Fact Sheet

General Practice Accreditation and Standards

**What is general practice accreditation?**

Established in the 1990’s, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for general practices and the associated accreditation processes were developed to encourage general practice quality improvement.

**Assessment**

A general practice can self assess against the RACGP Standards or seek independent accreditation by an approved third party, such as

- Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL); or
- GPA ACCREDITATION plus

**What are the benefits?**

Accreditation encourages general practice continual improvements and best practice standards.

An accredited general practice is also eligible to participate in the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) administered by Medicare Australia.

Current PIP incentive payments include:

- Asthma Incentive
- Cervical Screening Incentive
- Diabetes Incentive
- eHealth Incentive
- GP Aged Care Access Incentive
- Indigenous Health Incentive
- Practice Nurse Incentive Program
- Procedural GP Payment
- Quality Prescribing Incentive (QPI)
- Rural Loading
- Teaching Incentive

Note: From the 1 July 2013 the After Hours Incentive is no longer paid

**How can our practice demonstrate achievement?**

There are a range of methods and techniques that can be used to demonstrate your practice achievements against the standards, criteria and indicators including:

- Patient records
- Practice documentation such as the practice policy and procedure manual, practice information sheet, staff position descriptions, temperature data logs for vaccine refrigerators, quality improvement and continuing professional development [QI&CPD] data, Health Insurance Commission data, appointment schedules
- Patient feedback questionnaires and patient feedback data
- Discussions between relevant members of the practice team and accreditation surveyors.

There may be times when practices consider a particular indicator to be not applicable. In this situation, practices are encouraged to consider whether peers would agree with such an assessment.

**Standards, Criterion and flags**

Each Standard contains;

- a Criterion explaining the key components of the Standard
- an Explanation or description of the Standard aspects
- key Indicators to measure achievement.

A Standard will indicate whether the Indicators are either Flagged or Unflagged.

Flagged indicators are considered mandatory with Unflagged indicators considered discretionary.
Contacts

Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL)
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Medicare Australia - Practice Incentives Program (PIP)
GPO Box 2572
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Email: pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au
Website:

References

www.racgp.org.au [Viewed online 22 November 2013] Available from:

Medicare Australia. Practice Incentives Program.
www.medicareaustralia.gov.au [Viewed online 22 November 2013] Available from:
Example

**Standard**
Describes the qualities required for particular practice activities

**Criterion**
Describes key components of the standard

**Explanation**
Provides a description and explanation of key aspects of the criterion

**Indicators**
Measures degree of achievement of criterion

- This symbol shows a flagged or mandatory indicator; Indicators not flagged are discretionary.

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**Standard 1.5**
Continuity of care

**Criterion 1.5.1**
Continuity of comprehensive care and the therapeutic relationship

*Our practice provides continuity of comprehensive care to patients.*

**Explanation**
Key points
There are several types of continuity:

- The sense of affiliation between the patient and their doctor (‘my doctor’ or ‘my patient’), sometimes called ‘relational continuity’
- Consistency of care by the various people involved in a patient’s care (i.e. Not working at ‘cross purposes’), sometimes called ‘management continuity’
- Continuity of information across healthcare events, particularly through documentation handover and review of notes from previous consultations, sometimes called ‘informational continuity’

**Indicators**

- **A.** Our staff can describe how patients can request their preferred GP when making an appointment or attending our practice
- **B.** Our practice team can describe how we encourage continuity of comprehensive care
Resources recommended by the RACGP

- Australian Medicines Handbook: .......................................................... www.amh.net.au
- Interpretive Guide to the RACGP Standards for general practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services: ..................................... http://www.racgp.org.au/your-practice/standards/interpretiveguide4thedition/
- Medical Board of Australia Code of Conduct: .............................................................. www.goodmedicalpractice.org.au
- RACGP Australian Family Physician: ................................................................. www.racgp.org.au/afp