



The Royal
Australian &
New Zealand
College of
Psychiatrists

Certificate of
Postgraduate
Training

in Clinical Psychiatry

Certificate of Postgraduate Training
in Clinical Psychiatry
Program Offering 2024

Upskilling
medical practitioners
in mental health care



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in Clinical Psychiatry

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Background

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) has received funding under the Psychiatry Workforce Program (PWP) to develop the Certificate of Postgraduate Training in Clinical Psychiatry (the Certificate). The PWP is an Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care initiative that has been introduced to address mental health workforce maldistribution and shortages.

The Program aims to improve access to high quality mental health care for all Australians. By developing the program, the RANZCP aims to optimise patient care by supporting medical practitioners in developing enhanced skills to provide mental health care in our communities.

Please note the program being developed by the RANZCP is vocational training for registered medical practitioners and is not a higher education award in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Program summary



Duration

12 months – 48 months



Mode of delivery

Flexible (no placements required)



Fee

Application Fee: \$250.00
Program Fee: \$12,500.00



Intakes

2 per year (March & September)



Eligibility

- current general or current specialist registration as a medical practitioner in Australia
- undertaking fifth or subsequent postgraduate year
- working in Australia with patients who require assessment and/or care and support in relation to their mental health.

About the program

The Certificate of Postgraduate Training in Clinical Psychiatry (the Certificate) is a program for medical practitioners that focusses on the development of practical clinical skills which can be applied to assessing patients who present with new mental health conditions or require assistance and/or support to manage a mental health condition.

Program design

The Certificate is designed to:

- upskill medical practitioners in psychiatry principles and techniques to assist patients with mental health conditions, in the context of their everyday practice
- prompt depth of learning in an elective special interest area, applicable to the patients they consult with
- create pathways to access advice from specialist psychiatrists
- develop a community of medical practitioners who value continuing professional development in mental health and ongoing learning together.

Program aim

The Certificate will optimise patient care by supporting medical practitioners in developing enhanced skills to provide mental health care in our communities.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, applicants must have current general or current specialist registration as a medical practitioner in Australia.

Medical practitioners must be:

- a. undertaking their fifth or subsequent postgraduate year
- b. working in Australia with patients who require assessment and/or care and support in relation to their mental health.

Duration

Minimum time to complete the Certificate

Participants must be engaged in learning within the Certificate for a minimum of 12 calendar months. It is expected that many participants will complete the Certificate over 24 months or longer, applying their learning progressively as they work.

Maximum time to complete the Certificate

Participants must complete all core and elective components of the Certificate within 48 calendar months (4 years) from commencement.

Intakes

Intakes into the program will occur twice in a calendar year. The intake dates for the inaugural year of the program are:

- September 2024
- March 2025

Places into the program are limited.

Prioritisation of applicants to the Certificate will occur should the number of applications exceed the number of places available. Prioritisation into the program will be based on the following principles for applicants:

- a. who have not completed previous education or training in mental health or psychiatry,
- b. who are in a workplace with a high prevalence of patients presenting with mental health conditions,
- c. who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander,
- d. who predominantly work:
 - with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
 - in rural areas as per the [Modified Monash Model 2019 \(MM 2-7\)](#).

Applicants who are unsuccessful for one intake, but deemed suitable for the program, may re-apply for a subsequent intake.

Fees

The Certificate fee schedule is as follows:

| Program Fees | | Amount (Exc. GST) |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Application Fee | Payable per application | \$250.00 |
| Program Fee | Provides 24 months enrolment | \$12,500.00 |
| Extension of enrolment | Provides 24 months enrolment | \$6,250.00 |

Fees are payable at application, enrolment and extension of enrolment, if applicable. Participants are unable to commence the Certificate program until payment is received.

For a further information on the fees for the program, please see the Participants' [Fee and Refund Schedule](#).

Program structure

Flexible Model of Delivery

Participants do not need to complete any rotations or placements at designated accredited sites, and the RANZCP does not find employment for participants while they are enrolled in the Certificate.

Participants will complete the various learning and assessment activities of the Certificate while working as a medical practitioner in Australia in their usual clinical environment or equivalent, with patients who require assessment, care and/or support in relation to mental health.

Participants undertake the Certificate alongside their usual day to day practice as a medical practitioner and make arrangements to complete Structured Feedback Exercises at their place of work.

Learning Environment

Participants complete a range of activities during the Certificate, contributing to an online learning and assessment portfolio. The portfolio contains core and elective learning components.

Core learning focuses on the development of generalisable knowledge and skills which can be applied to various patient presentations.

Elective learning allows participants to select a special interest area to develop specific knowledge and skills for assessing patients from an identified population, or who have symptoms of a specific mental health disorder (or category of mental health disorders), or both, and for supporting patients in relation to their mental health.

Clinical Expertise and Guidance from Psychiatrists

Throughout the program, participants will be guided and assessed by RANZCP Fellows. Participants will engage with psychiatrists who undertake the following roles in relation to learning and assessment of the program:

- Certificate Supervisors
- Certificate Reviewers
- Peer Group Facilitators
- Assessors



Supervision

During the program, participants' learning will be supported by a Certificate Supervisor. The Certificate Supervisor will meet with the participant regularly to review progress (in-person or by video conference).

Certificate Supervisors will:

- facilitate opportunities for the participant to observe psychiatrists and be observed to complete Structured Feedback Activities
- discuss and provide feedback on activities completed within the participant's learning and assessment portfolio
- provide the opportunity for the participant to ask questions about any patients they are working with for whom they may need assistance.

The following table provides examples of potential supervision and review arrangements.

| Engagement | Observations of psychiatrist consultations (Direct observation of psychiatrists by participants in person or by video conference). | Structured Feedback Exercises (Direct observation of participants by psychiatrists in person or by video conference). | Progress Review Meetings (Meetings in person or by video conference). |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Private Practice <i>Most suited to General Practitioners (GPs) and other medical practitioners working in private practices who have patients presenting with mental health conditions, paired with psychiatry supervisors who also work predominantly in private practice or at a private mental health hospital.</i></p> | | | |
| <p>The Certificate participant pairs with a psychiatry supervisor.</p> | <p>The Certificate participant organises to go to the psychiatrists practice at scheduled times to observe the psychiatrist with patients and/or observe consultations. These may be patients that the participant has referred for assessment and/or management.</p> | <p>Structured Feedback Exercises may be conducted at the psychiatrist's rooms or Certificate participant's practice.</p> | <p>Meetings are organised at mutually convenient times to discuss specific experiences and progress in the Certificate.</p> |
| <p>Community Mental Health Services <i>Most suited to medical practitioners who work in settings with limited patients presenting with mental health conditions, do not work at a public hospital and/or are not paired with a psychiatrist supervisor who works in private practice.</i></p> | | | |
| <p>The Certificate participant engages with a community mental health service and a psychiatrist who can provide supervision through the service.</p> | <p>The Certificate participant organises a series of sessions to observe the psychiatrist with patients at the health service or unit. They may also participate in outreach services.</p> | <p>Structured Feedback Exercises are conducted with patients who present to the community clinic.</p> | <p>Meetings are organised to discuss specific experiences and progress in the Certificate when both the Certificate participant and the supervisor are at the community clinic.</p> |
| <p>Public Hospitals that have a Psychiatric Service/Unit <i>Most suited to medical practitioners who work in a hospital that has psychiatry services (minimum consultation-liaison psychiatry service).</i></p> | | | |
| <p>The Certificate participant employed at the hospital engages with the head of the psychiatry department or the psychiatrist working with the emergency mental health care team, to identify a psychiatrist who will provide supervision.</p> | <p>The Certificate participant organises a series of sessions to observe the psychiatrist at outpatient clinics or the emergency mental health care unit/centre.</p> | <p>Structured Feedback Exercises may be conducted with patients in the emergency department, outpatient clinics or inpatient services. The Certificate participant may request that they are observed assessing or providing care in the department in which they work (e.g., the emergency department).</p> | <p>Meetings are organised to discuss specific experiences and progress in the Certificate when both the Certificate participant and the supervisor are at the hospital.</p> |
| <p>Public or Private Hospitals <i>Most suited to medical practitioners working in a hospital who have patients presenting with mental health conditions, paired with psychiatry supervisors also working predominantly in private practice or hospitals.</i></p> | | | |
| <p>The Certificate participant pairs with a psychiatry supervisor.</p> | <p>The Certificate participant organises a series of sessions to observe the psychiatrist at outpatient clinics or their practice.</p> | <p>Structured Feedback Exercises may be conducted at the psychiatrist's rooms or Certificate participant's workplace. The Certificate participant may request that they are observed assessing or providing care at the hospital (e.g., on the ward).</p> | <p>Meetings are organised at mutually convenient times to discuss specific experiences and progress in the Certificate by video conference.</p> |

Certificate curriculum

The [curriculum](#) focuses on providing education and training in foundation concepts of psychiatry, psychiatric assessment and interventions. Knowledge and skills can be applied when assisting patients from a variety of age groups and populations, and to those who require assessment and/or care and support in relation to their mental health.

Key Competencies

The Certificate [Key Competencies](#) outline the expectations of graduates on completion of the program.

The competencies are aligned to the CanMEDS roles, and it is intended that participants build on the knowledge and skills they have attained during their medical education, training and practice to date.

The attainment of each competency is in the context of:

1. the medical practitioner assessing and supporting patients specifically in relation to their mental health
2. the medical practitioner's area of practice, whether that be hospital medicine or a specialty, such as general practice, rural generalism, emergency medicine or paediatrics.

Upon completion of the Certificate, it is not expected that all graduates will be competent to assess and support all patients with mental health conditions.

Curriculum Outcomes

The [Curriculum Learning Outcomes](#) provides an additional level of detail and guide the content of the learning and assessment for the program.

The core areas of learning for the curriculum are:

1. assessment of new mental health presentations,
2. assessment and management of risk,
3. psychosocial interventions,
4. pharmacotherapy.

Learning and assessment

As the Certificate program is competency-based, participants can choose the amount of time they devote to their study to complete the requirements.

Core Components

| Learning | | |
|--|--|--|
| Activity | Requirements | Participants guided by: |
| Initial Supervisor Meeting | Meeting within first 6 weeks | Certificate Supervisor |
| Online Learning Modules | Foundations of Clinical Psychiatry: Concepts to Set the Scene | Certificate Supervisor to discuss Applied Learning |
| | Psychiatric Assessment: Exploring Patients' Presenting Concerns | |
| | Stress, Avoidance and Anxiety: High Prevalence Conditions | |
| | Alcohol and Other Substance Use | |
| | Highs and Lows: The Spectrum of Mood Disorders | |
| | Deliberate Self-Harm, Suicide and Risk Mitigation | |
| | Disordered Thought and Perception: Identifying and Managing Psychosis | |
| | Forgetfulness, Confusion and Aging: Differentiating the Causes of Cognitive Impairment | |
| | Neurodevelopmental Concerns of Children and Adults | |
| | Confronting Disordered Eating | |
| Patient Consultation Observations | 5 observations | n/a |
| Practice Logbook | 40 unique entries | n/a |
| Reflections | 8 reflections | n/a |
| Peer Group Discussion Meetings | 12 hours | Peer Group Facilitator |
| Structured Feedback Exercises | Comprehensive Patient Assessments | Certificate Reviewers |
| | Care Plan Reviews | Certificate Reviewers |
| | Observed Care Plan Discussions | Certificate Reviewers |
| | Case-based Discussions | Certificate Reviewers |

| Assessment | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Assessment | Activity | Participants assessed by: |
| Online Learning Modules | Activities throughout modules | n/a |
| | Applied Learning template responses for each module | Certificate Supervisor |
| Core Clinical Skills Activities | Assessing patients presenting with mental health conditions | Certificate Supervisor |
| | Assessing and managing risk in relation to patients who may harm themselves or others | |
| | Use of psychosocial interventions to support patients in relation to their mental health | |
| | Initiating pharmacotherapy for patients with mental health conditions | |

Elective Components

| Learning | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Activity | Requirements | Participants guided by: |
| Elective Learning Plan | Prepared on template, approved by Certificate Committee | Elective Supervisor |
| Narrative Review | 2000 words | |
| Structured Feedback Exercises | Comprehensive Patient Assessments | |
| | Care Plan Reviews | |
| | Observed Care Plan Discussions | |
| | Case-based Discussions | |

| Assessment | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Assessment | Activity | Participants assessed by: |
| Elective Clinical Skill Activity | As per Elective Learning Plan | Elective Supervisor |
| Oral Presentation | On special interest area | Certificate Assessors |

Recognition of prior learning

Certificate Participants

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will be considered for participants who:

1. enrol in the Certificate for the first time, with previous study and experience
2. who re-enrol in the Certificate after a period of absence and decide to re-commence their learning.

For participants who enrol for the first time, as per the policy, RPL applications must be submitted up until 3 months after the participant commenced the Certificate.

The Certificate participant must have been a registered medical practitioner at the time of completing the study, examination, or activity for which they are requesting RPL and engaged in continuing professional development in relation to mental health between completion of the activity and enrolment in the Certificate.

For participants re-entering the Certificate after a period of absence, participants may apply for RPL and credit for the Online Learning Modules and the narrative review. All other components must be completed during the Certificate.

Former RANZCP Trainees

Trainees who exit the RANZCP Fellowship Program prior to completing Stage 2 can apply for RPL to obtain credit for learning and/or assessment components of the Certificate.

Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Trainees and Fellows

ACRRM Trainees or Fellows who have completed Advanced Specialised Training (AST) in Mental Health and RACGP Trainees or Fellows who have completed Additional Rural Skills Training (ARST) in Mental Health will be able to apply for potential RPL credits.

Further information



Further information on the program is outlined in the following documents:

- [Certificate Policy](#)
- [Certificate Handbook](#)
- [Certificate Prioritisation Guideline](#)

How to apply

Applicants are asked to apply for entry into the program via an online [application form](#). In completing the form, applicants are asked to demonstrate they meet the eligibility criteria and are asked to provide:

- evidence of their medical registration
- details of their medical degree
- details of specialist medical college membership, if applicable
- confirmation of clinical exposure to patients who require assessment, care and/or support in relation to their mental health.
- any previous learning in psychiatry / mental health
- previous employment history and relevant experience in psychiatry / mental health
- psychiatry interest areas
- declaration of any former or current restrictions on their medical registration

In addition, applicants are requested to provide a personal statement to support their application, as well as confirmation that their employer is supportive of them undertaking the program.

Queries

The RANZCP welcomes any queries via email at certpsychhelp@ranzcp.org



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