



Effective 1 February 2021

Fellowship Pathway Regulations

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Fellowship Pathway Regulations

The Division of Rural Hospital Medicine (the 'Division') is established as a Chapter under the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (the 'College', Rules 2017, Clause 20.4), and Fellowship of the Division is granted in terms of the criteria specified in clause 10.3 of the College Rules (2017).

The Division's objectives are to:

- Promote excellence in rural hospital medical care
- Train rural hospital doctors to a high standard, with an appropriate range of generalist skills and special interests
- Promote rural hospital medicine as a vocation
- Advocate for rural health and education
- Promote rural health research
- Promote and develop professional relationships
- Provide ongoing professional support
- Acknowledge Māori rural communities as an important part of rural health and strive for equality in access and health outcomes for rural Māori.

The Division's Council, through the Board of Studies, monitors standards for the award of the RHM qualification. The Division's training programme is accredited through the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ).

1. The discipline and specialty of Rural Hospital Medicine

1.1. The scope of Rural Hospital Medicine

The vocational scope of rural hospital medicine (RHM) is determined by its social context, the rural environment. The demands of this environment include professional isolation, geographic isolation, limited resources and special cultural and sociological factors. The single factor that most determines this scope of practice, its depth and its nature, is that it is practiced at a distance from comprehensive specialist medical and surgical services and investigations. A broad body of knowledge, skills and attitudes, not common to any other medical vocational group, is required to deliver optimum secondary care patient outcomes in rural hospitals. Working in a rural area demands high levels of individual responsibility and clinical judgement.

In contrast to rural general practice, the other rural medical scope of practice, rural hospital medicine is oriented to secondary care, is responsive rather than anticipatory and does not continue over time.

1.2. The definition of Rural Hospital Medicine

Rural Hospital Medicine is defined by its breadth. It involves the set of skills needed to deal, at least initially, with any presenting medical problem. As a consequence of distance, a doctor's scope of practice is not confined to a particular range of illnesses or acuity of presentations (as occurs in other branches of medicine). It requires skills in the diagnosis and management of clinical presentations that would, in an urban hospital, fall within the scope of practice of many different specialties. These include: Emergency Medicine, General Medicine, General Surgery, Orthopaedic Surgery, Geriatric Medicine, Rehabilitation Medicine, Paediatrics, Palliative Care, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Psychiatry and Anaesthetics.

The scope incorporates skills in managing complex cases with limited resources, including limited investigations (imaging and laboratory) and personnel (access to onsite specialists, specialised nursing and allied health professionals). There is a high reliance on clinical skills and judgement.

Shared-care arrangements with urban-based specialists are frequently utilised to safely manage patients over such a broad scope of practice, requiring the rural hospital generalist to be proficient in communication and the use of tele-medicine and tele-radiology.

The scope includes a wide range of procedural skills at the secondary care level, including hospital level resuscitation skills. Many rural hospital generalists have an additional set of specialist skills. These may derive from: Surgery, Anaesthetics, Emergency Medicine, Palliative Care, as well as other areas of Medicine. These skills may be procedural or knowledge-based and frequently compliment others within the rural hospital medical team, considerably increasing the range and quality of services the team as a whole can provide. This is achieved by directly provision of patient care or by acting as a resource for other members of the team. As these skills are in addition to the core generalist skills, the doctor is still able to contribute fully to the generalist cover of the hospital.

The scope of Rural Hospital Medicine includes particular skills in assessing the appropriateness of referral or continued patient management within the skill and resource constraints of the rural hospital environment. This includes balancing the potential clinical benefits of referral to a base hospital against the risks of transfer and removing the patient from their own community. It includes effectively communicating this to the patient in order to allow them to make informed choices regarding their ongoing care.

Delays in transfer or retrieval of patients to definitive care can occur for a variety of reasons, including weather, availability of staff and transport resources and bed-space constraints. Rural hospital doctors require particular skills in recognising serious illness at an early enough stage to discuss and, where appropriate, arrange safe and timely transfer of patients to a place of definitive care. This requires a high level of understanding of the likely course of major medical problems and knowledge of the risks and requirements of various modes of transfer and retrieval. Where delays to transfer or retrieval of unstable patients occurs, rural hospital doctors need to be able to provide extended care following initial resuscitative stages of treatment, in conjunction with base hospital and/or retrieval team advice.

As with other modern branches of medicine, Rural Hospital Medicine is dependent on effective teamwork. This includes general practitioners and specialist colleagues, as well as nursing, ambulance, allied health, Māori health workers, and other clinical and non-clinical staff.

2. Fellowship of the Division of Rural Hospital Medicine New Zealand

2.1. Pathways to Fellowship

The standard pathway to Fellowship of the Division is to complete a four-year full-time equivalent (FTE) training programme, with a Fellowship Assessment at the end of the programme. This is shown in the

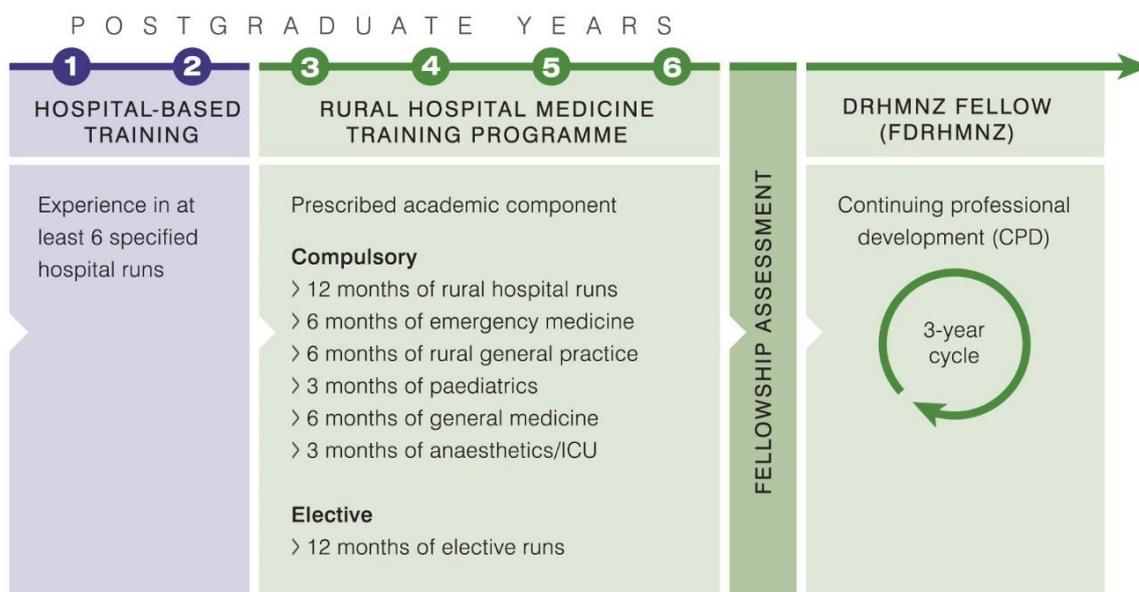


diagram below:

The Division also has a Prior Specialist Pathway to Fellowship for doctors who have completed other recognised training programmes. The requirements for this Pathway are outlined in section 6 below.

2.2. Criteria for the award of Fellowship

To be awarded Fellowship of the Division (FDRHMNZ) through the Rural Hospital Medicine (RHM) training programme Registrars must:

- (a) Complete programme clinical experience requirements – refer to section 3.3
- (b) Complete programme academic component requirements – refer to section 3.4
- (c) Complete programme learning activities – refer to section 3.5
- (d) Fulfil programme resuscitation skills course requirements – refer to section 3.6
- (e) Fulfil programme assessment requirements – refer to section 3.8. This includes the final rotational supervisor report which may be provided after the Fellowship Assessment visit has occurred
- (f) A pass in the Fellowship Assessment visit – refer to section 4
- (g) Hold a Certificate of Professional Status (COPS) from the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ)
- (h) Be in good financial standing with the College.

Decisions regarding the award of Fellowship are taken by the Board of Studies or approved delegate. Unsuccessful candidates may be required to undertake further activities before reconsideration.

3. Rural Hospital Medicine training programme Regulations

3.1. General requirements

These regulations apply to all registrars beginning the RHM training programme on 1 February 2021 or after. Programme regulations for individual registrars are governed by the rules in place at the time of first registration into the RHM training programme, unless

- There has been a break in active participation in the programme for a period of a year (cumulative) or longer (this includes registrars 'on hold' from the programme); and/or
- The registrar has failed to complete the programme in the maximum time permitted.

(Registrars who started the training programme prior to May 2020 are governed by the Regulations outlined in the Training Programme Handbook at the time of their registration with the programme.)

In either case, if the registrar is re-admitted or permitted to continue in the programme, the registrar may be required to transfer to the Programme Regulations in place at the time of recommencing their training or to undertake an alternate programme in discussion with the Division.

The maximum period that a registrar can remain on the programme, except with the permission of the Board of Studies or approved delegate, is eight years.

Outcomes of all decision processes may be appealed using the mechanisms outlined in the Division's Reconsideration and Appeal Policy. Candidates progressing through the Fellowship pathway and who wish to appeal assessment decisions should contact the Division regarding the appropriate processes. All appeals are decided on an individual basis and do not set precedents for future appeals.

3.2. Admission to the programme

The minimum requirements for admission to the programme are:

- Citizenship or permanent residency status in New Zealand
- Registration with the MCNZ which allows work in rural hospital medicine and general practice in the general scope of practice
- 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, and Throat; Emergency Medicine; General Medicine; General Practice; General Surgery; Geriatric Medicine; Musculoskeletal Medicine; Obstetrics and Gynaecology; Ophthalmology; Orthopaedic Surgery; Paediatrics; Palliative Care; Psychiatry; Rehabilitation Medicine; Respiratory Medicine; Rheumatology; Rural Hospital Medicine and 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 Board of Studies or approved delegate).
- At the time of entry to the programme, a Certificate of Professional Status (COPS) from the MCNZ 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. Good professional standing must be maintained for the duration of the training programme, and the registrar must notify the Division immediately if there is any change to this status.

Entry to the programme is via a competitive selection process and is not guaranteed. The admission requirements and process are set out in the Division's Admission Policy.

3.3. Clinical experience requirements

- (a) The full-time RHM training programme consists of a total of 48 months FTE clinical experience. This is comprised of six compulsory runs (36 months FTE), and 12 months FTE of elective runs.
- (b) Except where otherwise defined, FTE is defined as an eight-tenths or more clinical workload (approximately 32 hours or more a week) in an approved clinical position.
- (c) Leave taken may contribute to FTE time to a maximum of 15 leave days per six months.
- (d) Whilst on the programme, registrars must be in clinical practice for a minimum of at least four-tenths FTE a week. This is referred to as the minimum clinical time requirement of the programme. This applies to all registrars, including in cases where the specific clinical experience requirements have been completed.
- (e) Registrars who are working less than the minimum FTE clinical time required (see section 3.3d) will be registered in the programme as 'on hold'. If the registrar is the holder of a current practising certificate, they will be required to comply with MCNZ requirements for recertification (as outlined in section 3.7) during their 'on hold' period.
- (f) The maximum time allowed 'on hold' is three years cumulative total. If the registrar is 'on hold' for a period of longer than a year (cumulative), on return to the programme they may be required to transfer to new programme rules or to undertake an alternate programme in discussion with the College.

- (g) All clinical experience during the training programme is expected to be undertaken in New Zealand. Prior approval may be given by the Board of Studies or approved delegate for up to 12 months' relevant and appropriate overseas clinical attachment.
- (h) Clinical experience undertaken after entry into the training programme will only be recognised if undertaken whilst actively participating in the training programme.
- (i) Runs must be undertaken in Division-accredited or recognised placements.
- (j) All registrars must be in a collegial relationship during their clinical runs with a specialist who is registered in the vocational scope in which they are working.

The minimum compulsory and elective runs for the programme are detailed in the table below.¹

Compulsory runs	Elective runs
<p>All of the following must be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two runs (twelve months FTE) in Rural Hospital Medicine undertaken at different sites. At least one of the rural hospital runs must be in a Level three rural hospital.² • One run (six months FTE) in General Medicine (three months may be Cardiology or Respiratory Medicine) • One run (six months FTE) in rural general practice³ • One run (six months FTE) in Emergency Medicine⁴ • 0.5 run (three months FTE) in Paediatrics • 0.5 run (three months FTE) in Anaesthetics and/or Intensive Care 	<p>An additional two runs (12 months FTE) of elective time must be completed. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further experience in any of the compulsory runs listed • Urban general practice • Surgery • Palliative Care • Rehabilitation Medicine • Geriatric Medicine • Māori Health Provider • Obstetrics and/or Gynaecology • Orthopaedic Surgery/Musculoskeletal Medicine <p>Prior approval of the DRHM Board of Studies or approved delegate is required for any other attachment.</p>

3.4. Academic component requirements

Registrars on the training programme are required to complete the academic papers listed in the table below:

¹ Registrars may gain more clinical experience than the minimum required.

² If possible, one of the rural hospital medicine runs should be done early in the programme, and the other at the end. The second rural hospital run is used for the Fellowship assessment visit. A description of hospital levels can be found in the Division Training Handbook.

³ The recognition of a placement as being rural is at the discretion of the Board of Studies or approved delegate.

⁴ This must be a registrar position which reports directly to a consultant.

1	GENA 724 The Context of Rural Hospital Medicine PGDipRPHP University of Otago Examines the context of clinical care in rural hospitals in relation to the person and profession of the doctor, the hospital and the community.
2	GENA 725 Communication in Rural Hospital Medicine PGDipRPHP University of Otago Clinical skills, knowledge and values required in the rural hospital setting for psychiatry, palliative care, rehabilitation medicine and communication with patients including Māori patients.
3	GENA 726 Obstetrics and Paediatrics in Rural Hospitals PGDipRPHP University of Otago Covers the management of paediatrics, neonatal care, and obstetric and gynaecological emergencies in a rural hospital setting.
4	GENA 727 Surgical Specialties in Rural Hospitals PGDipRPHP University of Otago Covers the management of common surgical problems appropriate to be managed in a rural hospital setting. Includes general surgery, urology, vascular surgery, ophthalmology and ENT. OR POPLPRAC 740⁵ Urgent Primary Surgical Care Auckland University.
5	GENA 728 Cardiorespiratory Medicine in Rural Hospitals PGDipRPHP University of Otago Covers the management of cardiology and respiratory problems in a rural hospital setting. Includes acute coronary syndromes, arrhythmias, valvular heart problems, airways obstruction and respiratory infections.
6	GENA 729 Medical Specialties in Rural Hospitals PGDipRPHP University of Otago Covers the management of acute and chronic common medical problems in a rural hospital setting. Includes gastroenterology, endocrinology, neurology, oncology, rheumatology and infectious diseases.
7	GENA723 Trauma and Emergencies in Rural Settings PGDipRPHP University of Otago Equips rural practitioners with the knowledge, skills and framework with which to manage emergency and trauma patients in a rural practice setting. OR The Emergency Medicine Certificate from the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine.

Prior learning exemptions may apply – see section 5.2 below.

3.5. Learning activities

For the duration of the programme, registrars are required to:

⁵ The University of Auckland may require registrars to undertake the prerequisite paper POPLH709 before being accepted onto POPLPRAC 740

- (a) Maintain a learning plan and reflection log of their learning experiences
- (b) Discuss and review cases with the Rotational Supervisor for each attachment
- (c) Complete a skills log of clinical experiences obtained
- (d) Meet with their Education Facilitator four times a year, except in the case of registrars on the dual Fellowship training pathway who are engaged in the General Practice Education Programme (GPEP) Year 1 training.

3.6. Resuscitation skills course requirements

Registrars are required to complete the following resuscitation skills courses during training:

- (a) Emergency Management of Severe Trauma (EMST) or Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS).
- (b) Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS). Registrars are required to complete a College-endorsed resuscitation course appropriate to their training programme.⁶
- (c) Advanced Paediatric Life Support (APLS) or Paediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).

These courses must be current at the time Fellowship is awarded. For the purposes of this programme, EMST and APLS courses are regarded as current for five years from date of issue. ACLS courses are regarded as current for three years from date of issue.

3.7. Professional development activities required until Fellowship is obtained

In order to comply with MCNZ recertification requirements, registrars who have put their training programme 'on hold', or who have completed either the academic or the clinical component of training but not other requirements, must complete all of the following professional development activities until either Fellowship is obtained or they return to the programme (i.e. no longer 'on hold').⁷

- Development and implementation of a professional development plan – one per year, to be reviewed and agreed to by the Education Facilitator
- Audit of medical practice – one per year
- Peer review meeting attendance of at least 10 hours per year
- At least 15 hours of continuing medical education per year
- At least one hour per year of activities aimed at developing cultural competence
- Multisource colleague feedback once every three years
- Maintenance of a collegial relationship with an appropriate vocationally registered rural hospital medicine practitioner, comprising a minimum of four meetings with a minimum of eight hours of interaction per year.

Registrars who are engaged in academic studies may claim these activities towards meeting their professional development requirements.

Confirmation that CPD activities have been completed as required will be obtained from the College's CPD team.

3.8. Assessment requirements

The assessments required before Fellowship assessment are as follows:

⁶ The Primary Response in Medical Emergencies (PRIME) course can be taken as an alternate.

⁷ Further information can be found in the Division's Continuing Professional Development booklet, available on Learning Zone.

- Assessment components of the academic papers
- Twelve mini clinical evaluation exercises (MiniCEX)
- Rotational supervisor reports
- Education Facilitator reports
- Multisource colleague feedback
- Structured Assessment using Multi-Patient Scenarios (StAMPS) assessment.⁸

Specific requirements for each component are given below.

3.8.1. Assessment component of the academic papers

The requirements for the assessment components of the academic papers are:

- (a) Each paper must be passed.
- (b) For any grade below B-, the registrar will be identified for additional support in the particular area. The remedial requirements in each case will be determined by the Board of Studies or approved delegate.
- (c) University letters confirming course results should be submitted to Division Programme Advisor as soon as possible after completing a paper, and a full academic transcript must be submitted once all components are completed.⁹

3.8.2. MiniCEX examinations

The requirements for the MiniCEX examinations are:

- (a) Twelve MiniCEX examinations must be successfully completed over the course of the training programme.
- (b) MiniCEX examinations must be undertaken by Rotational Supervisors (except in the case of 3.8.2d and 4.2a below). The Rotational Supervisor may delegate this responsibility to an appropriately qualified doctor.
- (c) It is the registrar's responsibility to request that the Rotational Supervisor conducts the MiniCEX.
- (d) For registrars on the dual Fellowship pathway, a maximum of two MiniCEXs completed during GPEP Year 1 may be counted towards the MiniCEX requirements, providing that they are conducted by a College teacher.

3.8.3. Rotational Supervisor reports

- (a) A Rotational Supervisor report must be obtained on completion of each of the clinical runs in the training programme.
- (b) The report must indicate that the Rotational Supervisor is satisfied that the run has been completed successfully in order for the run to be credited to programme requirements.

⁸ The StAMPS exam is run by the Australian College for Rural and Remote Medicine.

⁹ It is the registrar's responsibility to ensure that the Division Programme Advisor receives the transcript. This must be an original transcript, or a copy certified by a Justice of the Peace.

- (c) It is the registrar's responsibility to ensure that the Rotational Supervisor has completed the report, and that the completed report has been received by the Division Programme Advisor.

3.8.4. Educational Facilitator reports

- (a) A report from the registrar's Educational Facilitator must be obtained annually.
- (b) The report must indicate that the registrar is making progress in meeting their learning plans, and that the Educational Facilitator has no significant concerns regarding the registrar's practice.

3.8.5. Multisource colleague feedback

- (a) In the final six months of training, registrars are required to undertake a multi-source feedback colleague survey.
- (b) Results on this tool must indicate no significant colleague concerns regarding the registrar's practice.

3.8.6. StAMPS assessment

- (a) The registrar must successfully complete the StAMPS examination, comprising eight scenario questions.
- (b) The StAMPS examination must be undertaken no earlier than twelve months prior to the completion of the training programme.
- (c) The StAMPS examination is run through the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM). Registrars can choose to sit the examination via teleconference (at a limited number of venues) or face-to-face. Registrar travel to attend the examination may be required, at the registrar's expense.
- (d) Places on the examination are limited. It is the registrar's responsibility to ensure that they are booked into an appropriate examination session. Registrars should inform the Division of their intentions to sit the examination at the beginning of the year in which they intend to do this.

4. Fellowship assessment

4.1. General requirements

- (a) The purpose of the Fellowship assessment visit is to examine a registrar's practice to ensure that it is safe, competent and meets the standard for Fellowship. The visit normally takes place in the final two months of the registrar's final clinical placement for the programme and will not take place before this.
- (b) The Fellowship assessment visit is conducted by a senior Fellow of the College.
- (c) The assessment visit for Fellowship must take place in an approved run in an approved and accredited rural hospital setting (see section 3.3) in which the registrar has previously worked.
- (d) Decisions on the award of Fellowship are made by the Board of Studies or approved delegate. The Board of Studies or approved delegate may stipulate that further assessment of the candidate is

required, and/or may require that the candidate undertake further training before being re-assessed for Fellowship.

- (e) All criteria for the award of Fellowship (outlined in section 2.2) must be attained within 18 months of the assessment visit or another assessment visit will be required.

4.2. Eligibility for the Fellowship assessment visit

Registrars are eligible for Fellowship assessment when:

- (a) They have satisfactorily completed all programme requirements, with the exception of:
- i. any MiniCEX examinations which can, with the prior approval of the Fellowship Assessor, be completed on the day.
 - ii. the final Rotational Supervisor report which must be provided prior to the award of Fellowship.
- (b) They are recommended to progress to assessment by a Clinical Leader and their Education Facilitator.

4.3. Fellowship assessment visit requirements

The following documents must be available at the time of the visit:

- (a) Registrar portfolio, including all the following:¹⁰
- An updated curriculum vitae
 - Results of university examinations
 - Results of other external examinations (if applicable)
 - Certificates from all resuscitation skills courses attended
 - Record of clinical attachments
 - Rotational Supervisor reports from all except the current placement (see section 4.3b below, and section 2.2)
 - Results of all miniCEX assessments undertaken
 - StAMPS results
 - Multisource feedback colleague survey results
 - Documentation confirming participation (or results of assessments) from any other courses, conferences or training activities attended
 - Learning plan and reflection log
 - Clinical skills log
 - Annual Educational Facilitator reports.
- (b) An interim report from the Rotational Supervisor of the registrar's clinical placement at the time of the visit.

¹⁰ All these documents, with the exception of the learning plan, reflection log and skills log, will be collated by the Division from documents that have been submitted over the course of the programme. The learning plan, reflection log and skills log must be provided by the registrar on the day of the Fellowship visit. Templates for these documents are available on Learning Zone.

- (c) Results from a multi-source feedback assessment conducted within 12 months of the date of the visit.

In addition, candidates for Fellowship assessment must:

- (a) sign a declaration that they do not have a pending criminal proceeding, or an investigation under the Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994 (unless they have a Letter of Standing from the MCNZ which states that the complaint under investigation is of a minor nature).
- (b) declare any conditions on their practicing certificate for consideration. Visit eligibility will be determined by the Division Council.

5. Recognition of prior learning

Doctors who do not qualify for admission to the Prior Specialist Pathway to Fellowship (see section 6 below) may apply to the Board of Studies or approved delegate for exemption from individual components of the training programme where these are substantially similar to components undertaken previously.

5.1. Clinical experience

Doctors with clinical experience at PGY3 and above obtained before enrolling in the rural hospital medicine programme may apply to the Board of Studies or approved delegate to have their programme clinical experience requirements reduced, provided the clinical experience is equivalent to the requirements of the programme.

Clinical experience obtained in a position overseas may be recognised if deemed comparable to New Zealand clinical experience.

Recognition may be granted for a maximum of 24 months, depending on the relevance and recency of the clinical experience. In some cases, recognition may be given for particular clinical experiences without detracting from the overall time required in the programme.

Recognition of previous clinical experience will only be given only for work done whilst at a Registrar or Senior House Officer level.

All doctors who receive recognition of clinical experience must still meet the programme minimum clinical practice time requirements while enrolled in the programme (see section 3.3d).

At the discretion of the Board of Studies or approved delegate, specific programme requirements may be set for individuals who have been granted recognition of clinical experience obtained prior to the programme.

5.2. Academic component requirements

Doctors who have completed a postgraduate course relevant to rural hospital medicine before entering the programme may apply to the Board of Studies or approved delegate for recognition of prior learning to determine whether they are eligible for exemption from a specific academic component. Applications will be considered case-by-case, based on the level of study, the education provider, the country, and its relevance to rural hospital medicine.

Specific exemptions that may be granted include:

- Doctors who have passed GPEP Clinical and Written Examinations will be exempt the requirement

to complete GENA 725.

- Doctors who have passed Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) Part 1 will be exempt the requirement to complete GENA 728 and GENA 729.
- Doctors who have passed both the Postgraduate Certificate in Women's Health and the Postgraduate Certificate in Child Health will be exempt from the requirement to complete GENA 726.

5.3. Resuscitation skills course requirements

Doctors who hold current resuscitation skills courses (refer section 3.6) are not required to repeat these courses. All resuscitation skill course certificates must be current at the time of Fellowship.

5.4. Assessment requirements

Assessment requirements for doctors who have received recognition of prior learning exemption from some programme requirements are the same as those outlined in section 3.8, except that, at the discretion of the Board of Studies or approved delegate, exemption may be awarded for a limited number of miniCEX assessments if clinical time on the programme has been reduced.

6. Recognition of prior specialist training in Rural Hospital Medicine

6.1. Ad eundum gradum recognition of FACRRM

Doctors who hold Fellowship of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and who gained this qualification via the ACRRM training and assessment pathway will be entitled to apply for consideration for Division Fellowship ad eundum gradum if they are working in New Zealand and have twelve months of experience, either during or after training, in a rural hospital environment. Applicants for Fellowship ad eundum gradum need to:

- Complete an application form
- Provide a certified copy of their ACRRM Fellowship certificate
- Provide a letter from ACRRM confirming their current financial and professional good standing
- Provide evidence that they have at least twelve months experience during or after training in a rural hospital environment
- Provide confirmation that they hold a current Practising Certificate from the MCNZ
- Provide confirmed details regarding their employment in New Zealand; and
- Pay the relevant College/ Division membership fees.

Fellowship of the DRHMNZ will be granted once the necessary documentation has been received and approved.

6.2. Prior Specialist Pathway to Fellowship

It is well recognised and appreciated that many doctors who commit to Rural Hospital practice in New Zealand have completed their training in other specialties and/or countries. There is no recognised equivalent overseas qualification to New Zealand RHM, and therefore the only pathway to vocational registration in RHM through the MCNZ is via Fellowship of the Division.

Doctors who have trained and qualified in prescribed specialties relevant to RHM, either in New Zealand or a country that the MCNZ regards as having a comparable health system, and who have held their qualification for two or more years, are eligible to apply for the Prior Specialist Pathway. In this process, prior qualifications and experience are evaluated against the requirements of the RHM training programme to identify where these can be deemed equivalent and where further education and/or experience may be required to meet Fellowship standards.

It is anticipated that with understanding of the Prior Specialist Pathway requirements, doctors who apply to it may achieve more extensive recognition of their previous relevant clinical education and experience than the maximum two years recognised prior learning permitted in the Registrar training programme. This can allow for an accelerated pathway to RHM Fellowship providing core and individualised requirements are met, as agreed to by both the doctor and the Division's Board of Studies (or delegated committee) following the application and assessment process. It is important to note that the exit criteria for the Prior Specialist Pathway are the same as those for the Registrar training programme (although the number of some assessments required may vary on a pro-rata basis for time required to complete).

Doctors eligible to apply to the Prior Specialist Pathway are those with Fellowships in Primary Care, Emergency Medicine or Internal Medicine. Qualifications are eligible from the following countries: New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Hong Kong, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States of America.

Applicants for the Prior Specialist Pathway need to:

- Complete an application form (applications are due twice annually on February 1st and August 1st, digital forms available from the College website).
- Pay an application fee (covers initial evaluation of prior training, education, and experience)¹¹

Documentation required:

- Confirmation of New Zealand citizenship or permanent residency status
- Confirmation of current MCNZ Practising Certificate
- Confirmation of current New Zealand employment details
- Certified copy of Specialist qualification
- Any additional required as part of PSP Application form completion

¹¹ Non-refundable.

The documentation received is reviewed by a Fellow of the Division ('Evaluator'). The applicant's relevant clinical and educational experiences are assessed against the required components of the registrar training programme. A summary of where equivalencies to these components are either met, potentially (partially or fully) met, or not met is provided to the applicant. If the applicant decides to proceed a further fee is payable to cover the cost of an assessment interview¹². The Assessment committee is made up of: one Board of Studies member, one Clinical Lead and one representative Fellow of the Division. The committee holds an interview with the applicant intended to verify clinical experience, understanding and commitment. If the application is successful, a Pathway to Fellowship is provided to the doctor which involves core and individualised components and a time limit to complete. If accepted, the doctor must pay the relevant College/Division membership fee.

The core components are as follows:

- Completion of University of Otago papers GENA724, GENA725 - unless exemptions apply¹³
- 12 months supervised New Zealand Rural Hospital practice (with quarterly supervisor reports)
- Exit assessments
 - MiniCEX (number pro-rata to clinical time to complete)
 - Multi-source feedback
 - Current EMST, ACLS, APLS
 - Pass in StAMPs Exam
 - Fellowship assessment visit

Individualised components such as further clinical and/or academic requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis, factoring in the doctor's prior education and experience¹⁴.

Doctors will be eligible to apply for Fellowship of the Division once all prescribed core and individualised components are complete. Doctors applying for Fellowship must be in good financial standing with the College and provide a current Certificate of Professional Status (COPS) from the MCNZ.

¹² Non-refundable.

¹³ Refer to section 5.2 above.

¹⁴ If more than 12 months clinical time is required in addition to rural hospital time, the Prior Specialist Pathway is not appropriate. Doctors are still eligible to apply for the Registrar training programme and recognition of prior learning

7. General practice dual Fellowship training pathway

7.1. General requirements

Applicants wishing to undertake dual Fellowship training in RHM and general practice must be independently accepted to each training programme.

All general programme requirements specified in the Fellowship Pathway Regulations for each of the training programmes will apply also to the dual training pathway, and to the activities relevant to each pathway. This includes appeal processes, leave recognised, minimum clinical time required and time allowed on hold.¹⁵

The maximum period that a registrar can remain on the dual training pathway, except with the permission of the Board of Studies and the College, is eight years.

7.2. Clinical experience requirements

Registrars who are undertaking a dual Fellowship in RHM and general practice may claim up to 18 months against the DRHM clinical experience requirements for general practice experience gained on GPEP, provided that at least six months of GPEP training is undertaken in rural general practice.

This clinical experience component is credited against the Division clinical experience requirements for compulsory six months in rural general practice and twelve months of elective experience.

The clinical experience requirements for the dual Fellowship training pathway are as follows:

¹⁵ The College Fellowship Pathway Regulations are available on the College website and on Learning Zone.

Compulsory runs

All of the following must be completed:

- **Two runs** (12 months FTE) in **general practice** undertaken whilst fulfilling the GPEP Year 1 programme requirements. At least one run (six months FTE) must be in in **rural general practice**.
- **Two runs** (12 months FTE) in **Rural Hospital Medicine** undertaken at different sites. One of the rural hospital runs must be in a Level 3 rural hospital.¹⁶ One rural hospital run is usually taken early in the training programme, the other is undertaken at the end of training and is the site for the RHM Fellowship assessment visit.
- **One run** (six months FTE) in **General Medicine** (three months may be Cardiology or Respiratory Medicine).
- **One run** (six months FTE) in **Emergency Medicine**.
- **0.5 run** (three months FTE) in **Paediatrics**.
- **0.5 run** (three months FTE) in **Anaesthetics and/or Intensive Care**.
- A further **one run** (six months FTE) in **general practice**, during which the general practice Fellowship assessment visit is conducted.¹⁷

7.3. Academic component requirements

Registrars on the dual Fellowship pathway must complete the academic papers required for Division Fellowship, listed under 3.4 above, as per the requirements set out in section 3.8.1 above.

Completion of any of the required courses for the Division training programme will fulfil the academic component requirement for the GPEP programme.

7.4. Learning activities

In addition to the learning activities listed in 3.5 above, registrars on the dual Fellowship training pathway are required to undertake the following formative activities:

- (a) During GPEP Year 1:
- seminar attendance – a minimum attendance of 32 (out of 40) FTE educational days, including any compulsory sessions (or College-approved alternative sessions organised by the registrar)
 - research and presentation of two vignettes, one matched questions, and one 'what the evidence base suggests' (WEBS) resource over the course of the year
 - four video consultations reviewed with the teacher or in the seminar group over the course of the year
 - one in-practice visit per attachment

¹⁶ The rural hospital levels are described in the Division Training Handbook.

¹⁷ Normally undertaken after 30 – 36 months of training.

- patient feedback survey
- an audit of medical practice on a topic of choice, to be presented to the practice, teacher or seminar group
- five after-hour sessions conducted per attachment. These sessions are expected to be four - five hours and should have a focus on acute care rather than scheduled patients. Sessions may be taken in local after-hours clinics or Accident and Medical clinics, provided that supervision (by a Fellow of the College or appropriately vocationally registered doctor) has been arranged.
- a log detailing community visits undertaken to community service providers. A minimum of five visits are expected per attachment.

In addition, registrars are expected to:

- meet with an assigned supervisor of training (GPEP teacher) on a weekly basis
 - undertake research and prepare a seminar presentation
 - undertake any other activities recommended by the GPEP teacher.
- (b) During the third general practice run:
- professional development plan
 - in-practice visit from a medical educator
 - patient feedback survey
 - referral audit
 - medical record review (or approved alternate audit of medical practice)
 - learning group attendance – minimum of six hours of meeting time.

7.5. Resuscitation skills course requirements

Registrars on the dual training pathway must meet the resuscitation skill course requirements set out in section 3.6 above.

7.6. Assessment requirements

The assessment requirements for the dual training pathway are as detailed in section 3.8 above, with the addition of:

- GPEP written examination
- GPEP clinical examination.

General requirements regarding the GPEP examinations are detailed in the College Fellowship Pathway Regulations. Recognition is not normally given for activities undertaken more than eight years previously.

7.7. Fellowship assessment

Registrars on the dual Fellowship training pathway must meet the Fellowship assessment requirements of each programme. The requirements for the Division are set out in section 2.2 and 4 above. The requirements for College Fellowship are outlined in the College Fellowship Pathway Regulations.

8. Registration within the vocational scope of rural hospital medicine

Once Fellowship has been granted, Fellows of the Division may apply to the MCNZ for registration within the vocational scope of rural hospital medicine.

9. Continuing professional development requirements

The Division's continuing professional development programme is designed to meet the MCNZ's recertification requirements for the maintenance of registration within the vocational scope of rural hospital medicine. It also helps rural hospital doctors demonstrate their commitment to quality improvement and lifelong learning.

Further information

For further information, contact the Division:
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