

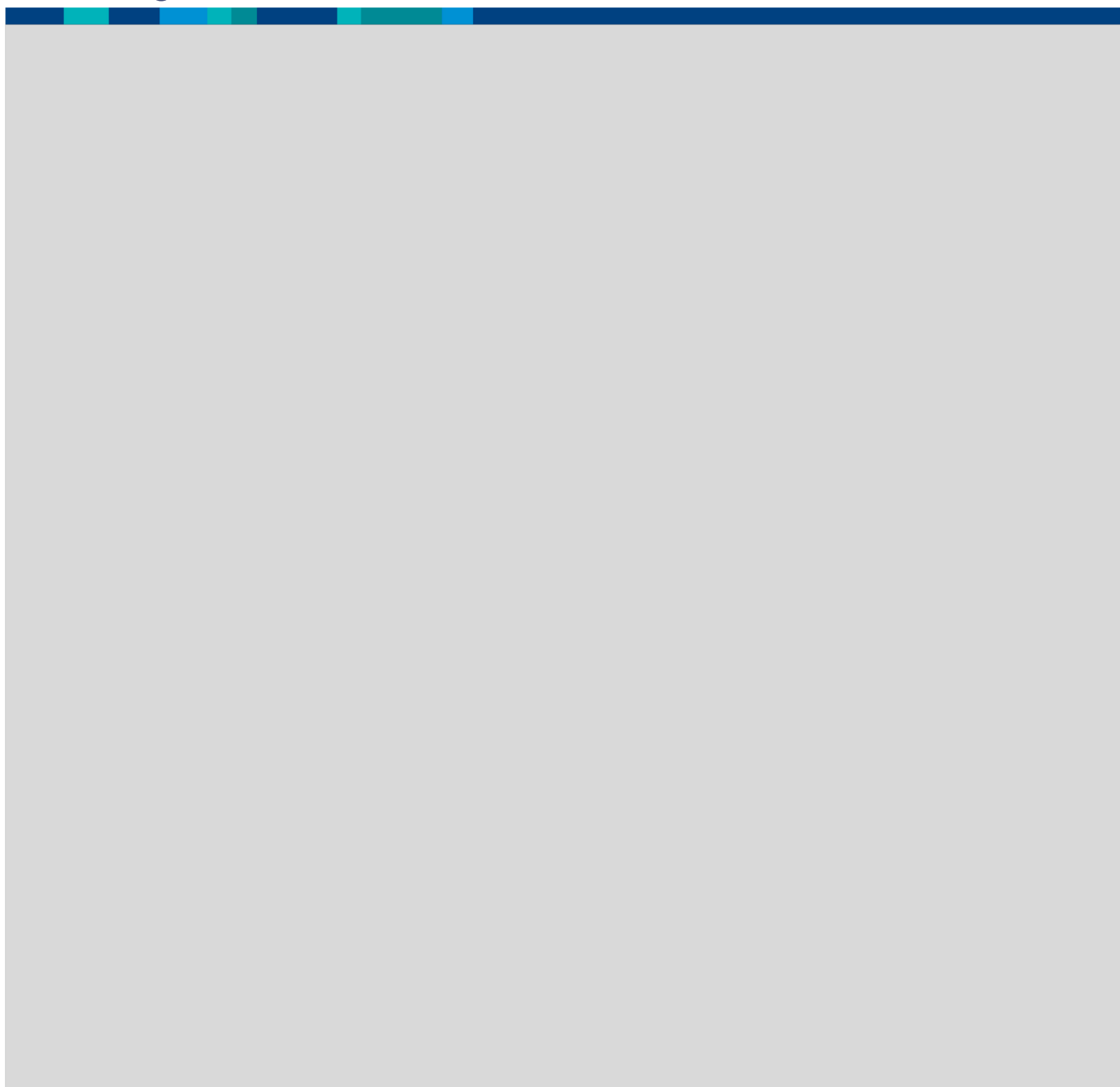


Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

National Consistent Payments

Guidelines for supervisors, practices and registrars



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Objectives

This Guidelines document provides guidance to registrars, supervisors and practices.

The Guidelines will assist all AGPT participants, including supervisors, practices and registrars, to understand the eligibility criteria, the process of determining and delivering the basic support payments, and the process of accessing the flexible payment pool.

Overview

The AGPT program is a three-to-four-year general practice training program that provides entry to up to 1,500 medical practitioners per year.

In 2023, the AGPT program will transition to the general practice (GP) colleges (the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, (ACRRM)). Nationally Consistent Payments (NCP) across the AGPT will be implemented from Semester 1 2023.

The NCP framework and Guidelines provide information on how GP supervisors, practices and registrars will receive support payments. These support payments aim to:

- support and encourage GP supervisors, practices and registrars to participate in GP training and deliver GP services; and
- provide transparency of the support provided to training participants in the AGPT program, particularly in regions where there are difficulties in attracting and retaining GPs.

The NCP Guidelines may be amended at any time by Health in consultation with the RACGP and the ACRRM. The NCP Guidelines, fact sheets, and questions and answers on support payments for supervisors, practices and registrars, including all information on the College-Led AGPT program, will be available publicly on the Health website.

Services Australia will administer the payments to all AGPT program participants on behalf of Health.

Participants – College-Led AGPT Program

The NCP Guidelines (the Guidelines) provide additional information on how the NCP framework operates and how the payments will be calculated and made, including in unusual or complex payment circumstances.

The Guidelines provide additional guidance to:

- Supervisors – support payments are made to the practice unless directed by the practice to make payment to the supervisor;
- Practices – support payments are made directly to eligible practices that have been accredited and contracted by the RACGP and/or the ACRRM to train a registrar and are hosting registrars; and
- Registrars – support payments are made to eligible registrars in training under the College-Led AGPT program.

Geography based support payments

The AGPT program support payments to registrars and supervisors are tiered according to the Modified Monash Model (MMM) classification of the location of training.

The RACGP and the ACRRM will provide payment instructions to Services Australia to make payments based on training placements agreed to by supervisors, practices and registrars. Payment levels will be adjusted by the colleges based on the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) training to be undertaken by registrars.

Eligibility Requirements Across Geographical Locations

All eligible supervisors, practices and registrars who are currently participating in the AGPT program with the RTOs will automatically transition to the College-Led AGPT program starting from Semester 1, 2023.

The College-Led AGPT program will provide payments tiered according to MMM to target financial support more effectively and provide greater clarity for supervisors, practices and registrars in regional, rural and remote locations.

The number of payments and amount of funding for each of the eligible AGPT program participants (supervisors, practices and registrars) receive depends on the:

- MMM training location;
- training term in which the participant is engaged;
- (for supervisors and practices) hours each eligible participant is involved in training each week / term (1.0 FTE is equivalent to 38 hours per week and 26 FTE weeks per term (GPT1/GPT2/GPT3)); and
- terms and conditions of payments within the scope of the NCP framework and requirements.

Withdrawal from AGPT program

Eligible AGPT program participants, including supervisors, practices and registrars, should advise the relevant college that they are considering withdrawing from the AGPT program. In the case of circumstances that could lead to a participant being withdrawn from the AGPT program after the commencement of training, the relevant college should be advised by the participant ahead of withdrawal occurring.

Consistent with college eligibility requirements, registrars who plan to start the AGPT program but do not proceed with a placement will not be paid. Registrars who terminate their training in the AGPT program during a placement with a GP practice will not be required to return the support payments received during the period of their training.

Payments to eligible AGPT participants – Semester 1, January 2023

Health, Services Australia and the colleges (RACGP and ACRRM) are working closely together to ensure that those eligible participants who are continuing and/or starting their training term in January 2023 will be paid in accordance with the NCP framework at the start of their Semester 1 training term.

Further instructions will be provided in due course for those regions that commence Semester 1, 2023 in January 2023.

Calculation Of FTE Hours and Rural/Remote Loading Payments

The RACGP and the ACRRM will calculate and determine the appropriate FTE hours for all AGPT program participants to support the training and payment requirements. This is consistent with the GP training colleges' role in setting standards for training and determining FTE training hours to obtain college fellowship.

The RACGP and the ACRRM will provide payment data for each of the AGPT program participants (supervisors, practices and registrars) to Health and Services Australia.

Payments Processing and Application Programming Interface

Services Australia will build an Application Programming Interface (API) that will allow college systems to communicate directly with Services Australia systems.

The two key operations of the API will be:

- the RACGP and the ACRRM submitting payment requests; and
- both colleges enquiring on the status of submitted payment requests.

Bank Account Details

For payment processing, the bank account details will be held within Services Australia systems as part of recipient registration. Payment requests may remain in a pending state if bank account details are not currently available for the recipient at the time of a payment run.

Payment Calculation and Maximum Payment Amounts

The FTE training hours will be used by the RACGP and the ACRRM to calculate the maximum payment amounts which will be received by AGPT program participants across each MMM geographic classification and at each training year level.

Consistent with the NCP framework and payments model, the colleges (RACGP and ACRRM) will provide the payments data to Services Australia for processing and prior to making payments, as applicable.

Any changes or amendments to the payments data will be communicated by the RACGP and the ACRRM to Services Australia. This will allow the colleges to reconcile payment data for checking and quality assurance purposes.

The use of discretionary flexible payment pool funds by the RACGP and the ACRRM will provide additional support, including in hard-to-fill locations or for complex training requirements. These special training circumstances will be considered by the RACGP and the ACRRM to ensure a nationally consistent payments approach is sustainable. To maintain the principles of accountability and transparency around the use of public funds, the colleges will provide an annual report to the Department on the use of flexible payment pool funds as part of annual compliance reporting to Health.

AGPT program year level

The AGPT program provides for a participant to actively remain within the program in training for a period of 52 FTE weeks per year.

To determine the maximum support payment amount, the RACGP and the ACRRM will consider the AGPT program year level, the pro-rata FTE active training hours of each participant, and the MMM classification of the locations in which the training program will occur and/or has occurred. The RACGP and the ACRRM will provide the training and payment data to Health and Services Australia for the payments to be processed and delivered to all eligible program participants.

Of note: Consistent with the NCP framework and payments model, eligible registrars on the AGPT program will be provided with support payments in advance of every training term. As such, registrar payments will be based on college requirements and starting a placement with a GP practice, irrespective of FTE hours in a particular location. For participating supervisors and practices, support payments will be based on the FTE hours, and as such pro-rata FTE hours will be applicable.

The timely submission of a payment data file to Services Australia for the purposes of compliance checks, data processing and payment run is the responsibility of the RACGP and the ACRRM.

For participating supervisors who practise across multiple MM locations, the RACGP or ACRRM will calculate pro-rata FTE training hours for each location to determine the total payments to be provided. For registrars who practise across multiple MM locations, the RACGP or ACRRM will pay eligible registrars at a level consistent with the highest MM location of their training placement.

The following guidance is provided for scenarios that may involve complex situations.

Scenario	Guidelines
Part-time vs full-time GP training	<p>Supervisor and Practice Payments will be made to all participants based on FTE training hours. The calculation and determination of FTE for each participant will be carried out by the RACGP and the ACRRM prior to providing the information to Health and Services Australia for payments to be made.</p> <p>As indicated in the NCP framework, an eligible registrar on a part-time training program will receive the same level of support as one undertaking full-time training.</p> <p>Registrar Payments will be made in advance at the commencement of each training term.</p>
Registrars training across multiple locations concurrently	<p>For Practices and Supervisors, payments made will be based on the FTE training hours undertaken by the registrar in each MM location.</p>

Scenario	Guidelines
	<p>For registrars working across multiple MM locations, the colleges will provide payment advice that reflects the higher location-based payment rate. For example, in a scenario where a registrar works across an MM2 and MM1 area, payments would be made at the MM2 level.</p>
<p>Registrars in training with both the RACGP and the ACRRM</p>	<p>It is the responsibility of the RACGP and ACRRM to provide a single payment to registrars, practice and supervisors hosting a dual applicant.</p> <p>The RACGP and ACRRM will work together to determine a simple process of data collection based on their system requirements and internal business and financial processes.</p>
<p>GP training in a hospital</p>	<p>The NCP framework is limited to provisions for payments to supervisors, practices and registrars involved in GP training activities approved by the RACGP and the ACRRM in a GP facility or an Aboriginal Medical Service facility.</p>
<p>Participant seeking a review of their payments</p>	<p>Participants can seek a review of their payments via the colleges, RACGP and ACRRM.</p> <p>Examples of circumstances under which a review may be sought include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a registrar has received a lower payment due to a movement across MM locations in a period. which was not captured in the payment process. a supervisor or practice is affected by inadequate documentation of active FTE training hours. <p>The information submitted by the participants will be assessed by the RACGP and / or the ACRRM. If the case is assessed as eligible, a 'top-up' will be requested by the college, which will allow Services</p>

Scenario	Guidelines
	Australia to make additional payments directly to the training participant.
Hardship situation payments - difficult to fill GP training locations	<p>There are provisions under the flexible pool of funds to provide additional support payments to participants in areas where it is difficult to recruit GPs. The RACGP and the ACRRM will assess and consider eligibility for these payments to meet community needs.</p> <p>Queries on the flexible payment pool funds should be directed to:</p> <p>RACGP:</p> <p>Email: transition@racgp.org.au</p> <p>Tel: 1800 472 247</p> <p>ACRRM:</p> <p>Email: training@acrrm.org.au</p> <p>Tel: 1800 223 226</p>

Evaluation of College-Led AGPT program – NCP framework and payments model

The College-Led AGPT program and NCP framework is planned for evaluation in mid-2024.

This will include review of the business rules and guidelines.

Frequency of Payments and Payment Runs

Consistent with the requirements under the NCP framework, the colleges (RACGP and ACRRM) will determine how the frequency of pay runs will integrate with the payments system, including payment data processing by Services Australia. In addition, the RACGP and the ACRRM, in agreement with Services Australia, will determine how exceptional and/or off cycle payments requests are managed.

For example, standard payment runs could be determined to occur on a monthly or quarterly basis for supervisor and practice payments, or once a semester for registrar payments.

Both colleges (RACGP and ACRRM) will provide additional guidance on the expected payment dates as part of their communications plan on how the payments will be provided to supervisors, practices and registrars prior to Semester 1, 2023.

Payments During Leave Periods

The NCP framework provides support payments for training placements.

Where support placements are paid directly to a supervisor who has long-term leave (greater than 4 weeks) during a training placement, the supervisor can direct the college to provide

the payment to the relieving supervisor. Where supervisor payments are made to the practice, it will be at the discretion of the practice as to how payments will be distributed to supervisors.

Where registrars undertake long-term leave (greater than 4 weeks), future supervisor and practice support payments will be adjusted on account the new FTE level of payment required.

Participant Bank Account Details

All eligible participants for AGPT program payments must provide their bank account details and register for a Provider Digital Access (PRODA) account with Services Australia.

Information on how to register for a PRODA account is available on the Services Australia's website:

- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/proda-provider-digital-access>
- <http://medicareaust.com/MISC/MISCP02/provider-digital-access.html>

If you require assistance with PRODA, you can contact PRODA Support on 1800 700 199 (option 1) 8am to 5pm local time or email: proda@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Eligibility for Flexible Pool Payments

The scope, terms and conditions and requirements for accessing and receiving the discretionary flexible pool of funds are provided in the NCP framework.

ACRRM and RACGP will provide details of the flexible payment available to training participants in the AGPT program. Details of the support payments available from each college's flexible fund pool can be accessed at:

- RACGP payment: [RACGP - College-led general practice training](#)
- ACRRM payments: [College-led Training \(acrrm.org.au\)](#)

The use of flexible funds to provide additional payments to eligible AGPT program

Health, through the management of the RACGP and the ACRRM College-Led training grant agreements, will ensure that the use of funds is in accordance with the requirements set out under the NCP framework, business rules and these Guidelines.

Opting Out of AGPT Program

All AGPT program participants who are eligible for a support payment under the College-Led AGPT program must satisfy all eligible requirements and any other GP training compliance requirements specified by the RACGP and the ACRRM.

If an eligible participant opts out of the AGPT program, such a participant will be required to notify the college(s).

The RACGP and the ACRRM must notify Services Australia of any participants who have opted out of the AGPT program or payments.

Taxation

Goods and Services Tax will not be provided on practice and supervisor payments consistent with advice received that the activity undertaken by practices and supervisors are not considered services under the goods and services tax legislation purposes.

Supervisors, practices and registrars are advised to seek tax advice from their financial adviser, accountant and/or the Australian taxation office regarding their individual tax circumstances, including the support payments received under the College-Led AGPT program.

Recovery of over-payments and withholding of payments

Where an over-payment has been identified, the RACGP and the ACRRM will work with training participants to adjust future payments to recoup the excess funds paid. The RACGP and the ACRRM will receive a payment advice from Services Australia outlining the payment details after each payment has been made. Services Australia requires the RACGP and the ACRRM to check and confirm the payment advice is correct and appropriately paid to the participants as specified in the payments data file received in Services Australia.

All participants (supervisors, practices and registrars) who provide false information or refuse to notify the RACGP and the ACRRM of any changes to their circumstances which might affect their eligibility to receive the support payments, will be required to pay back any payments received incorrectly.

Practices are required to work closely with the RACGP and the ACRRM to ensure that the support payments provided are correct.

Practices and supervisors who are not actively involved in the GP training activities approved by the RACGP and the ACRRM will not be provided with support payments under the NCP framework.

Support payments will be withheld for any payment period where practices or supervisors do not maintain ongoing training requirements within the GP training period. Payment eligibility will be reinstated once the participant has undertaken the requirements as outlined in the practice placements agreements as agreed to by the RACGP and/or the ACRRM.

Changes to Registrar in Training, Supervisor, and Practice Arrangements

To remain eligible for support payments under the College-Led AGPT program, all participants (supervisors, practices and registrars) must notify the RACGP and the ACRRM about any changes to the training arrangements to support continuous training and maintain appropriate payment arrangements.

Health requires the RACGP and the ACRRM to provide accurate data and relevant supporting information for compliance reporting.

Privacy

All personal information provided to Services Australia is protected by privacy law, including the Privacy Act 1988, and this information will be used to generate data which will be used by

Services Australia, as a Commonwealth Australian Government entity, for the purposes of the AGPT program.

The personal information collected from AGPT program participants by the RACGP and the ACRRM will be disclosed to the Australian Government (Commonwealth) Department of Health and Aged Care and Services Australia for the purposes of:

- administering the AGPT program and payments system;
- program auditing and compliance reporting;
- statistical and research purposes where it is authorised by law;
- monitoring, assessment and evaluation of progress and achievements; and
- further strategic policy reforms and review of operational principles around the AGPT program.

Further information is available from the RACGP and the ACRRM about how the information collected from the participants in the AGPT program will be managed and used for training and payment purposes, as set out in their privacy policy documents on their websites.

Contact Information

For any further queries and questions on the NCP Guidelines and Payments Model, please contact:

- RACGP – Queries on eligibility, access and release of payments and other operational matters: transition@racgp.org.au
- ACRRM – Queries on eligibility, access and release of payments and other operational matters: training@acrrm.org.au
- Health – Policy matters, NCP Framework and Payments model: AGPTTransition@health.gov.au

Verso

The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (Health), in consultation with Services Australia, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).