



## 1. TITLE:                   ADMISSION TO GPEP AND PLACEMENT POLICY

- 1.1 Policy reference:       CO-A-001-01
- 1.2 Category:               Academic – Admission
- 1.3 Approval date:         July 2020
- 1.4 Approved by:          Chief executive
- 1.5 Effective date:         September 2020
- 1.6 Review/revision date:  July 2021
- 1.7 Unit responsible:      Learning team

## 2. Policy declaration

### 2.1 Purpose

This policy outlines the College requirements for admission and selection of doctors to enter year 1 of the General Practice Education Programme (GPEP or the programme) of The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (the College).

The training of registrars is required to be undertaken in College-accredited training practices. This policy ensures that when placing College-employed registrars, practices and regional placements are aligned with the College's strategic direction.

## 3. Background

### 3.1 Objectives

This policy sets out the College's principles for the admission, selection, enrolment and placement of prospective general practice registrars into GPEP in order to gain the award of Fellowship of The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (FRNZGP).

### 3.2 In scope

This policy applies to:

- > programme admissions for GPEP.
- > Division of Rural Hospital Medicine (the Division) registrars enrolled in the GPEP component of the dual Fellowship training pathway.

### 3.3 Out of scope

- › Division registrars not undertaking the dual Fellowship training pathway.
- › Applicants entering through a prior specialist training pathway to Fellowship.
- › Fellows in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes.

## 4. Definitions

All definitions are available in the College's Academic Regulatory Framework for Quality Assurance (CO-A-001-00).

## 5. General policy

### 5.1 Policy principles

The principles underpinning this policy are:

#### 5.1.1 Equity

The College has an obligation to prioritise eligible Māori and Pasifika applicants to enable a workforce that reflects New Zealand demographics. This means the College will prioritise eligible applicants able to practise in te ao Māori, including having te reo and tikanga Māori competence.

#### 5.1.2 Transparency

All procedures and decisions will be communicated to applicants accurately and consistently to ensure they are fully informed. Processes leading to decisions will be open to appeal where the applicant feels there has been a lack of natural justice.

#### 5.1.3 Reliability

Enrolment processes and procedures used are appropriate and valid and result in a fair and consistent outcome for all applicants. Equal opportunities are provided for all individual applicants to allow them to demonstrate they meet admission and additional requirements of the programme.

#### 5.1.4 Quality

All processes used aim to ensure that the College's quality standards are met and that GPEP registrars display the behaviours and competencies expected of College members.

5.2 Numbers of registrars enrolled into GPEP year 1 will be limited by the funding available to train them. Funding for training may come from a range of sources including:

- (i) The Health Workforce Directorate of the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) – in which case the registrars will be employed by the College in their first year of training and the College funds both training and employment.
- (ii) A mix of practice funding and the Ministry – in which case the practice employs the registrar and the College funds their training.
- (iii) Self-funding – in which case the practice funds the employment of the registrar, and the registrar or their practice funds their training.

- 5.3 Application, admission and selection processes will be used to:
- > enable the number of registrars in training to meet future workforce needs and funded training positions.
  - > ensure the applicants most suited to the specialties of general practice medicine are selected for enrolment in the programme.
  - > ensure Māori and Pasifika applicants, who meet the selection criteria, are given priority admission.
  - > prioritise applicants wishing to practise in rural settings.
- 5.4 In selecting applicants, preference will be given to those applicants who meet the Ministry criteria for funding, i.e. New Zealand citizens or permanent residents with no restrictions. The Ministry may exercise its complete discretion to waive these requirements and fund places in cases where the following prerequisites are met:
- (i) The applicant works, or will be working, in a vulnerable service or region, as determined by the Ministry.
  - (ii) There are insufficient New Zealand citizen/permanent resident applicants to fill GPEP places.
  - (iii) The applicant intends to obtain a permanent resident visa and provides evidence of their commitment to remain in New Zealand long-term.

Where an applicant meets the College's eligibility requirements but is not a citizen or permanent resident, the College may approach the Ministry for dispensation to employ and/or train the applicant.

- 5.5 The College may refuse to admit an applicant entry to GPEP if they have previously been refused entry by the College. Any applicant who has previously been excluded from the programme and who wishes to apply to re-enrol must lodge a written application with the College prior to applying. The College shall make the final decision on whether any applicant who has been excluded may be permitted to re-enrol and may impose conditions on the re-enrolment.

## 5.6 Application

5.6.1 Applicants for admission to GPEP must:

- a. hold registration with the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) allowing work in general practice in the General scope of practice without limitations or conditions.
- b. have completed a minimum of two years of postgraduate experience<sup>1</sup> in a range of medical positions relevant to general practice in New Zealand, including:
  - (i) a total of eight rotating hospital runs, with at least six being from the College's preferred list;<sup>2</sup>
  - (ii) one year of hospital or relevant community-based attachments (runs) completed in New Zealand.
- c. qualify to be an Associate Member of the College, as per the College Rules in force at the time the application is submitted.

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1 NOTE: This postgraduate experience does not have to be completed at the point of application submission but must be completed prior to the start date of the first year in GPEP.

2 Refer to GPEP Standard: Clinical experience – General Requirements

- d. provide a Certificate of Professional Status (COPS) from the MCNZ which is dated no more than three months prior to the programme entry date and indicates that the doctor is in good professional standing.
- e. submit a fully completed application form and payment of the relevant application fee before the application closing date.

5.6.2 Applicants who have conditions on their General scope of practice and/or who have insufficient runs from the College's preferred list may apply and be considered for selection into the programme if:

- > the conditions or limitations on their General scope of practice will not limit their ability to participate fully in and fulfil the requirements of the programme.
- > their total experience indicates they have sufficient breadth of experience to succeed in the programme.

5.6.3 Where applications do not meet the requirements of section 5.6.1 above, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis by a College committee comprising relevant staff, one or more educators from the Learning team, and any other appropriate representation co-opted as required.

5.6.4 Where the number of applications do not meet all of the available funded training places, the College may engage directly with teaching practices who have undertaken to engage practice-employed trainees to ascertain whether they are aware of individuals who have not applied but who they would employ as trainees.

In such instances, and to ensure engagement of quality trainees, these individuals would be required to complete a standard application, arrange for submission of referees' reports and proceed to interview (where applicable).

## 5.7 Selection

5.7.1 Selection screening is undertaken for all applicants, and interviews may be required if applicants are unable to demonstrate in their application that they are likely to be successful in the programme. All applicants that are accepted on the programme will be required to have a phone interview with a College medical educator from their preferred region for placement purposes.

5.7.2 Where an applicant has unfavourable referee reports, the reasons for this must be discussed with the doctor(s) who provided them before any decision on the registrar's employment by the College or offer of training is made. An initial unfavourable report may be set aside after discussion between College senior management and any other appropriate representation co-opted as required.

5.7.3 A waitlist will be established consisting of applicants who are either in the process of obtaining work visas/resident visas and/or where there are more applicants than funding will allow for.

## 5.8 Programme enrolment

- 5.8.1 All selected applicants who are not on the waitlist will be offered enrolment into GPEP. Applicants seeking employment through the College will be offered placements to cover the first year of training.
- 5.8.2 Once enrolled in the programme, applicants become registrars and must become Members of the College.
- 5.8.3 The Fellowship Pathway Regulations in place at the first year of a registrar's enrolment will apply to their entire training programme.
- 5.8.4 In the case of deferrals, refer to the Varying GPEP Training Policy (CO-A-002-03).

## 6. Placements

### 6.1 Practice accreditation

- 6.1.1 All GPEP registrars in the College training programme must be trained in College accredited training sites.
- 6.1.2 Practices wishing to take a GPEP registrar must hold Cornerstone teaching accreditation. Practices taking a GPEP year 1 registrar must have a trained teacher who is a College Fellow.

### 6.2 Placements – College-employed GPEP year 1 registrars

- 6.2.1 The College will place all College-employed registrars in two Cornerstone-accredited practices for their first year of training (except in exceptional circumstances). These practice placements will be six months apiece and it is intended that at least one placement will be in a rural and/or high-needs practice.

In determining registrar placement, the College will consider any conditions imposed due to limitations on the Ministry funding and the registrar's:

- > personal circumstances
- > travel times to training sites
- > desired region(s) for training
- > previous experience or areas of expertise
- > special interests or needs that can be accommodated in training

- 6.2.2 Evidence gathered from the application form, referee(s) and interviews (where held) will be used to confirm those applicants selected for placement in GPEP. Applicants who meet the following criteria will be given priority for placement:
  - (i) Applicants of Māori and Pasifika ethnicity, in order to reflect New Zealand demographics in the general practice workforce.
  - (ii) Applicants employed in a rural area or dual enrolled in the Rural Hospital Medicine Training Programme.
  - (iii) Applicants who demonstrate a commitment to rural practice, which may include placement for a year in a rural practice or high-needs area.

- 6.2.3 Where the number of eligible applicants for GPEP exceeds the places available, the final selection of applicants will be based on additional criteria reflecting the College's strategic objectives:
- a. Ensuring the general practice and rural workforces reflect the populations they serve and are fairly distributed according to need.
  - b. Building capacity to reduce health inequity and develop culturally safe practice.
  - c. Increasing the Māori general practice workforce.
  - d. Addressing the specific needs of key priority populations including Māori, Pasifika and rural communities.
  - e. Addressing rural health needs.
- 6.2.4 In filling regional placements, the College will seek to balance:
- > the level of demand for GPs
  - > the number of GPs wishing to work in the region
  - > the number of training practices available in the region.
- 6.2.5 Registrars will have a deadline of ten (10) working days to accept the formal offer of placement. If an offer is declined, the College will work with the registrar to find an alternative placement aligned to College priorities and registrar needs where possible.
- 6.2.6 Where a registrar subsequently decides not to take up the formal offer of a placement, or additional funding becomes available, a position may be offered to another applicant.
- 6.2.7 Waitlisted applicants may be offered a placement on the programme based on the College's need to fill priority placements and regional needs. Such placements may not reflect their preferred region.
- 6.2.8 Waitlisted applicants have the right to decline the placement offer by the College and choose to see if an opportunity becomes available in their preferred region; however, the College cannot guarantee they will be given a place. If such applicants do not find a place, they will need to reapply for entry into the programme in the following year.

### 6.3 **Placements – practice-employed and self-funded GPEP year 1 registrars**

- 6.3.1 Self-funded and practice-employed registrars must find a training practice that complies with College requirements, including the requirement that the practice has Cornerstone teaching accreditation.
- These registrars may undertake their first year of training in a single practice.

### 6.4 **Placements – GPEP registrars in training beyond year 1**

- 6.4.1 All registrars in GPEP training beyond year 1 must find their own training practice.
- All training practices must hold the College Cornerstone teaching accreditation.

## **7. Appeal of application outcome**

Applicants may appeal the admission decision under the Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06).

## **8. Related policies, documents and legislation**

- › Academic Regulatory Framework for Quality Assurance (CO-A-001-00)
- › Admission to GPEP and Placement Procedure (CO-A-001-01A)
- › Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06)
- › Varying GPEP Training Policy (CO-A-002-03)
- › Approval of GPEP Teaching Practices and Teachers Policy (CO-A-001-02)
- › Academic Integrity Policy (CO-A-002-02)
- › Fellowship Pathway Regulations

## **9. Administrative procedures**

### **9.1 Promulgation of published policy**

This policy will be available via the College intranet and website.