General practice experience assessments

The AMDS Program is a mechanism for doctors who nominate that they are seeking to attain vocational qualifications in general practice to obtain clinical experience. From 1 March 2018, the Department of Health (Health) will assess a doctor's grounds to participate on the AMDS Program according to evidence that the doctor:

- meets the minimum medical registration requirements for participating on the Program (as per the revised AMDS Guidelines, this is generally taken to mean general registration with the Medical Board of Australia); and
- is seeking a placement for the purpose of attaining clinical experience that will support attainment of vocational recognition (VR) through Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP) or the Australian College of General Practitioners (FACRRM).

Health will apply the first of these considerations using the doctor's medical registration record, which is publicly available in its current form from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's website in most cases. If Health has questions regarding a prospective participant doctor's medical registration, these will be referred to the AMDS provider that nominated them for a placement as part of the assessment process.

To satisfy the second consideration, the doctor will be required to provide Health with an assessment of their general practice experience as evidence of their intent to satisfy the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) eligibility requirements under s19AA of the Health Insurance Act 1973 (the HIA) by becoming a VR GP. This fact sheet explains how this requirement will apply as part of the AMDS Program application process from 1 March 2018.

When must a new participant provide their general practice experience assessment?

From 1 March 2018, Health will grant an initial placement on the AMDS Program to a doctor who does not hold a current assessment of their general practice experience. This initial placement will be granted for:

- a period of six months; or
- until the end date specified on the AMDSs current Deed for the Program (this applies where the provider's current Deed terminates before a period of six months). Health will extend the doctor upon renewal of the AMDS's Deed in these cases, but the doctor will remain limited to an initial six month period of participation.

The initial six month placement will only be extended if the doctor has provided their general practice experience assessment to Health through their AMDS.

What will Health accept as a general practice experience assessment?

A general practice experience assessment must be from the RACGP. It must be current, meaning it was provided by the RACGP in the six month period immediately preceding the AMDS placement request.

Contacting Health for further information

The Access Programs Section of Health is responsible for the AMDS Program. The AMDS Program is supported by a dedicated in-box: AMDS@health.gov.au. Further information regarding the AMDS Program can be obtained by emailing this in-box. The Access Programs Section responds to all emails within a 28 day timeframe.

Further reading

AMDS Program Guidelines – AMDS providers and prospective participants are encouraged to note Health's timeframes for assessing placement requests (the normal assessment timeframes apply when a doctor renews a placement on the basis of having received their general practice experience assessment:
http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/approved-medical-deputising-service

The RACGP's General Practice Experience Pathway:
https://www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/imgaus/pep/

The RACGP's General Practice experience assessment application form:
https://www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/imgaus/fracgpapp/

The RACGP's policy for assessing general practice experience:
https://www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/policies/assessment-of-general-practice-experience-policy/