

Rural Generalist Recognition Taskforce

PROGRESS UPDATE · APRIL 2024

JOINT APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL RECOGNITION OF RURAL GENERALIST MEDICINE AS A SPECIALISED FIELD OF PRACTICE

The Joint Application of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and the Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP) to the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) for Rural Generalist Recognition is now in its final stage. It is hoped that final advice will be available by the end of the year.

The **national consultation** on the Joint-Application was conducted over 16 October through to 12 December 2023. This was conducted on behalf of the MBA by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) Review Panel, chaired by Prof Chris Baggoley, who are responsible for the joint-application's assessment.

The Review Panel have met following the consultation and requested a meeting with the Taskforce and to visit a Rural Generalist workplace in the next weeks.

Over the next few months, the AMC Review Panel will collate a report which is for approval through AMC governance. A recommendation will be made to the MBA that will in turn make recommendation to the joint Health Ministers.

Should the Health Ministers recognise the new specialist field, this will be incorporated into the national law and included on the national register of specialties. Doctors with an approved Fellowship qualification in Rural Generalist Medicine will be able to apply for specialist registration in the new field.

In parallel with these events, the Taskforce has been seeking to progress wider system adjustments in anticipation of a positive outcome.

- In December 2023, the Taskforce wrote to all state and Territory health departments seeking to commence a dialogue around the implications and opportunities for their respective industrial and clinical frameworks. Positive meetings have been held with senior representatives of the Western Australian, Victorian and Northern Territory health departments.

- In association with the joint application, the Rural Doctors Association of Australia has commenced a consultative project to explore the potential scope for inclusion of Rural Generalist item numbers in the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS).

Background:

The Rural Generalist Recognition Taskforce has been meeting regularly since 2019 to oversee the joint-application to the Medical Board of Australia (Medical Board) for recognition of Rural Generalist Medicine as a specialised field within general practice. It is chaired by the National Rural Health Commissioner, Adjunct Professor Ruth Stewart and includes senior representatives of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM).

The MBA conducted an initial assessment and determined that a case had been established to progress the joint application to a Stage 2 Assessment to be conducted by the AMC. A further assessment determined that an Office of Impact Analysis Regulation Impact Study (RIS) would not be required in the process.

The three joint-applications can be viewed:

- [Stage 1 Application](#)
- [Stage 1 Additional Advice](#)
- [Stage 2 Application](#)

The Medical Board's overarching process and guidelines can be viewed [here](#).

For further information please contact the joint-application secretariat at recognitiontaskforce@acrrm.org.au.