

GP Workforce Planning and Prioritisation Program

In 2022, WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) was selected by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC), to conduct the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Workforce Planning and Prioritisation (WPP) activity across WA. This Activity is funded until the end of 2025.

WAPHA's role is to provide robust, independent, evidence-based recommendations to inform the geographic distribution and priority placement of GP Registrars to meet our community's current and future GP workforce needs. Recommendations provided to DHAC will guide the two GP colleges, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, in selection and placement allocation.

In the future, the colleges may make plans to build or improve the ability to train GPs in high priority locations where GP Registrars may have not previously been placed.



Collaboration and consultation

The GP WPP Team engages with a range of stakeholders to understand issues faced at the local level of primary health care, in particular general practice.

Consultation with Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations in Western Australia (WA) is essential to inform recognition of specific Aboriginal health needs within the prioritisation analysis.



Activity deliverables and governance

Following stakeholder engagement and consultation, WAPHA has established the WA Statewide GP WPP Steering Committee. This group provides information and context, and tests assumptions within the report. Committee members provide support or dissent on the recommended priority placements of GP catchments in greatest need of GP services. This governance process is a requirement prior to submission of the reports to the DHAC. The report includes:

- Workforce needs and placement prioritisation: Priority placement recommendations of GP catchments for GP Registrar training to meet future community needs, based on workforce data, training data and local insight. This analysis is determined according to the WAPHA WPP Data and Reporting Framework.
- Training capacity: Available training capacity (including accreditation status), identification of at-risk training sites and evidence of any training capacity gaps.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is WAPHA's role in the GP Workforce Planning and Prioritisation Activity?

- WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) will provide **advice and analysis on workforce need and training capacity** across each jurisdiction to the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC) and the GP colleges.
- WAPHA's role is to undertake analysis and provide advice that will **guide GP college selection and allocation processes**. This involves **stakeholder engagement at the jurisdictional and regional level** to gain intelligence and test assumptions.
- WAPHA will provide advice to the DHAC on the GP catchments in greatest need of general practitioner services, to inform the distribution of AGPT registrars.

What are the aims of the GP WPP activity?

- The GP WPP activity supports college led general practice training by providing independent, regionally based data and analysis to inform the distribution and placement of registrars training on the AGPT Program.
- The GP WPP activity will:
 - Provide analysis on current and future community needs for general practice services, which will inform the AGPT distribution targets to be met by the GP colleges (and set by the DHAC).
 - Provide advice and analysis on the training capacity across Western Australia, which will assist the GP colleges to match registrars to suitable training placements and inform training capacity building activities.

What is the Data and Reporting Framework?

- The GP WPP activity requires a consistent analytical approach across all PHN regions, while allowing the GP WPP organisations to incorporate local knowledge into their assessments.
- The **National Data and Reporting Framework** (The Framework), developed by the GP WPP organisations, describes the data collection and analysis systems that will be used to inform area-level workforce need and training capacity profiles and set priorities for the allocation of GP Registrars.
- The Framework also articulates:
 - Underpinning principles for the GP WPP analysis including the methodology for data collection and analysis.
 - Relevant and feasible indicators and sources of data.
 - Methods used to co-design The Framework.
- The Framework supports a consistent approach across each GP WPP organisation, while also allowing for localised considerations.

How will WAPHA engage with stakeholders?

- Engage with relevant jurisdictional peak bodies.
- Draw upon stakeholders' distinct expertise and build strong networks with local bodies. This is especially important for the members who have strong links into regional and remote communities.
- There is an opportunity to maximise the value delivered by the GP WPP organisations through building regional and community buy-in via GP WPP stakeholder consultations.

How will the GP WPP activity impact Aboriginal Medical Services /ACCHOs?

- The GP WPP activity will be important for guiding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health stream of the AGPT Program. The First Nations General Practice Training Committee will provide advice on this component of the program. The inaugural meeting of this Committee is scheduled for October 2023.
- Around \$36 million per year is provided through the AGPT Program to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health stream. This includes \$27 million per year allocated to the Salary Support Program, which provides a subsidy to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health settings to offset the cost of the registrar's salary.
- It is important that the GP WPP activity supports these aspects of the AGPT Program. This includes stakeholder consultation on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspects of the prioritisation analysis, which will require further development as this work evolves.

Will registrars be required to train within a single GP Catchment or a single PHN region?

- As is currently the case with registrar placements, there is no compulsion for registrars to work in a single catchment or PHN region for training duration.
- GP WPP organisations advice to support registrars to train within a region is not intended to prevent training in other locations due to registrar preference or training requirements, nor does it preclude post-fellowship changes to practice location for personal or professional reasons (unless subject to location restrictions).

Now that Regional Training Organisations (RTOs) have ceased management of the AGPT Program, will GP catchments or PHN regions become new training boundaries?

- No, from 2024, the GP colleges will define their own regional training boundaries.
- DHAC's use of PHN regions and GP catchments for the purposes of data analysis is not intended to create new proxy training boundaries.
- Training placements for registrars each semester will consider the priority of need within the training region, as well as supervisor and facility capacity in the GP catchments.

Will the GP WPP activity specify the GP catchments where a registrar must be placed?

- The GP WPP activity is providing advice to inform future allocation and distribution of registrar placements. It is not mandating where placements must occur. The placement of registrars remains a decision for the GP colleges who will continue to make placement and selection decisions based on safe, quality care and training.
- There will be no requirement to immediately place registrars in every GP catchment with demonstrated need.
- A core principle of the GP WPP activity is that implementation of distribution targets must not compromise a safe and positive registrar experience.

How will the GP WPP activity work towards meeting community needs if it is not specifying where registrars must be placed?

- DHAC is working with the GP colleges on the approach for translating GP WPP organisations' advice into implementable and measurable distribution targets that achieve the Government's distribution objectives, without compromising a positive and safe registrar experience.
- Distribution targets will require the GP colleges to increase overall registrar training activity across GP catchments that are categorised as most in need.
- There is an expectation that the GP colleges will make plans to build or improve training capacity in high priority catchments where registrars have not been placed.
- This approach will give the GP colleges flexibility in how they meet distribution targets.

Will WAPHA provide career counselling or pastoral care to registrars?

- No, the GP colleges are responsible for these functions.
- Many PHNs and Rural Workforce Agencies provide professional development, community integration and other supports to GPs, registrars and supervisors.
- If the GP WPP activity is being performed by a PHN or RWA in a particular region, this does not prevent a registrar or supervisor from engaging with the support and other services they offer.

How can I contribute to the GP WPP activity?

- GP WPP organisations are required to collaborate with existing workforce planning organisations and local stakeholders, including with jurisdictional health departments and local health districts.
- GP WPP organisations hold stakeholder forums in each PHN region to test their analysis and conclusions.
- Strong local and regional engagement provides a platform for joint local planning, aims to foster regional community buy-in and will ensure local insights are reflected in GP WPP organisation advice.
- Contact the WAPHA for information about opportunities to contribute.

When will the GP WPP activity release reports publicly?

- The Department and GP WPP organisations are working together on a plan to publish information relating to the GP WPP activity.
- The Department anticipates this will occur in the first half of 2024.
- There is no intent to release the reports that are provided to the Department in full as they are provided in a format not suitable for public release and there are privacy considerations. It is likely that information relating to the key findings and recommendations in each GP WPP region will be provided.

What is the Australian General Practice Training Program and the role of the GP colleges?

- The Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program is a three to four-year GP training program that offers 1,500 commencing training places each year. It provides registrars with medical education in addition to training placements to support their learning towards General Practice fellowship.
- From 1 February 2023, responsibility for the administration and delivery of the AGPT program transferred from a model led by Regional Training Organisations (RTOs) to a GP college led model.
- Under the college led training model, it is the role of the GP colleges to deliver a high-quality GP training program that educates and distributes a GP workforce to provide appropriate general practitioner care to address the needs of all population groups across Australian communities.
- This includes responsibility for the development and management of the GP colleges' individual AGPT training policies registrar management, including career planning, selection, placements, pastoral care, and appeals.
- The information collated by the GP WPPs will assist the GP colleges to determine the priority locations for registrar training through detail of community need as well as information related to the training capacity of communities and practices.



Acknowledgement

WA Primary Health Alliance acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners and Elders of this country and recognises the significant importance of their cultural heritage, values and beliefs and how these contribute to the positive health and wellbeing of the whole community.

Disclaimer

WA Primary Health Alliance's publications and the material within them are intended for general information purposes only. Please read our full [disclaimer](#). While the Australian Government contributed funding for this material, it has not reviewed the content and is not responsible for any injury, loss or damage however arising from the use of or reliance on the information provided herein.

✉ info@wapha.org.au

/company/wapha

/WAPHA_PHNs

☎ 1300 855 702

/waphaphns

www.wapha.org.au