to achieve the stated learning objectives of training. As experienced and practising GPs they have a unique mix of educational experience and practical knowledge and experience in the general practice environment.

Medical educators liaise with GP supervisors, organise and conduct external education activities, provide both advice and support to registrars and teacher training, and support for GP supervisors and mentors. They also undertake a number of other activities, such as acting as training advisers to individual registrars and, where undertaken, performing external clinical teaching visits.

# 07

## Support Organisations

### General Practice Registrars Australia

General Practice Registrars Australia Ltd (GPRA) is the peak national representative body for GP registrars. Since the inception of general practice vocational training in 1974, GP registrar representation has played an integral role in maintaining educational relevance and standards. GPRA provides essential feedback on registrar issues to relevant stakeholders and represents future GPs.

Visit GPRA at [www.gpra.org.au](http://www.gpra.org.au)

#### The Objectives

The main objectives of GPRA are:

- › To promote the profession of general practice in Australia
- › To recognise and support the needs of general practice registrars in Australia
- › To strive for the unification of the profession of general practice, with the goal of ensuring a strong future for general practice
- › To strive for excellence in general practice education and training, thereby ensuring improved health care outcomes for the Australian community
- › To be involved in the GP training program environment at all levels.

GPRA is an organisation run for registrars by registrars that provides quality representation on educational and policy issues to the Commonwealth Government, GPET, RTPs, and GP stakeholder organisations (e.g. divisions of general practice, ACRRM, AMA, RACGP, and RDAA). GPRA produces a number of educational and professional resources for GP registrars, including a series of publications, several events and regular newsletters to optimise registrars' training experience. In particular GPRA performs the function of the industrial body for GP registrars and negotiates the *National Minimum Terms & Conditions for GPT 1 & GPT 2 Term Registrars* with the National GP Supervisors Association, which governs the minimum conditions of employment for registrars.

## How GPRA works

GPRA has an eight-member board and a management unit that continually strive to provide enhanced support and services to GPRA members. The GPRA Board directors are elected from GPRA's membership at an annual general meeting each August. The board relies on the GPRA Advisory Council to inform GPRA policy, positions and representation to stakeholders. GPRA provides an excellent training ground for general practice registrars in committee work, representation and leadership.

Each RTP employs one or more registrar liaison officers (RLO), who provide support to registrars and facilitates registrar input into the program. The RLOs from each RTP, and registrar representatives on other national organisations such as RACGP, GPET, ACRRM and the AMA, constitute the GPRA Advisory Council.

If registrars have any concerns during their training which require advocacy and support then they are encouraged to contact GPRA, either directly or via their RLO, by email at [enquiries@gpra.org.au](mailto:enquiries@gpra.org.au) or phone at 1300 131 198.

The GPRA Advisory Council meets face-to-face two to three times a year and communicates daily via an electronic list-server, thus forming an Australia-wide network from which to source solutions to local and national training issues. This continuous evaluation and feedback greatly enhances the quality of GP training, and RLOs in each region are given a unique opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of training issues and provide on the ground support to registrars.

## National GP Supervisors Association and supervisor liaison officers

The National General Practice Supervisors Association (NGPSA) is the formal peak body representing the views and communicating the issues related to GP supervisors and supervisor liaison officers (SLOs). It is independent of both GP Colleges.

Each regional training provider appoints a GP supervisor liaison officer (GPSLO) who can deal directly with the NGPSA. The GPSLOs meet twice per year with additional teleconference link-ups as required. The GPSLO's role is to act as a local reference person for GP supervisors' issues of concern, for support, and to encourage development of the significant role of the supervisor in the registrar's educational experience.

GPET funds the NGPSA to facilitate several face-to-face meetings between both parties each year, keeping the lines of communication open and productive. Secretarial support for NGPSA is kindly provided by the RACGP.

# 08

## Remuneration During Training

During hospital training time, registrars are paid according to the appropriate awards for junior medical officers.

During the first 12 months of community-based training registrars are employed by practices and the terms and conditions of employment are outlined in a document entitled *National Minimum Terms & Conditions for GPT 1 & GPT 2 Term Registrars*. This document is available on the GPRA website at [www.gpra.org.au/tnc.php](http://www.gpra.org.au/tnc.php) and has been developed by collaboration between the GPRA, NGPSA and the Australian Medical Association. The document will be reviewed and the salaries indexed towards the end of the year. A new version should be available from December 2009.

Beyond the first 12 months of community-based training, GP registrars negotiate their own terms and conditions as part of the transition towards becoming independent practitioners. GPRA recommends that registrars remain as employees for the duration of the training period. If registrars intend to work as independent contractors they must get appropriate financial advice as well as advice from the Australian Tax Office to ensure that they are not breaching any statutory laws.

While registrars are responsible for negotiating their own terms and conditions, registrars who feel they need assistance should seek advice from registrar liaison officers, their regional medical educators, or regional coordinators before approaching practices. GPRA also provides advice to assist registrars in negotiating their contracts.

# 09

## Australian Government Requirements

### Medicare access during training

Registrars are able to access the GP items in the Medicare Benefits Schedule for the period and at the location of their approved training placements. For this to be achieved, documentation defining the placement as an approved placement must be lodged by the registrar via the regional training provider (RTP) before taking up a training position. The completed paperwork must be sent to the RTP at least six weeks before the commencement of the unit of training.

Without this process being duly undertaken, access to Medicare is not possible. Particular attention needs to be focused on correctly recording the dates of the placements, as extensions to these dates (including any variations to the approved period) require notification to Medicare Australia. Medicare Australia cannot and will not backdate applications which are received after the commencement of a placement (the commencement date cannot be a date earlier than the date Medicare Australia receives the placement advice from GPET). Registrars are responsible for the timely and correct submission of this information. The 'Application for a General Practice Registrar Placement' form is available on the AGPT website <http://www.agpt.com.au/Registrars/GeneralInformation/> under 'Application Forms'.

GPET will, in accordance with arrangements with Medicare Australia, forward the application form to Medicare Australia for new registrars prior to registrars taking up their units of training. Medicare Australia will register the placement and advise the registrar in writing of the provider number, location details and the period of eligibility associated with the approved placement.

Registrars who want to continue accessing Medicare benefits whilst awaiting examination results and fellowship must ensure their current placement/s is renewed prior to the expiry date to prevent loss of Medicare access. Registrars must make the application for extension of their placement to GPET (via their RTP) who will then forward the placement to Medicare for processing.

For more detailed information read the second page of the 'Application for a General Practice Registrar Placement' form, which provides *Important information regarding Applications for General Practice Registrar Placements*.

## 19AB exemptions for overseas trained doctors and former overseas medical students

Registrars who are:

- › overseas trained doctors (primary medical qualification obtained overseas)

OR

- › former overseas medical students (primary medical qualification was obtained in Australia and a temporary resident when first enrolled in medical school in Australia)

AND

- › were first registered with an Australian state or territory medical board on or after 1 January 1997
- › are subject to section 19AB of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (the Act) for a minimum period of ten years. Therefore these registrars require an exemption from a Department of Health and Ageing (DHA) delegate in order to access Medicare benefits during this time.

These exemptions are generally granted where a doctor is working in a district of workforce shortage (as defined by DHA) and are time and location specific. The exemptions are commonly known as 19AB exemptions.

Registrars undertaking the rural pathway are granted exemption where training occurs in RRMA3+ (before 1 July 2010) or RA2+ (after 1 July 2010).

Registrars subject to section 19AB of the Act must ensure they have a 19AB exemption approved by DHA for every GPET approved placement.

The responsibility to obtain a valid 19AB exemption and/or renewal of a 19AB exemption prior to commencing training in an approved placement rests with the registrar. An application for a 19AB exemption or an application to renew a 19AB exemption should be received by Medicare Australia at least 28 days prior to the expiry date of the current exemption because DHA cannot backdate a 19AB exemption.

When a medical practitioner applies for a provider number, and a section 19AB exemption is required, Medicare Australia applies to DHA, on the doctors' behalf, for such an exemption.

## Required rural training

It is a condition of entry to AGPT that general pathway registrars will commit to undertake 12 months of their training in a general practice placement in a rural and/or outer metropolitan location, and rural pathway registrars commit to undertake all of their general practice and primary rural and remote training in a rural location.

This requirement is advertised in advance to applicants and each RTP determines the time periods and units of training during which enrolled registrars will undertake their rural placements.

Urban RTPs have developed arrangements with rural RTPs for these placements. Registrars can be assured that the quality and standards of training are consistent across training regardless of location. It is the rural locations which provide the additional training and skills that are required in rural areas, and generally these are over and above those available in urban locations. Registrars who have sought and been granted part-time training and who have enrolled as part-time registrars are permitted to complete their required rural training in a six-month period part-time. They may not undertake any other general practice work in urban areas during this period of part-time rural training. The intent for part-time registrars is that all of their available working time will be spent in rural locations to satisfy the rural requirement.

# 10

## Appendix 1 – Contacts

### Regional Training Providers (by state/territory)

This information is correct as at the publication date of this document.

#### NSW/ACT

##### Bogong Regional Training Network

Wodonga, VIC (covers a part of southern NSW)

Tel: (02) 6057 8600

Email: [bogong@bogong.org.au](mailto:bogong@bogong.org.au)

Website: [www.bogong.org.au](http://www.bogong.org.au)

##### CoastCityCountry Training

Wagga Wagga NSW

Tel: (02) 6923 5400

Email: [cccadmin@bigpond.com](mailto:cccadmin@bigpond.com)

Website: [www.ccctraining.org](http://www.ccctraining.org)

##### General Practice Training – Valley to Coast

Mayfield NSW

Tel: (02) 4968 6753

Email: [gptraining@gpvtvc.com.au](mailto:gptraining@gpvtvc.com.au)

Website: [www.gpvtvc.com.au](http://www.gpvtvc.com.au)

##### GPlogic

*NB: from 4 January 2010 regional training providers GPlogic and Victoria Felix Medical Education will be merging into one organisation. For updated contact information post 4 January 2010 please visit <http://www.agpt.com.au/TrainingProviders/TrainingProviderLinks/>*

Bathurst NSW

Tel: (02) 6334 4359

Email: [info@gplogic.com.au](mailto:info@gplogic.com.au)

Website: [www.gplogic.com.au](http://www.gplogic.com.au)

## **GP Synergy Limited**

*NB: from 1 January 2010 the regional training programs of GP Synergy Limited and the Institute of General Practice Education Inc will merge and come under the administration of GP Synergy Limited. For updated information post 1 January 2010 please visit <http://www.agpt.com.au/TrainingProviders/TrainingProviderLinks/> or [www.gpsynergy.com.au](http://www.gpsynergy.com.au)*

Sydney and New England/North West Offices NSW

Tel: (02) 9818 4433 / (02) 6752 7354

Email: [info@gpsynergy.com.au](mailto:info@gpsynergy.com.au)

Website: [www.gpsynergy.com.au](http://www.gpsynergy.com.au)

## **Institute of General Practice Education Inc**

*NB: from 1 January 2010 the regional training programs of GP Synergy Limited and the Institute of General Practice Education Inc will merge and come under the administration of GP Synergy Limited. For updated information post 1 January 2010 please visit <http://www.agpt.com.au/TrainingProviders/TrainingProviderLinks/> or [www.gpsynergy.com.au](http://www.gpsynergy.com.au)*

Smithfield NSW

Tel: (02) 9756 5711

Email: [igpe@igpe.edu.au](mailto:igpe@igpe.edu.au)

Website: [www.igpe.edu.au](http://www.igpe.edu.au)

## **North Coast GP Training Limited**

Ballina NSW

Tel: (02) 6681 5711

Email: [info@ncgpt.org.au](mailto:info@ncgpt.org.au)

Website: [www.ncgpt.org.au](http://www.ncgpt.org.au)

## **WentWest Ltd**

Parramatta NSW

Tel: (02) 8833 8000

Email: [wentwest@wentwest.com.au](mailto:wentwest@wentwest.com.au)

Website: [www.wentwest.com.au](http://www.wentwest.com.au)

## **Northern Territory**

### **Northern Territory General Practice Education**

Casuarina NT

Tel: (08) 8946 7079

Email: [reception@ntgpe.org.au](mailto:reception@ntgpe.org.au)

Website: [www.ntgpe.org](http://www.ntgpe.org)

## **Queensland**

### **Central and Southern Qld Training Consortium**

Alderley QLD

Tel: (07) 3552 8100

Email: [csqtc@csqtc.qld.edu.au](mailto:csqtc@csqtc.qld.edu.au)

Website: [www.csqtc.qld.edu.au](http://www.csqtc.qld.edu.au)

## Rural and Regional Queensland Consortium

*NB: from 4 January 2010 Rural and Regional Queensland Consortium will be known as Queensland Rural Medical Education.*

Toowoomba QLD  
Tel: (07) 4638 7999  
Email: [info@rrqc.org.au](mailto:info@rrqc.org.au) (from 4 Jan 2010 – email: [info@qrme.org.au](mailto:info@qrme.org.au))  
Website: [www.rrqc.org.au](http://www.rrqc.org.au) (from 4 Jan 2010 – website: [www.qrme.org.au](http://www.qrme.org.au))

## Tropical Medical Training

Vincent QLD  
Tel: (07) 4729 5000  
Email: [enquiries@medicaltraining.com.au](mailto:enquiries@medicaltraining.com.au)  
Website: [www.medicaltraining.com.au](http://www.medicaltraining.com.au)

## South Australia

### Adelaide to Outback GP Training Program

North Adelaide SA  
Tel: (08) 8366 3100  
Email: [jane.jones@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:jane.jones@adelaide.edu.au)  
Website: [www.adelaidetooutback.com.au](http://www.adelaidetooutback.com.au)

### Greater Green Triangle GP Education & Training Inc

Warrnambool VIC (covers parts of both SA and VIC)  
Tel: (03) 5562 0051  
Email: [gmcmeel@ggtgpet.com.au](mailto:gmcmeel@ggtgpet.com.au)  
Website: [www.ggtgpet.com.au](http://www.ggtgpet.com.au)

### Sturt Fleurieu

Strathalbyn SA  
Tel: (08) 8536 5000  
Email: [sturt.fleurieu@sfgpet.com.au](mailto:sturt.fleurieu@sfgpet.com.au)  
Website: [www.sfgpet.com.au](http://www.sfgpet.com.au)

## Tasmania

### General Practice Training Tasmania Inc

New Town TAS  
Tel: (03) 6278 1551  
Email: [joanne.france@gpvt.com.au](mailto:joanne.france@gpvt.com.au)  
Website: [www.gpvt.com.au](http://www.gpvt.com.au)

## Victoria

### Bogong Regional Training Network

Wodonga VIC (covers part of southern NSW)  
Tel: (02) 6057 8600  
Email: [bogong@bogong.org.au](mailto:bogong@bogong.org.au)  
Website: [www.bogong.org.au](http://www.bogong.org.au)

### Gippsland Education and Training for General Practice (getGP)

Churchill VIC  
Tel: (03) 5132 3100  
Email: [admin@getgp.net.au](mailto:admin@getgp.net.au)  
Website: [www.getgp.net.au](http://www.getgp.net.au)

### Greater Green Triangle GP Education & Training Inc

Warrnambool VIC (covers parts of both SA and VIC)  
Tel: (03) 5562 0051  
Email: [gmcmeel@ggtgpet.com.au](mailto:gmcmeel@ggtgpet.com.au)  
Website: [www.ggtgpet.com.au](http://www.ggtgpet.com.au)

### Victoria Felix Medical Education

*NB: from 4 January 2010 regional training providers GPlogic and Victoria Felix Medical Education will be merging into one organisation. For updated contact information post 4 January 2010 please visit <http://www.agpt.com.au/TrainingProviders/TrainingProviderLinks/>*

Bendigo VIC  
Tel: (03) 5441 9300  
Email: [info@vicfelix.com.au](mailto:info@vicfelix.com.au)  
Website: [www.vicfelix.com.au](http://www.vicfelix.com.au)

### Victorian Metropolitan Alliance

Hawthorn VIC  
Tel: (03) 9822 1100  
Email: [sharon.butler@vma.com.au](mailto:sharon.butler@vma.com.au)  
Website: [www.vma.com.au](http://www.vma.com.au)

## Western Australia

### Western Australian General Practice Education and Training Ltd

Bentley WA  
Tel: (08) 9473 8200  
Email: [admin@wagpet.com.au](mailto:admin@wagpet.com.au)  
Website: [www.wagpet.com.au](http://www.wagpet.com.au)

## Other contacts

### Australian Defence Force Training

Commander Nicole Curtis, RAN  
Staff Officer Medical Officers  
Directorate of Strategic Workforce Development  
Joint Health Command  
CP2-7-045A, Campbell Park Offices, ACT 2600  
Tel: (02) 6266 4176  
Email: [nicole.curtis@defence.gov.au](mailto:nicole.curtis@defence.gov.au)

### General Practice Registrars Australia

Melbourne VIC  
Tel: 1300 131 198  
Email: [enquiries@gpra.org.au](mailto:enquiries@gpra.org.au)  
Website: [www.gpra.org.au](http://www.gpra.org.au)

### Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine

Brisbane QLD  
Tel: 1800 223 226 / (07) 3105 8200  
Email: [acrrm@acrrm.org.au](mailto:acrrm@acrrm.org.au)  
Website: [www.acrrm.org.au](http://www.acrrm.org.au)

### Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

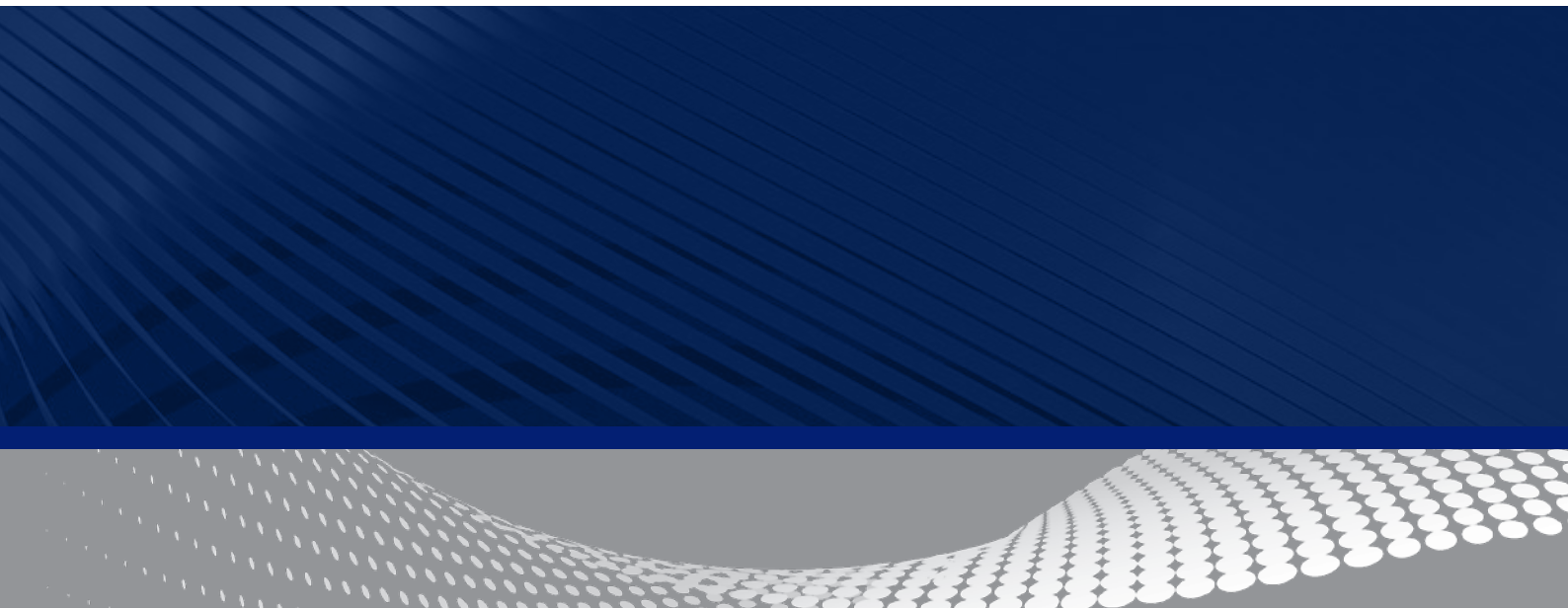
South Melbourne VIC  
Tel: 1800 331 626 / (03) 8699 0414  
Email: [racgp@racgp.org.au](mailto:racgp@racgp.org.au)  
Website: [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au)

RACGP State faculty offices are present in each state and can be contacted toll-free on 1800 626 901. The National Rural Faculty can be contacted toll-free on 1800 636 764.

# 11

## Glossary

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| ACRRM  | Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine                 |
| AGPT   | Australian General Practice Training program                    |
| FACRRM | Fellow of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine   |
| FARGP  | Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice                   |
| FRACGP | Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners |
| GPET   | General Practice Education and Training Limited                 |
| GPSN   | General Practice Students Network                               |
| GPRA   | General Practice Registrars Australia Limited                   |
| NGPSA  | National General Practice Supervisors Association               |
| RACGP  | Royal Australian College of General Practitioners               |
| RLO    | Registrar liaison officer                                       |
| RPL    | Recognition of prior learning                                   |
| RRADO  | Registrar research and development officer                      |
| SLO    | Supervisor liaison officer                                      |



[www.agpt.com.au](http://www.agpt.com.au)