

General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group

Terms of Reference

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Preamble

General practice accreditation is voluntary in Australia and is designed to support implementation of processes and systems to improve the quality of care for patients attending accredited general practices. Accreditation is a key criterion for access to financial incentives via the Department of Health's (the Department) Practice Incentives Program (PIP).

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) develops the *Standards for General Practices* against which practices are assessed for accreditation. The Standards seek to provide a *'framework for the continuing development of well performing practices teams to enable them to focus on quality care and risk management'*. The Standards focus on practice processes aimed at supporting quality care and not direct clinical care.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) was established as a permanent agency on 1 July 2011 and its functions are set out in Section 9 of the *National Health Reform Act 2011* which include the development and coordination of national models of accreditation.

The National General Practice Accreditation Scheme (Scheme) was endorsed for implementation in May 2016. The Scheme provides support for the consistent assessment of Australian general practices against the RACGP Standards for general practices. The Commission, in collaboration with the RACGP, developed the Scheme, which commenced on 1 January 2017.

The National General Practice Accreditation Scheme includes:

1. an industry-based stakeholder committee to provide governance and oversight of the Scheme
2. an approval process for accrediting agencies to assessing general practices against the RACGP Standards for general practices
3. a data collection and reporting framework for accrediting agencies that requires the submission of de-identified accreditation outcomes.

Role of the working group

The General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group will assist the Commission, the RACGP and the General Practice Accreditation Coordinating Committee (the Coordinating Committee) to implement, monitor and evaluate accreditation processes under the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme.

The General Practice Accrediting Agency Working Group is an essential component of the implementation process and will:

- Identify, prioritise and provide feedback on issues relating to the implementation of the Scheme and/or the assessment of general practices against the RACGP Standards
- Discuss solutions and provide advice on possible options for addressing identified issues
- Work collaboratively with the Commission, the RACGP, the Coordinating Committee and other accrediting agencies to resolve and/or progress these issues
- Assist in the interpretation of data and information generated by the assessment of general practices
- Provide information and advice to their clients and other relevant organisations that is consistent with the Commission's, RACGP's and Coordinating Committee's position.

Function of the working group

The General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group will undertake the following functions:

- Identify key issues of concern for accrediting agencies and/or their clients relating to the implementation of the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme or the assessment of the RACGP Standards
- Identify, discuss and recommend actions that accrediting agencies can take to progress these issue
- Suggest actions for the Commission, the RACGP and/or the Coordinating Committee to progress issues, where relevant
- Work collaboratively with the Commission, the RACGP, the Coordinating Committee other approved accrediting agencies to implement agreed actions, processes and/or solutions
- Provide information sought by the Commission and/or the Coordinating Committee in a timely way.

General principles

The General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group represents accrediting agencies approved to assess general practices to the RACGP Standards.

Membership will be determined by representative nominations from approved accrediting agencies.

The Chair will be nominated by the Commission. The Commission will also provide secretariat support to the General Practice Accreditation Working Group.

The General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group is established as a time limited committee of the Commission.

Members of the General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group are appointed for two years, at which point an evaluation of the General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group will occur and recommendations of its future made to the Coordinating Committee and the Commission.

Feedback from the General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group meeting will be tabled at next scheduled Coordinating Committee meeting.

Key Responsibilities of the working group

The Chair

The Chair will be the Commission's Program Director, National Standards. The Chair has responsibility for:

- Providing leadership on matters relating to the work of the working group
- Providing the communication link between the General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group, the Coordinating Committee, the RACGP and other relevant organisations.

If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, a Senior Project Officer from the National Standards team will chair the meeting.

Members

Members of the working group are:

- Representatives of currently approved accrediting agencies assessing general practices
- nominated by their organisation based on their role, skills and expertise
- Appointed by the Commission for a period of two years or until their resign from their position, whichever comes first

- Required to participate actively in all meetings and share their opinions and views on the matters being discussed.

Meetings

Frequency and Location

Meetings will be held approximately quarterly. Meetings will predominately be held via teleconference with the option of one face to face meeting scheduled annually, if required. Additional meetings may be added at the request of members and with the agreement of the Commission. Face to face meetings will be held at the Commission's office in Sydney.

A schedule of meetings will be agreed with members annually.

Agenda

Members will have the opportunity to contribute to the agenda through an agenda nomination process. Items must be within the scope of the General Practice Accreditation Working Group's Terms of Reference and will be signed off by the Chair.

The Commission will be responsible for issuing the agenda, related paperwork and for providing secretariat support services to the working group.

Proxies

Members may nominate proxies who can participate, whenever necessary.

Members shall make every effort to attend meetings. When members are unable to attend meetings, only their nominated proxy shall attend in their absence.

Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a majority of members.

Travel and Accommodation

Travel, accommodation and related expenses for eligible members will be met by the Commission. Payment will be in line with the Commission's policy: *Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement Policy for Commission Committees*.

Correspondence

The preparation and filing of all General Practice Accreditation Working Group correspondence shall be the responsibility of the Commission.

All correspondence relating to the General Practice Accreditation Working Group shall be stored electronically at the Commission.

Record Keeping

The maintenance of an electronic record and filing of all working group documentation shall be the responsibility of the Commission.

All documents relating to the working group shall be stored electronically by the Commission in line with public servant archiving requirements.

Nomination of Members

Approved accrediting agencies will be invited to nominate a person with relevant skills, experience and interest in the implementation of the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme and the assessment of standards for general practices, to join the General Practice Accreditation Working Group.

The Commission will maintain a register of current and past members nominated by accrediting agencies who participate on the General Practice Accrediting Agencies Working Group.