

Section 19AA and approved 3GA programs

About Section 19AA

Section 19AA of the [Health Insurance Act 1973](#) determines who can bill patients under Medicare.

Under Section 19AA, doctors who are permanent residents or Australian citizens are able to access a Medicare provider number once they are:

- recognised as a Fellow by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
- recognised as a Fellow by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM)
- recognised as a Fellow by an Australian specialist college
- on an approved 3GA program.

Approved 3GA programs

Medical practitioners who do not have fellowship can apply for an approved 3GA program that will provide access to a Medicare provider number and billing whilst they work towards fellowship.

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and temporary residents may also be eligible to participate in 3GA programs, but they need to satisfy the requirements of Section 19AB or qualify for a Section 19AB exemption.

The following approved 3GA programs will enable access to a Medicare provider number and billing.

More Doctors for Rural Australia Program

The [More Doctors for Rural Australia Program \(MDRAP\)](#) assists non-vocationally recognised (nonVR) doctors gain general practice experience in rural and remote communities prior to joining a college fellowship pathway.

MDRAP placements must be completed in a Distribution Priority Area (DPA) that is classified as a Modified Monash Model (MMM) area MM 2 to MM 7, at an Aboriginal Medical Service or an Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Service.

The MDRAP is a two year program that requires participants to make at least one application to a fellowship program each year through either of the general practice colleges (RACGP or ACRRM).

Participants of the MDRAP are required to complete “The foundation of general practice” training modules within six months of joining the program.

RACGP Practice Experience Program

The [RACGP Practice Experience Program \(PEP\)](#) is a self-directed fellowship training program.

The PEP consists of terms which are six months in duration and it may take 12-18 months to complete the program, depending on when it is commenced.

To be eligible for the PEP, doctors must work in MM 2 to MM 7 areas.

ACRRM Independent Pathway

The [ACRRM Independent Pathway](#) is a flexible training pathway with a structured education program, developed and delivered by Fellows of ACRRM.

Training placements are undertaken in ACRRM accredited locations in MM 2 to MM 7 areas.

The ACRRM Independent Pathway is a four year training program.

Australian General Practice Training Program

The [Australian General Practice Training \(AGPT\) Program](#) provides 1,500 Government-funded places for registrars to complete supervised GP training.

AGPT is run Australia-wide and registrars can select either a general or rural pathway in their application. If a rural pathway is selected, the registrar is required to work at least 12 months in an MM 2 to MM7 location.

Participants are required to register with a regional training organisation (e.g. WAGPET) and undertake GP fellowship with either RACGP or ACRRM (or both).

Remote Vocational Training Scheme

The [Remote Vocational Training Scheme](#) is a vocational training program for medical practitioners who are already working in an eligible location. The program provides access to Medicare billing whilst participants complete GP fellowship with RACGP or ACRRM (or both).

The three to four year program enables doctors to complete training in a remote location classified MM 4 to MM 7 or at an Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Service located in an MM 2 to MM 7 area.

Approved Medical Deputising Services Program

The Approved Medical Deputising Services Program aims to provide valuable general practice experience for non-vocationally recognised (nonVR) doctors by allowing them to work after-hours in supervised deputised positions.

Through this program, doctors are eligible to bill for some Medicare items and must actively work towards fellowship of either RACGP or ACRRM.

While it is a two year program, requests for extensions will be considered on an annual basis for up to a maximum of 10 years.

Approved Private Emergency Department Program

Through the Approved Private Emergency Department Program, advanced specialist trainees undertaking emergency medicine training can work in a Government approved private hospital and access applicable Medicare items for billing for 12 months.

3GA programs closed to new applicants

The Rural Locum Relief Program, Special Approved Placements Program and Temporary Resident Other Medical Practitioners Program are now closed to new applicants, however current participants can still access a Medicare number under Section 19AA.

Further information

To find out more about Section 19AA and approved 3GA programs, contact Rural Health West Permanent Recruitment by calling 08 6389 4500 or emailing recruit@ruralhealthwest.com.au

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.

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