

Education and Training Complaints and Appeal Procedure

1.0 Related Policy

Education and Training Complaints and Appeal Policy

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Complainant

A person who initiates a complaint or appeal regarding activities related to the process and/or outcomes of education and training provided by Northern Territory General Practice Education Ltd. (NTGPE). Complainants could include program participants and/or General Practice Trainers/Placement Supervisors and training posts/placement locations who provide clinical placement and supervision of program participants.

2.2 Program Participant

General Practice Registrars (GPRs), Junior Doctors (JDs), medical students and/or International Medical Graduates (IMG) undertaking training and/or clinical placement with NTGPE.

2.3 General Practice Trainer (GPT)

A qualified vocationally registered General Practitioner who is also accredited to train General Practice Registrars (GPRs) in the clinical setting in the NT, They may hold either a Fellow of the Royal College of General Practitioners (RACGP) or Fellow of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) or equivalent. GPTs are responsible for clinical education and placement management including the role of general practice supervisor and mentor. GPTs may also supervise and support program participants in the Prevocational General Practice Placement Program (PGPPP), Rural Undergraduate Support and Coordination (RUSC) Program and International Medical Graduate Education and Support (IMGES) Program.

2.4 Placement Supervisor

A placement supervisor is a placement location staff member who has accepted responsibility for the supervision, mentoring and education of NTGPE program participants. The placement supervisor need not be a General Practitioner (GP) but usually is a GP.

2.5 Training Post

A general practice, hospital, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or other health service accredited for GPR training and/or Junior Doctor placement.

2.6 Placement Location

A general practice, hospital, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or other health service where Rural Undergraduate Support and Coordination (RUSC) program participants are undertaking medical education and training and/or clinical placement with NTGPE. These places may or may not be accredited for General Practice (GP) training.

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2.7 Trainer Liaison Officer (TLO)

An accredited General Practice Trainer (GPT) employed by NTGPE who actively communicates with NTGPE and the GPT group on a wide range of issues related to training of General Practice Registrars (GPRs), Junior Doctors (JDs), Medical Students and International Medical Graduates (IMG). They assist NTGPE to provide relevant and timely support and advice to GPTs. They also help to address any issues or problems the program participants or GPTs wish to bring to the attention of NTGPE.

2.8 Training Adviser (TA)

A Medical Educator, who as part of their role, acts as an adviser or mentor to the General Practice Registrar during their training program.

2.9 Program Coordinator (PC)

A highly skilled administrative person who assists and supports NTGPE teaching (Medical and Aboriginal Cultural Educators) staff in the delivery of all aspects of the relevant training program; General Practice Registrar (GPR) Program, Prevocational General Practice Placements Program (PGPPP), Rural Undergraduate Support and Coordination (RUSC) Program and International Medical Graduate Education and Support (IMGES) Program.

3.0 Procedure

NTGPE aims to resolve complaints as quickly and informally as possible. Most complaints are resolved through informal discussion with relevant parties. Less than 10% require resolution through the formal process.

3.1 Complaint Process

- 3.1.1 Where possible the complainant raises their concern, in the first instance, with the person directly involved to resolve the issue informally.
- 3.1.2 If the complainant is unable to resolve the issue, they contact the Program Coordinator, Trainer Liaison Officer, Placement Supervisor, Training Adviser and/or other appropriate NTGPE personnel orally or electronically for assistance. NTGPE will endeavor to assist the complainant by providing information, advice and/or informally discussing the issue with the relevant parties.
- 3.1.3 Complaints relating to NTGPE personnel may be directed to the Director Medical & Cultural Education (DMCE) or the Executive Director (ED).
- 3.1.4 Although NTGPE has no direct jurisdiction in employer related issues for GPRs and IMGs, NTGPE will facilitate the discussion of issues impacting on a program participant's wellbeing and/or training outcomes. This may involve implementing agreed strategies to improve the learning environment.
- 3.1.5 If informal discussions are not successful and/or the complainant is not satisfied, the complainant formally writes a letter to the DMCE. This letter should be submitted within 30 calendar days of the issue arising.

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- 3.1.6 The DMCE acknowledges the complaint in writing within seven days and investigates the matter with all concerned parties as follows:
- for non assessment complaints, the investigation is conducted according to the nature and seriousness of the matter and may include internal mediation with the concerned parties or, if required, external investigators may be engaged; and
 - for complaints regarding assessment, remarking or reassessment may be considered.
- 3.1.7 The DMCE responds to the complainant in writing within 30 calendar days of receiving the complaint with the results of the investigation and reasons for the decision. Outcomes of the investigation may include:
- that no further action should be taken; or
 - information about the corrective action; and if required
 - strategies and ongoing monitoring to prevent a similar occurrence.
- 3.1.8 All parties are advised of the entitlement to use the Appeal Process described below and/or any external organisations that may assist should the complaint remain unresolved; for example General Practice Education and Training (GPET) in relation to the GPR Program, PGPPP at employing hospitals/RACGP/ACRRM.

3.2 Appeals Process

- 3.2.1 If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation of the complaint or assessment, they lodge an appeal in writing to the Executive Director (ED) within 14 calendar days of being advised of the outcome.
- 3.2.2 The appeal is acknowledged in writing within 14 days and all parties are informed of the appeal process.
- 3.2.3 For appeals involving assessment, an independent panel acceptable to all parties is convened within 30 calendar days to review the previous investigation and/or remark or reassess the previous training assessment
- 3.2.4 For appeals not directly related to assessment:
- the ED arranges mediation between all parties within 30 calendar days of the appeal being lodged; and
 - appellants may be referred to a suitable external organisation for counseling.
- 3.2.5 In all cases, the appeal is conducted in a transparent, fair and impartial manner.
- 3.2.6 The results of the appeal and corrective action to be taken are reported in writing to all concerned parties.

3.3 Recourse

All appeals are final, except in the case of assessment appeals for GPRs in which case the appellant may approach the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) for a final decision.

3.4 Documentation

- 3.4.1 For informal complaints/concerns:
- the incidents are noted and stored in the relevant program participant file; and

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- the PC records the relevant data on the *Education and Training Informal Complaints Register* which is stored in a secure folder.

3.4.2 For formal complaints and/or appeals:

- the DMCE sends written documentation of the complaint and/or appeal and investigation result to the Quality Assurance (QA) Manager to store in the Complaints and Appeals file;
- documentation is stored in the relevant program participant, training post/placement location and/or GPT/placement supervisor file to indicate there is supplement information on the Complaints and Appeals file; and
- the QA Manager enters relevant data on the *Education and Training Formal Complaints and Appeals Register* which is stored in a secure folder accessed solely by the NTGPE Executive.

3.4.3 The QA Manager reviews the registers on a regular basis and reports quarterly to the ED.

4.0 Related Documents

4.1 NTGPE Documents

- Performance Assessment, Monitoring and Intervention (PAMI) for General Practice Registrars Policy and related procedures
- GPT and Training Post Performance Monitoring Policy and related procedures
- Supervision Quality Parameters for GPRs Policy and related procedures
- Practice Agreement

4.2 Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Documents

- Standards for General Practice Education and Training Trainers and Training Posts, 2005
- Curriculum for Australian General Practice, 2007
- Standards for the Supervision of Prevocational Doctors in General Practice, 2007

4.3 Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) Documents

- Standards for Teaching Posts and Teachers in Rural and Remote Medicine, 2006
- ACRRM Primary Curriculum, 3rd edition

4.4 AGPT Program Policies, 2006, 6.7 Role and Function of the General Practice Education and Training (GPET) Assessment and Review Panel (GARP)

4.5 Australian Curriculum Framework for Junior Doctors, 2008, Confederation of Postgraduate medical Education Councils.

5.0 Attachments

5.1 Education and Training Formal Complaints and Appeals Register

5.2 Education and Training Informal Complaints Register

6.0 Effective From

This procedure is effective from 12 January 2010.

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