Prevocational General Practice Placement Program (PGPPP) Fact Sheet

In Tasmania, the University of Tasmania through the Rural Clinical School and General Practice Training Tasmania have formed a collaboration to support the PGPPP.

General Practice Training Tasmania’s (GPTT) purpose is to provide best practice training to develop General Practice capacity in Tasmania. The Rural Clinical School’s (RCS) purpose is both to train medical students and junior doctors to meet the future health needs of rural communities, and to encourage health professionals to engage in clinical teaching and research within the North West region of Tasmania. RCS clinical training includes General Practice.

While each entity has a distinctly different purpose, they share a common focus to build General Practice capacity in rural Tasmania through the PGPPP and support for GP supervisors.

While maintaining separate roles, the RCS and GPTT work collaboratively to build on a common focus. The RCS is responsible for all rural placements, and GPTT takes care of urban placements.

**PGPPP represents an opportunity for Post Graduate Junior Doctors to gain exposure to all aspects of community based medicine through General Practice.**

**PGPPP aims to:**

- provide well supervised general practice placements for junior doctors in outer metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas,
- enhance junior doctors’ understanding of the integration between primary and secondary health care,
- provide junior doctors with a positive and confidence building experience in practice, and
- encourage junior doctors to take up general medicine as a career choice, particularly in areas of unmet need.

**PGPPP benefits include:**

- hands on experience in general practice and procedural medicine including surgery, emergency medicine, anaesthetics and obstetrics,
- direct care of patients from local communities with opportunity for follow up care,
- lifestyle balance with community support in some of Australia’s most scenic rural areas,
- remuneration on par with hospital training including fully furnished accommodation supplied, and
- constant supervision and mentoring by experienced GP Supervisors.
Frequently asked questions:

Who is eligible for PGPPP?

Currently PGY2 and 3 are eligible for PGPPP and we are planning to extend the program to interns in the North West in 2011, and extend state wide by 2012.

International Medical Graduates are able to participate upon successful completion of AMC examinations.

How will I be paid during my PGPPP term?

Your pay will continue as normal. During the course of the placement you will remain an employee of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Tasmania and therefore, will be paid by the relevant hospital.

Will I be expected to complete on-call duties?

Rostering for limited on-call duties is negotiated between you and the Practice.

Is there an opportunity for increased earnings?

Opportunities for limited over-time may enable participants to increase their earnings. Participants are also able to contact their hospital and register for weekend work, for example in Department of Emergency Medicine (DEM).

Will I be supported?

A huge amount of support is available from all organisations involved in PGPPP.

The Practice will ensure a Supervisor is accessible to you at all times, to provide clinical advice and assistance, either directly or by telephone.

Post Graduate Junior Doctors see patients appropriate to their level of experience, initially with direct supervision and then without supervision and review as needed.

The Practice will support you in your ongoing learning by enabling you to attend educational activities during paid time.

GPTT organises orientation to general practice. GPTT is also available to provide you with support in relation to specific educational needs and provides advice throughout your placement. You will also be able to participate in workshops provided by GPTT to Registrars as part of their training.

The RCS is available throughout rural placement terms to support and to help make your rural placement an enjoyable experience.
Increasingly the Specialist Medical Colleges are supportive of PGPPP and working towards the development of training pathways that recognize community based terms.

*Which Practices/Communities are available?*

In the Southern Region, currently terms are available at New Norfolk (rural) and Sorrell (outer metropolitan).

Northern Region, Scottsdale, Longford and George Town (rural) along with Newstead and Summerdale (outer metropolitan).

North West, Ulverstone and Smithton (rural).

*How does Medical Indemnity Cover work during my placement?*

As you remain an employee of the DHHS Tasmania, your current insurance will continue to cover you.

*What else will I do on the PGPPP?*

During the attachment you will be encouraged to participate in social, cultural and recreational activities in the community. It is hoped that you will learn to recognise and appreciate the advantages of practicing medicine in rural areas and develop an understanding of the strong feelings in these communities and the special qualities not found in cities. You will learn about the way in which close-knit communities have a strong set of behavioural norms and social attitudes that have effects on the health status of the community. While always being ready to help someone in need, the preferred attitudes and values are those of self-sufficiency and independence.
The Derwent Valley Medical Centre (DVMC) provides 90% of Primary Health care to the Derwent Valley and surrounding areas, with approximately 12,500 active patients. The Centre provides comprehensive General Practice to all individuals and families in the community. Visiting specialties include Psychologists, Exercise Physiologist, Podiatrist, Diabetes Educator, Urologist, and Hobart Pathology services. There are 3 full time GPs and 4 part time GPs working in the practice. Other practice staff includes a Practice Manager, 2 Registered Nurses and 2 Enrolled Nurses and 4 receptionists. Surgery hours are 8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. on weekdays, Surgery is closed on Saturdays There is an after hour’s service available, afterhours is shared on a roster basis, and DVMC also uses the deputising service GP Assist.

DVMC is an Accredited Practice with AGPAL and won the “2008 AGPAL Practice of the Year award”. This award is presented to an AGPAL Accredited Practice which has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to quality and safety and has achieved accreditation at the highest level. It is a credit to the DVMC Doctors, Staff and Management to be the recipient of this prestigious award.

In January 2010, an extension to the Practice was completed which includes an extra Treatment Room, two additional consulting rooms, Allied Health room and a Library. There are now three Treatment Rooms, eleven consulting rooms, two waiting areas and a Library and Allied Health room. This is a state of the art practice with excellent facilities. The Practice received a Grant from Department of Health and Ageing, as part of the National Rural and Remote Health Infrastructure Grants to extend teaching capacity and to optimise ability to recruit and retain doctors through a vertical integrated pathway. The Practice continues to provide undergraduate medical teaching, and due to increased space and
capacity has increased teaching load. The Practice also provides undergraduate nursing teaching.

The Practice has an intake of Medical Students, PGPPP Doctors, General Practice Training Tasmania (GPTT) Registrars, John Flynn Scholars and Nursing Students. The local hospital – New Norfolk District Hospital is a 2 minute walk from the surgery, with 12 Acute beds. GPs can admit to this local hospital and there are also Allied Health Services and Community Nursing available from the Hospital.

Corumbene Nursing home has Practice doctors looking after 90% of the residents. Corumbene has 71 beds and 2 respite beds.

New Norfolk is a rural community 35 minutes from the centre of Hobart, and the Royal Hobart Hospital. New Norfolk produces the majority of hops used by Australian breweries. The town and region contains some historic properties that have been authentically restored to the colonial era, with some buildings predating those at Port Arthur. The Derwent Valley has some amazing lakes, rivers and streams providing some of the world’s finest fly fishing. Mount Field National Park is also within close range, and offers a wide variety of scenic features and wildlife.

### Anne Street Medical Services, Georgetown

Anne Street Medical Services is a group Practice with on-site X-ray with digital processing, next to a 15 acute bed GP District Hospital and Regional Health Service Centre. The Practice is AGPAL accredited and fully computerised.

PGPPP participants have their own consulting room. The Practice also has a teaching room and multiple treatment/procedure rooms.

**Training Opportunities include:**
- exposure to, and involvement with trauma care in a rural setting providing triage and trauma care to the George Town Municipality in conjunction with the Ambulance Tasmania,
- skilling in GP Radiography, use of a slit lamp in the practice,
- Involvement with inpatient care at the George Town Hospital,
• participation in minor surgical procedures including vasectomies,
• sharing in the rostered on call service (under supervision of a senior rural GP),
• enjoying a rural lifestyle in comfortable accommodation, and
• getting involved with the local community – watersports, walking, rock climbing.

George Town is one of the largest towns in the Tamar Valley, 40 minutes drive north-west of Launceston on the eastern side of the Tamar River.

George Town is home to two of northern Tasmania’s largest industries, located at nearby Bell Bay. Bell Bay is also the location of the Australian Maritime College’s firefighting facility. There are plenty of recreational activities in George Town and the surrounding areas. Apple and strawberry farms are located to the east of George Town at Lefroy, and also to the south. Pipers Brook vineyards, one of Tasmania’s most recognized wine labels, are to the east of George Town. Self-guided walking tours of the town give historical insights. The Maritime Museum at Low Head, north of George Town, marks Australia’s oldest continuously used pilot station, founded 1803. Low Head also has surf and swimming beaches, and a fairy penguin observatory, with guided tours available.

There are several cruises available departing from George Town. Wildlife watching tours are available, which takes passengers to the fur seal colony and dolphin & seabird spotting. There are also "thrill seeker" cruises, and day or weekend cruises to Bass Strait islands on the SS Furneaux Explorer.

Scottsdale Doctors’ Surgery

The Practice is supported by six medical practitioners, two part time nurses, one full time and five part time receptionists. The Practice’s main surgery is a custom built medical centre located in the centre of Scottsdale, with a branch surgery at the nearby seaside town of Bridport. Both the Scottsdale and Bridport surgeries are AGPAL accredited. The Scottsdale building consists of 4 consulting rooms, 1 examination room, practice manager’s room, treatment room, minor procedure theatre, staff room. The Practice is equipped for minor procedures including audiometry, ECG, liquid N2, oxygen, diathermy (hyprecator) and sonicaid.

The North-Eastern Soldiers Memorial Hospital (NESMH) is a public hospital situated about 1 km from the surgery and has 50 beds, half of which are geriatric. General medicine, minor
surgery and obstetrics are conducted here. The hospital is staffed by the Practice doctors and solo practitioners (in town on a sessional basis) who tend to act as resident/registrar/consultants while undertaking their normal work in their practices. The Scottsdale Doctors Surgery doctors do a ward-round together every weekday morning and the duty doctor will see patients at the weekend. Obstetric patients are usually managed by their own doctor.

X-ray facilities are available in normal hours with a full-time radiographer at the hospital. IVP, cholecystograms may be done. More detailed X-rays may be referred to Launceston where they provide an excellent public and private service including ultrasound, nuclear, CT and MRI scans.

An Occupational Therapist is employed on a full-time basis at the NESMH. A community health nursing service is provided from the hospital. There are two physiotherapy practices in Scottsdale. An ambulance service is provided through the NESMH.

All practice GPs participate in normal consulting hours which are 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. – 6 p.m. daily with an appointments system in operation. House visits are done within a 10 km radius of the Scottsdale-Bridport area.

The Practice maintains a clinical interest in:

- Obstetrics
- A & E
- Hospital operating
- Minor surgery
- Enhances Primary Care
- Asthma

Scottsdale is the largest town in north-east Tasmania. Near Scottsdale is Nabowla, where the largest lavender farm in the southern hemisphere can be found, and is one of the area’s major tourist attractions. Another major industry for the area is forestry, with several mountain forestry reserves close to Scottsdale. South Springfield Forest Park and Mt. Maurice Forest Reserve are both to the south of Scottsdale. The Sidling Range lookout is a short drive to the east of the town, and gives wide-ranging views of the area. Cuckoo falls and the Tonganah hopfields are even closer to the town. Approximately 30 minutes drive to the north of Scottsdale is the coastal town of Bridport, where fishing is a popular recreational activity.
Longford Medical Services is a rural-based general medical Practice with dedicated General Practitioners. Longford is a 25 minute drive from the nearest city and general hospital in Launceston. Eight Doctors are employed by the Practice. After-hours care is provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The majority of staff are long-serving members, some with more than 30 years of service to the Practice. The Practice is fully computerized, using Best Practice and Pracsoft for billing and appointments. Documents and letters are scanned to the patient’s file. The Practice has five consulting rooms in Longford and two in Perth. Longford also has a nurse treatment room and a minor theatre.

There is a high level of commitment within the Practice to:
- health promotion and disease prevention,
- a highly effective reminder system that maintains good communication with patients,
- communication and interaction with other health services in the community and between general practitioners and staff members,
- continued professional development and ongoing training for all, and
- the Practice provides opportunistic preventative care and early detection using scientifically validated guidelines.

Longford Medical Services was named the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) National General Practice of the year, 2007.

Longford is centre for the local farming district, and is officially classified as an historic town, with many of the buildings built by convicts. The town is home to Woolmer’s Estate, being Australia’s most historic family estate. This property is open to the public with scheduled guided tours, along with Brickendon homestead. The Longford Wildlife Park has native Australian animals. Close to Longford are Cressy and Brumby’s Creek, famous for fly-fishing.
Patrick Street Clinic, Ulverstone

Patrick Street Clinic’s mission is to be recognised by the Central Coast community as a leader in quality health care and service, and aims to provide the best medical care for patients incorporating best practice principals, up to date knowledge and technical advances.

Patrick Street Clinic is a rural group practice in the north-west Tasmanian coastal town of Ulverstone. The practice is situated close to a shopping centre, in a converted residence, which has recently been extended and tastefully renovated. The practice was established many years ago by two of the practitioners, who, in the 1960s, were partly responsible for the establishment of the RACGP.

Eleven doctors are currently employed by the practice (10.56 FTE). After-hours care is provided in conjunction with the other large practice in the township. The closest hospitals are 20 minutes drive at Burnie and Latrobe.

The Practice is an AGPAL accredited general medical family practice. The Practice offers private billing with an emphasis on quality of care for patients. Patrick Street is an Accredited Teaching Practice. The practice is fully computerised, using Best Practice, Pracsoft billing and appointments. Documents, letters and notes are all scanned to patient’s file.

**Procedures and services offered at Patrick Street Clinic include:**
- Registered Nurses / Enrolled Nurses available daily
- Blood tests
- Cardiographs
- Trauma Care
- Suturing
- Cryotherapy
- Obstetric Care

- Minor Surgery
- Workplace Medicals
- Lung Function Tests
- Family Planning
- Tympanometry
- Vaccinations

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Ante-Natal Care  Immunisations
Allergy Testing  Desensitisation
Travel Medicine  Annual medical checkups
Audiometry

Local Ancillary Services:
Ambulance
Red Cross Transport
Meals on Wheels
Community Nursing

Smithton Medical Services

Smithton is in the far North West of Tasmania, about 45 minutes from Wynyard airport. The district boasts prosperous farming land, a varied and often spectacular coastline and some of Tasmania’s famous rainforest wilderness and wild rivers. Smithton has a moderate maritime climate with occasional exposure to the Roaring Forties.

This environment provides many recreational opportunities and there is also a wide range of organised sporting activities for adults and children. The district has a progressive expanding economy based on farming, forestry, fishing and tourism.

The Circular Head municipality has a population in excess of 8000. Smithton itself has a population of around 3,500. Picturesque, historic Stanley is also in the municipality. The Smithton Medical Centre is a fully accredited Medical Practice.

Four practices in the region have been gradually amalgamated to form a successful group practice which has improved the services offered to the community and the lifestyle of the doctors by allowing a less stressful working environment and enhancing professional support.

The practice is in a rural situation – 86 km (one hour by road) from the base hospital at Burnie.

The practice is supported locally by:
• the Smithton District Hospital (A GP run hospital),
• a community nursing service,
• visiting medical specialists – Psychiatrist, Respiratory physician,
• visiting allied health professionals (Physiotherapist, Optician, Dentist, R radiographer, Podiatrist,
• annual services: Diabetes Clinic (Endocrinologist, Dieticians, Podiatrists, Diabetes Nurse Educator) Breast screening service (mammography),
• ambulance service with an ALS trained office always on roster,
• 24 hour airstrip for fixed wing retrieval (eg major trauma, sick neonates),
• community based resource and counseling service,
• 2 local pharmacies, and
• an aged care facility.

The surgery is a delightful converted and refurbished federation home with seven spacious consultation rooms, minor procedure theatre, nursing sister’s room, reception area and staff room, practice managers office, waiting room with separate children’s play area.

Equipment includes spirometer, ECG, liquid nitrogen, slit lamp, audiometry, and equipment for minor procedures including sigmoidoscopy and vasectomy. There is a glucometer in each consulting room.

The practice has a strong commitment to ongoing education with weekly lunch time meetings, RACGP TP accreditation, final year medical student and preclinical University of Tasmania student community health placements. The practice is also Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) accredited.

In co-ordination with Smithton District Hospital, the practice offers an annual Diabetic Clinic involving a Visiting Endocrinologist, Ophthalmologist, Dieticians, Diabetes Educators and Podiatrist.