



Admission Policy

Purpose and scope

This policy outlines the process and procedures for admission to the training programme for the Division of Rural Hospital Medicine, New Zealand ('the Division').

It should be read in conjunction with the Fellowship Regulations, and with related policies such as the Division Appeals Policy.

Principles

- The aim of the Division's admissions process is to ensure that the best available candidates are selected for training as rural hospital medicine doctors. This will ensure the ongoing supply of the best possible practitioners for the scope of rural hospital medicine.
- Full details of the training programme and its requirements will be available to candidates wishing to apply for the programme, so that they are able to make an informed choice regarding programme selection.
- Applicants will be advised that the number of places available each year is limited and provided with an indication of the number of places likely to be available.
- Selection for admission to the programme will be based solely on merit. Candidates who meet eligibility criteria will be considered in open competition based on equal opportunity, without prejudice.
- The process will be transparent, legally defensible and fair. Applicants will have access to information regarding admission eligibility criteria, the selection process, and the appeals process.
- The admission and selection process will be regularly reviewed to ensure validity and effectiveness.

Eligibility

The minimum requirements for admission to the programme are:

- Citizenship or permanent residency status in New Zealand (if not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide evidence that they will have all the necessary approvals to undertake training by the date of commencement of training).
- Registration with the MCNZ which allows work in rural hospital medicine and general practice in the general scope of practice. (This registration must be obtained prior to the closing date for admissions, or the application will not be considered.)
- Two years full-time equivalent (FTE) appropriate medical experience after having gained a primary medical qualification. This must include experience in **at least six** of the following: Cardiology / Dermatology / Ear, nose, throat / Emergency medicine / General medicine /

General practice / General surgery / Geriatrics / Musculoskeletal / Obstetrics and Gynaecology / Ophthalmology / Orthopaedics / Paediatrics / Palliative care / Psychiatry / Rehabilitation / Respiratory Medicine / Rheumatology / Rural hospital / Rural general practice.

- At least one year of experience, after the primary medical degree, obtained in the New Zealand context (except with the permission of the Division's Board of Studies).
- A Certificate of Professional Status from the MCNZ (or equivalent international body) which is dated not more than three months prior to the programme entry date and which indicates that the doctor is in good professional standing (this must be provided at the time of entry to the programme).

Selection process

Entry to the programme is via a competitive selection process and is not guaranteed.

The number of places available on the programme is determined annually by the Division Council (or Executive Committee by delegated authority). This process takes into account the availability of places on the academic components of the programme, the availability of key programme runs, particularly those in rural hospitals, and any additional information available regarding workforce needs and funded training positions.

The programme application form and closing date for applications is available on the website.

The selection process is as follows:

- The applicant completes an application form
- After the closing date has passed, all applicants are screened for eligibility
- Applicants not eligible for consideration are notified, and given an indication of what they would need to complete to be eligible for consideration in future years.
- An interview schedule is set up for all eligible applicants
- Applicants are informed of their interview date. (Some flexibility in date is permitted, and technology is used for remote interviews where necessary.)
- Two interviewers are used for each interview. At least one of the interviewers will be a programme Clinical Lead.
- Each applicant is rated according to the selection criteria.
- Applicants are ranked according to their selection rating, and offers are made based on the number of places available in the programme.

Applicants for the dual pathway training programme (DRHM and GP) must be independently accepted to each training programme¹.

It is the successful applicant's responsibility to find employment which will enable them to fulfil the programme requirements. Acceptance to the programme does not provide guaranteed access to training positions.

¹ Admission requirements for the GPEP programme can be found in the RNZCGP Fellowship Pathway Regulations

Selection criteria

The interview is designed to identify factors which are important to success in the rural hospital medicine training programme. It is conducted as a structured interview, with questions marked and weighted according to a predefined schedule.

The following criteria are used in interview consideration of each candidate:

- Firm intention to enter rural hospital medicine
- Preparation for rural hospital medicine
- Readiness for vocational education for rural hospital medicine
- Commitment to addressing Māori health disparities
- Commitment to professional development
- Self-care
- Flexibility and availability
- Communication skills

Ratings for each criterion are weighted and summed, and applicants are ranked accordingly.

Provisional decisions made on the basis of the ranked interview scores, taking into account the number of places available. Referee reports are examined for those marked as 'provisionally accept', prior to finalisation of the list of offers to be made.

Two referee reports must be provided. The candidate must achieve a minimum total score of at least 4 (each report is rated on a scale of 1 – 4) to be offered a place.

Selection decisions are made and applicants are informed of the outcomes within four weeks of the interview process.

Successful applicants must provide a copy of their Certificate of Professional Status from the MCNZ prior to confirmation of their place on the training programme.

Feedback

All interviewed candidates who are unsuccessful in their applications will be individually contacted by a programme Clinical Lead and provided with feedback that may help their application should they decide to apply again in the future. This feedback may include suggestions for clinical experience that can be gained or academic components that could be undertaken.

Appeals

An applicant who believes they have been disadvantaged in the selection process through interviewer bias or unfair process, or who wishes to appeal for special consideration due to circumstances around the interview itself, may appeal the outcomes of the selection process.

The appeal should be in writing and should be addressed to the Chairperson of the Division's Board of Studies. The Chairperson will review the case, and will determine whether it is appropriate that a second interview be offered to the candidate. If offered, the interview will be conducted by two persons not on the original interview panel, one of whom may be the Chairperson of the Board of Studies.

The interview will follow the same format as the original interview. The ratings obtained at the second interview will be compared against the scores for successful candidates to determine whether a place on the programme may be offered.

Any remaining dispute may be referred to the College Censor-in-Chief for consideration. The Censor-in-Chief's decision on any issue is final.