

<b>Policy:</b>	Registrar Practice Allocation Policy
<b>Section:</b>	Registrar Administration
<b>Related policies or documents:</b>	RACGP standards; ACRRM Standards

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## 1. Principle

This policy addresses the rationale behind, and the process undertaken by NCGPT in matching registrars to accredited teaching practices. It is intended to ensure that NCGPT's processes are seen as fair, equitable and transparent to both registrars and training practices.

In developing this policy, NCGPT has taken into consideration both Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for General Practice Education and Training (Programs and Providers) 2005. In particular, Standard P26 from the RACGP which states that:

*"The general practice training provider must ensure that registrars are supported in securing at least two different general practice placements of high quality during their training."*

## 2. Policy

NCGPT has established an extensive network of accredited training practices across the region. A list of current NCGPT training practices is available on the NCGPT website. Each of these practices is required to demonstrate a strong commitment to education and training and must meet rigorous accreditation requirements established by the RACGP and/or ACRRM.

At NCGPT, registrars are not required to organise their own training terms or find training practices and organise their own training terms. In order to maximise our registrars' educational experience, NCGPT's medical educators allocate or "match" registrars to appropriate training practices each term. A range of considerations guide the allocation decisions and these are listed in section 4 of this Policy.

For the purposes of NCGPT's allocation policy and processes the RACGP's Standard P26 will be applied to all registrars. See Note 1 below for further information about the Standard and its application. While NCGPT endeavours to meet all requests for continuation of training placements, due to training practice capacity it may be necessary for a registrar to move practices at NCGPT's request.

NCGPT have developed a Fact Sheet for GP registrars moving between practices, which is provided to registrars when changing training practices.

NCGPT's allocation process aims to ensure that registrars are able to remain in their chosen geographical location throughout their training. Every effort is made to organise practice allocations that are within a reasonable commutable distance from a registrar's home. This is based on the requirement for NCGPT registrars to live within NCGPT's training region while undertaking their training as this provides an opportunity for the registrar to become part of their rural community.

To ensure registrars gain a full rural experience, where possible registrars on the Rural Pathway will be allocated to at least one term in an outer rural area within their preferred locality.

Many of our training practices have VMO rights at their local hospital. Where this is the case registrars will be expected to participate in the practice's VMO roster. NCGPT registrars can expect to be placed in a practice with VMO rights for at least one term during their training.

NCGPT's training program relies on the dedication and commitment of our network of experienced GP supervisors and training practices. To assist training practices to plan for and manage their patient loads every effort is made to ensure consistency in the allocation of registrars to the practices.

To enable NCGPT to efficiently manage the allocation process registrars are discouraged from organising potential training terms directly with our training practices. Training practices are aware of this policy and are encouraged to direct any enquiries from registrars (including registrars from other RTPs seeking to arrange a mandatory rural term) back to NCGPT for allocation.

Although registrars and practices are "matched" through the process described below, this does not remove each registrar's ability to negotiate the specific terms and conditions of their employment. Training practices are encouraged to negotiate terms and conditions that are agreeable to both the practice and the registrar. The National Minimum Terms and Conditions for GPT1 and GPT2 registrars establish the framework for registrar employment contracts.

Once a practice allocation has been made, registrars are given the opportunity to interview with the practice to ensure the allocation is acceptable to both the registrar and the practice. If registrars have concerns about a practice allocation they are strongly encouraged to contact NCGPT's Registrar Support Officer to discuss their concerns and, if appropriate, seek an alternative placement.

### **3. Practice Allocation Process**

The practice allocation process is conducted twice each year, beginning in approximately September for Term 1 and March for Term 2.

The allocation process is overseen by NCGPT's Director of Training and involves the Registrar Support Officer, Local Medical Educators and, where possible also involves NCGPT RLOs and SLO.

It is important to note that, at all times, the personal and educational needs of each registrar are paramount in our decision-making in relation to practice allocations.

When matching registrars to training practices, the following considerations are taken into account:

- Each registrar's requested preference for training node and/or specific geographical location;
- The location of the registrar's existing support networks including family, social and professional networks;
- Any special or additional educational support required by the registrar;
- The level of experience and clinical skills achieved by the registrar;
- Any special educational interests indicated by the registrar;

- The training term (e.g. GPT1, GPT2, GPT3 etc) achieved by the registrar;
- The accreditation level of the training practice e.g. Level 1 (can accept registrars in GPT1 (Basic), GPT2 (Advanced) and GPT3 (Subsequent) terms or Level 2 (can only accept registrars in their GPT3 terms);
- The special interests and the level of experience of the GP supervisors at the training practice;
- The capacity of the training practice to host the registrar. This includes availability of appropriately accredited GP supervisors and/or physical space within the practice;
- Any special requests or circumstances indicated by the registrar that need to be accommodated e.g. full time or part time training;
- The registrar's requirement to move during their training period ie. RACGP training standard P26 (see Note 1 below);
- Whenever possible, Practices accommodating multiple registrars will have at least one GPT1 registrar then another allocation if capacity allows;
- If a registrar requires to be placed in an ACRRM accredited practice;
- The practice preferences and needs are met i.e. male or female, full time or part time etc.

**Note 1: RACGP Standard P.26 Requiring a Minimum of Two GP Placements during training**

Standard P.26 of the RACGP's Standards for GP Education and Training (Programs and Providers 2005) states:

*"The general practice training provider must ensure that registrars are supported in securing at least two different general practice placements of high quality during their training."*

As an accredited training provider under the RACGP's Standards, NCGPT must ensure we, and our registrars, comply with the requirements of Standard P26. Although we acknowledge that moving practices can be unsettling for registrars at any time, our experience shows that the best time to implement the requirement to move practices is after a registrars' GPT1 (Basic) term or GPT2 (advanced) term.

If a registrar does not take the option to move practices at the end of their GPT1 term, NCGPT will assign a move for them at the end of their GPT2 term.

**4. Exemption from this policy**

Exemptions to this policy will only be granted for exceptional circumstances. Registrars seeking an exemption must make their request in writing to the Director of Training.

Exemption to RACGP Standard P.26 is at the discretion of the RACGP state censor and requires written application.

## Fact Sheet

### Advice to GP registrars moving between practices

In accordance with the RACGP training standards and NCGPT policy, all registrars are required to move between practices at least once during their training. The opportunity to work in and experience a variety of training practices is an integral part of the training program. Each practice is unique and will offer registrars an insight into different patient profiles, the special interests of the GPs as well as different teaching styles and business models.

If you move between practices within the same, or nearby, town inevitably some of the patients you have been treating at your current practice will want to follow you to your next practice. These are some guidelines about how to negotiate these situations in an ethical manner.

- i. Out of respect for your current host practice, it is important that you do not, in any way, encourage or solicit patients to follow you to your next practice;
- ii. If patients ask you where you will be moving to, tell them truthfully and leave it at that;
- iii. If they ask you if they could or should follow you to your new practice, advise them that it is their choice which practice they attend and which doctor they see. However, it is best to reassure them that they will be able to see another doctor in the current practice where they are known and that you will ensure that whichever doctor takes over their care (should they decide to stay) is fully informed about their medical history or issues in order to facilitate their continuity of care;
- iv. If the patient is fairly sure that they would prefer to follow you to the new practice, advise them to visit that new practice themselves first in order to see what it's like and to pick up a practice brochure. Also, encourage them to ask questions in order to find out about the practice and to make sure it's what they want.
- v. If they decide to change practices, advise them that they will need to formally request that their file be transferred to the new practice in order to facilitate their continuity of care

NCGPT's registrar training program relies on the continued commitment of all of our training practices and we have found over time that registrars moving between practices in the same town, if not managed sensitively and responsibly, can cause tension between local practices. As a registrar on our training program we ask that you remain mindful of the sensitivities surrounding this issue and follow the guidelines above when moving between practices.

Questions about the above guidelines can be directed to NCGPT's Registrar Liaison Officers or our Registrar Support Officer.