



Australian
College of
Rural and Remote
Medicine

THE JOHN FLYNN PLACEMENT PROGRAM (JFPP)

COMMUNITY CONTACTS FACT SHEET

Your questions and enquiries are always welcome.
Call the JFPP Team toll free on 1800 231 231

Email jfpp@acrrm.org.au. Fax: 07 3105 8299
Mail GPO Box 2507 Brisbane Q 4001.

INTRODUCTION

The *John Flynn Placement Program* (JFPP) is funded through the *Department of Health and Ageing* and is an important part of the Australian Government's strategy to attract more doctors to rural and remote areas. The *Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine* (ACRRM) administers the program. The JFPP annually selects three hundred (300) first, second and, sometimes, third year medical students annually, from twenty (20) universities, to participate in unique, rural and remote placements. Each student is matched with a medical practitioner and a community contact, who together provide mentorship, support and hospitality for a minimum of two weeks per year, over a four year period. Depending on the number of JFPP mentor doctors in your community, one or more student/s may visit each year.

The program enables students to form long term relationships with their communities. This strategy is based on the understanding that students who develop bonds and friendships within a community will be more likely to return to that or a similar rural community, as future qualified medical practitioners.

Accommodation is arranged and paid for by the program. Mentors and community contacts are welcome, but not obliged, to provide paid host accommodation. (See *Community Hosts*, below, for further information)

JFPP COMMUNITY ROLES

Local councils, community service organisations and individual community members are vital to the success of the program. You can play a very important part in welcoming medical students to your community, giving them an authentic taste of country life, and encouraging them to return one day, as qualified doctors. The program is focused on student enjoyment of your community and the opportunity to develop bonds with its people.

Generally students spend weekdays learning about rural medicine and weekends and some evenings enjoying social activities in the wider community. These arrangements are flexible and responsive to local factors and individual differences.

LOCAL COUNCILS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

- provide the JFPP with information about local facilities and services
- provide a referral and liaison role between the JFPP and their community
- help identify community contacts and accommodation hosts from within their organisations and/or community networks
- sometimes encourage local doctors to participate in the JFPP

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

Community Contacts support JFPP medical students and arrange social interaction for them during their placements, for two weeks per year over four years. Following are some of the tasks performed by Community Contacts.

- Communicate with students prior to their two week annual placement/s, to answer questions about your local area, identify student interests, and begin planning social activities for the student's visit. (Students will ring you with their proposed dates.)
- Provide arrival and departure greetings
- Provide and/or arrange arrival and departure local transport to/from student accommodation;
- Show students their medical site, and brief them about local shops, services, opening hours etc.
- Advise students of local transport options
- Provide local orientation and cultural awareness information
- Invite students to social activities
- Introduce and show students around the community
- Maintain communication with students, and support them throughout their two week placement

COMMUNITY CONTACT ELIGIBILITY

To participate in the JFPP, community contacts need to:

- Maintain knowledge of a range of local community activities suitable for a 20-30 age group (social, sporting, cultural), and investigate opportunities for students to participate in activities
- Refer students to sources of additional information, as requested. e.g.: tourist information, clubs and groups of special interest
- Provide orientation information and materials prior to and during placements. e.g.: maps, public transport information, shop & services opening hours, sometimes accommodation options etc.
- Provide safety advice and cultural awareness relevant to local conditions
- Be accessible to student/s who are placed with you, throughout their fourteen (14) day annual placements; and
- Provide a character reference from a community service organisation, primary health facility, local council (or other referee deemed suitable by the JFPP). Character Referees are nominated on JFPP Community Application Forms, and are checked by the JFPP Team

COMMUNITY HOSTS

A welcoming and happy host accommodation experience enriches students' understanding of rural life and provides a true sense of belonging to the community. Community Organisations and/or Community Contacts are invited, but not expected, to provide host accommodation for JFPP students.

Host accommodation requirements include:

- a warm welcome into your home
- willingness to answer questions and provide support and assistance
- a clean private bedroom with bed, linen, desk, chair, lamp, clothes storage, adequate lighting and ventilation
- access to a clean bathroom
- access to a washing machine, iron, and clothes line or dryer
- use of house keys for day and night access
- heater and fan, as required
- some kitchen and refrigerator space for food storage
- provision of basic breakfast (self service) and dinner, when students have advised that they will be home
- liaison with the community contact to ensure student access to accommodation on arrival (if host accommodation provider is different to community contact)

When staying in host accommodation students are required to:

- pay host \$200 per fortnight, in advance, as a contribution towards food
- request usage and pay host for telephone &/or internet access, if available/required
- advise host with reasonable notice when breakfast and dinner are required
- enter & leave the host accommodation quietly, and with consideration for host security

HOST ACCOMMODATION PROVIDER

To participate in the JFPP, host accommodation providers need to:

- provide accommodation to student/s throughout their fourteen day annual placement/s
- provide a friendly and welcoming home environment for students
- provide a character reference from a community service organisation, primary health facility, local council (or other referee deemed suitable by the JFPP). Character Referees are nominated on Community Application Forms and are checked by the JFPP Team.

Further information about the provision of host accommodation is available from the JFPP Team.

PLACEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- From August each year new JFPP students and their allocated mentors community contacts and hosts (if applicable) receive an Information Kit including confirmation of their inclusion in the program, orientation and support materials, relevant contact details and evaluation forms
- students are advised to make initial contact with their mentor, community contact and host (if applicable) as soon as possible following notification, to arrange dates for their first placement (usually between November & February), and begin the placement planning process.
- for second and subsequent placements, students are required to make timely contact with their mentor and community contact and host (if applicable), to arrange mutually suitable placement dates
- in the event that a community contact, host or mentor is unable to continue in the program, s/he should contact the JFPP team as soon as possible, so that alternative arrangements for the student can be made.

COMMUNITY REWARDS

- playing an important role in maintaining and improving health care in your community and rural Australia
- satisfaction of sharing your experience and understanding of rural life

- opportunity to meet new people from other places
- increased ability to share your skills and experience

PAYMENTS

- JFPP Community Contacts (or their organisation) are paid \$175 (GST inclusive) per student per placement week.
- JFPP Community Hosts are paid \$100 (GST inclusive) per student per placement week for accommodation only. An additional amount of \$100 per week for food (breakfast & dinner only) is payable by the student from his/her allowance, directly to the host.
- on receipt of your Invoice (template will be provided) immediately following each placement, the JFPP will make prompt payment to your selected bank account

REPORTING

Mentors, students, community contacts and hosts are asked to provide a brief Evaluation to ACRRM within six (6) weeks of each placement completion.

We understand that your organisation's office bearers, Community Contacts and Hosts may change over time. Please endeavour to communicate changes to the JFPP Team.

CONTACT THE JFPP TEAM

Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM)

Phone Freecall: 1800 231 231

Email: jfpp@acrrm.org.au

Postal Address: GPO Box 2507 Brisbane Q 4001

Web Site: www.acrrm.org.au

Thank you for supporting the John Flynn Placement Program and encouraging more medical students to consider a career in rural and remote medicine.