



# First Nations General Practice Training Committee

## Communique – 21 June 2024

The First Nations General Practice Training Committee (the Committee) met virtually on 21 June 2024. The meeting was chaired by Dr Dawn Casey and Dr Tim Senior.

In this second meeting, the Committee focussed much of its discussion on options to best utilise the [Australian General Practice Training](#) (AGPT) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Salary Support Program to support GP trainees working in First Nations health settings.

The Committee noted that the Salary Support Program was established under the AGPT program as a part of the [Nationally Consistent Payment Framework](#). The Committee recognised that there are other Commonwealth-funded fellowship training programs, such as the [Rural Generalist Training Scheme](#) (RGTS), where registrars are not able to access the Salary Support Program. The Committee welcomed news that arrangements had been put in place for 2024 and 2025 to enable similar payments to be made to RGTS registrars, and noted the importance of equity among different Commonwealth funded training pathways. This would allow First Nations Health settings to have more options and ensures registrars will not be at a disadvantage because of their pathway choice.

The Committee discussed other options to reform the Salary Support Program and requested further work to better understand implications of any other changes. This includes more data modelling and a better understanding of unintended consequences of any policy improvements being proposed. These may include but are not limited to areas such as: supervisor support, cultural education and mentoring, hourly base rate tiers, and other program flexibility opportunities.

The Cultural Educators and Cultural Mentors Network (CECMN) presented on its four priority areas of support, advocacy, networking and training, in GP training pathways. The CECMN Chair, Professor Marlene Drysdale, explained the difference between cultural education and cultural mentoring. Education is through formal sessions, provided by those with an education background. Mentoring is an ongoing activity with local community members especially elders, sharing local community knowledge in which the registrar is operating. The Committee found the presentation and discussion valuable.

Additionally, the Committee considered its consultation plan. Consultation and collaboration are part of the FNGPTC's Terms of Reference. The plan draws on consultation intrinsic to the Committee's functions. The two-year plan ensures the Committee engages with a broader group of stakeholders and fora to understand issues and implications for any proposed changes to the Salary Support Program policy. The Plan has four phases – two main consultation stages followed by two analysis and reporting periods.

The Committee is scheduled to meet again in September 2024.

More information can be found at [First Nations General Practice Training Committee](#)