

# RNZCGP 2002–2004 Maintenance of Professional Standards Programme

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## First MOPS triennium draws to a close

December 2001 heralds the end of the first triennium of the RNZCGP Maintenance of Professional Standards (MOPS) programme.<sup>1</sup> Feedback from participants has shown that the programme has been an acceptable framework to help general practitioners fulfil their professional development needs. This was illustrated by the results of a recent RNZCGP membership survey where 70% felt that the MOPS programme is currently pitched at the right level.<sup>2</sup>

After two years of the triennium, a high percentage of the 1 706 MOPS participants have fulfilled the triennium requirements from participation in Practice Review Activities (PRA), Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Additional Professional Development Activities (APDA). Once the MOPS participants' 2001 credit summaries have been processed, the College will send triennium certificates to general practitioners who have completed the triennium requirements.

## MOPS reporting - streamlining the credit recording process

Although the review of the MOPS programme showed that the programme was acceptable to participants with respect to fulfilling their professional development needs, participants found the process for record-

ing credits cumbersome. The College therefore is investigating ways to streamline and simplify this process to make it more user-friendly for general practitioners and providers of professional development activities.

The goal is to have electronic recording of credits direct to the College either by providers or participants, so that this is a single entry process and where practitioners can check their current triennium credit status electronically. This is in response to members' need to have the process of MOPS reporting and audit simplified.

The College has a continuous quality improvement focus and hence welcomes members' feedback and ideas on how the MOPS programme and processes can be streamlined to encompass participants' needs.

## Review of the RNZCGP MOPS programme

Over the last eighteen months, the College has reviewed the 1<sup>st</sup> triennium MOPS programme. This review included consideration of:

- feedback and evaluation from MOPS participants, the College membership survey,<sup>2</sup> focus groups, RNZCGP Professional Development committees and faculties
- the needs of those practising as isolated, rural, part-timer, locum practitioners and in special interest areas

- current legislation such as the Medical Practitioners Act<sup>3</sup> and proposed Health Professionals' Competency Assurance Bill<sup>4</sup> and social and economic issues
- the New Zealand Medical Council's requirements and 2000 review of recertification programmes
- other countries' and medical colleges' recertification programmes
- research literature to ensure that the RNZCGP MOPS programme is based on professional development strategies that evidence shows are more effective at changing doctors behaviour and healthcare outcomes (see the attached bibliography for some of this literature)
- effective adult learning techniques
- the College's focus of continuous quality improvement and not just minimum standards.

## Outcomes from the MOPS review

The review highlighted that the current MOPS programme provides a framework that:

- is widely accepted
- provides flexibility in order to encompass different practice needs and preferred learning styles
- has RNZCGP staff that support and advise practitioners on activities that suit their individual professional development needs

- encourages participation in a wide range of activities
- is based on a continuous quality improvement approach
- helps general practitioners fulfil their professional development needs
- is based on evidence for effective professional development
- the Medical Council accepts as the recertification programme for the vocational branch of general practice
- helps general practitioners meet the ongoing requirements for vocational registration.

### Improvements to the programme

From the results of this review, the College committees agreed that the programme was, to a large part, fulfilling its aims and that only a few

amendments were needed for the next triennium. This *NZFP* article covers the main elements and changes to the programme. Further details can be found in the 2002–2004 programme booklet<sup>5</sup> that was distributed in November to interested parties. All MOPS participants receive an initial free copy. The programme will be on the College website early in 2002.

Overall the 2002–2004 programme remains flexible to suit the broad range of learning needs of general practitioners. The variety of activities that participants can undertake is even greater. Changes have been made to recognise the current stresses and changing workforce needs of general practice. Through the College developing a stronger relationship with Te ORA (Maori Medical Association) and linkages to rural general practice groups, the professional development needs in these specific areas have been, and will continue to be, strengthened.

## College membership questionnaire – September 2000

### Responses to the questions pertaining to the RNZCGP MOPS programme

#### Education

#### Maintenance of Professional Standards Programme

#### (i) Are you currently undertaking the MOPS Programme?

	Number	Percentage %
Yes	161	58
No	109	39
No response	7	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>100</b>

#### (ii) The MOPS Programme is:

	1 Too Easy	2	3 Just Right	4	5 Too Hard	Total
Number	4	16	112	25	4	161
Percentage %	2	10	70	16	2	100

	Mean*	SD	Mode†	RR %‡
(iii) The MOPS Programme is effective in helping GPs maintain professional standards.	3.5	0.9	4	100
(iv) The MOPS Programme is an improvement on the previous Reaccreditation Programme.	3.8	0.9	3	99
(v) The MOPS Programme currently measures professional development participation. Would you support a move to MOPS that truly measures competence?	3.3	1.0	3	100
(vi) The MOPS Programme should include a facility for those who wish to demonstrate a higher level of performance.	3.1	1.1	3	100

\* † A 1 indicated 'strongly disagree', a 3 'neutral' and a 5 'strongly agree'.

‡ RR = response rate

#### Flexible programme

The programme has a focus of continuous quality improvement and allows general practitioners to plan their own professional development according to their preferred methods of learning and professional development needs. The flexibility in the programme encourages self-directed and reflective learning.

The new booklet outlines the varied types of activities that can be undertaken to gain the required credits in Continuing Medical Education (CME), Practice Review Activities (PRAs) and Additional Professional Development Activities (APDA). The Medical Council has indicated that they consider peer review and audit as an important part of recertification programmes, so the new booklet includes additional guidelines in these areas.

The main changes to the 2002–2004 programme are:

- Practice Review Activities – credit allocation now 15 credits each cycle (previously, 10 credits 1<sup>st</sup> pass and 20 credits 2<sup>nd</sup> pass).
- Practice Review Activities – College resources updated with additional activities including activities specific to locums, part-time general practitioners and GPs working in Accident and Medical Clinics. The *Self Care for General Practitioners*<sup>6</sup> resource is to be free to members. A copy of the *Developing Practice Review Activities*<sup>7</sup> booklet is complimentary to doctors who wish to apply for endorsement of an activity.
- Resuscitation Skills – attainment of a certificate of competence to Level 5 of the New Zealand Resuscitation Council standards at least once during the triennium.
- Clinical attachments CME – additional section at two credits per hour. This recognises the importance of one-to-one interaction between the learner and a mentor/colleague with expertise in a special area.
- Personal Mentoring – greater recognition under Additional Professional Development Activities –

up to 20 credits per annum as a separate section.

- 'Non-endorsed' CME – capped at 20 hours (20 credits) per activity.
- Development of guidelines and RNZCGP resources or programmes – increased from 20 to 30 credits per triennium.
- MOPS credit reporting dates – new schedule designed to fit in with the Medical Council's Annual Practising Certificate renewal dates that are based on doctors birth months.

The programme booklet includes forms for photocopying, additional support and information:

- List of RNZCGP professional development resources
- Application for Practice Review Activity endorsement
- RNZCGP Practice Review Activity summary sheet
- 'Non endorsed' CME recording sheet
- Activity logbook and annual credit summary form
- CME Certificate of Participation for a Clinical Attachment.
- Processes and Criteria for effective Peer Review Groups

The forms and the booklet will also be available on the College website ([www.rnzcgp.org.nz](http://www.rnzcgp.org.nz)).

## Effective Professional Development

One of the roles of the College is to develop professional standards for general practice, and the development of the MOPS programme is one aspect of this. The programme provides guidance to providers and participants by setting standards that aim to maximise the effectiveness of the professional development activities undertaken. The College records general practitioners' participation in these activities and recognises that they have demonstrated a commitment to professional development for MOPS and vocational registration purposes.

The current practice environment restricts the time that general practitioners have available for professional development, so it is imperative that this time is spent on continuing medical education and other activities that are effective in increasing knowledge and skills and that are more likely to help maintain competence. The ultimate goal being positive health outcomes for patients.

The RNZCGP professional development committees and staff continue to work to provide resources to help ensure effectiveness of the professional development activities available to New Zealand general practitioners. Some of the ways that this has been achieved include:

- Endorsement of professional development activities – development of RNZCGP endorsement criteria<sup>8</sup> based on international evidence for effectiveness and relevance to general practice in New Zealand by which the College assesses CME and Practice Review Activities.
- RNZCGP Registered CME Providers – nationwide network of providers with RNZCGP guidelines, support and review of these providers.
- Peer Review – RNZCGP registration and guidelines<sup>5</sup> for peer groups. Reflective learning is an important aspect of the MOPS programme and peer groups encourage this.

## Objectives of the MOPS programme

The objectives of the MOPS programme<sup>5</sup> are:

- To provide a professional development programme for vocationally registered general practitioners that is relevant, valid and straightforward.
- To assist general practitioners to maintain their vocational registration by meeting the recertification requirements of the Medical Council of New Zealand.
- To provide a programme that is flexible enough to encompass the range of styles of general practice in New Zealand without loss of robustness.
- To provide a programme that can assist practitioners who are experiencing extenuating personal circumstances in maintaining their right to independent practice.
- To assure the Medical Council of New Zealand and the wider community that vocationally registered general practitioners who are participating in the programme are continuously improving their knowledge and the way they provide care.

- **Learning needs analysis** – College members are encouraged to prepare professional development plans as part of portfolio-based learning; RNZCGP registered CME providers survey local GPs to identify needs when preparing annual CME programmes; College's audit of Registered Providers canvass the needs of general practitioners in the provider's area.
- **Education Facilitators** – the College plans to have available in 2002, education facilitators to help participants of the Advanced Vocational Education and MOPS programmes. These facilitators will be able to help participants plan and implement effective professional development.
- **Liaison with other general practice groups** – such as Departments of General Practice, IPAs, PCOs, Te Ora, rural networks to ensure co-ordination and to avoid duplication.
- **Liaison with MOH/healthcare organisations** – to identify patient health needs and priorities.
- **Practice standards** – ensuring professional development resources provide support for members of the general practice team wishing to meet practice standards.
- **Websites/journals** – the new MOPS programme booklet<sup>5</sup> contains a list of useful professional development websites, articles and journals relevant to general practice.

### Conclusion

The College has confidence that the new 2002–2004 triennium MOPS programme can assure the Medical

Council of New Zealand and the wider community that vocationally registered general practitioners who are participating in the programme are continuing to improve their knowledge and the way they provide care.

The College is committed to delivering a MOPS programme that provides vocationally registered general practitioners with a professional development programme that is relevant, valid and user-friendly and which is flexible enough to encompass the range of styles of general practice in New Zealand without loss of robustness. This commitment involves an on-going improvement focus and the College invites members' feedback and ideas on how the programme can be streamlined to encompass participants' needs.

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