Stay informed and on track.

A reference guide for psychiatry trainees and specialist international medical graduates on a pathway to Fellowship.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists has received Australian Government funding under the Specialist Training Program to produce this resource.
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For any suggestions or feedback on this resource email membership@ranzcp.org
Welcome to the College

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP or College) welcomes you as a new trainee or specialist international medical graduate (SIMG).

The RANZCP is the principal organisation responsible for training, educating and representing the medical specialty of psychiatry in Australia and New Zealand. The College’s vision is to enhance the mental health of our nations through leadership in high quality psychiatric care.

This guide will provide you with key information about the College and your membership. It will also help guide you on ways to keep yourself on track throughout your training and where you can get assistance if needed.

RANZCP membership types

Fellowship
You can apply to become a Fellow once you have successfully completed the RANZCP training program and met the requirements for Fellowship.

Affiliate membership
As a specialist international medical graduate working towards Fellowship, you are eligible to apply for Affiliate membership of the College.

Associate membership
As a trainee you are automatically an Associate Member of the College.

The role of the College

ADVANCE THE PROFESSION:
Provide the highest quality psychiatry training and ensure best practice assessment of trainees and overseas trained psychiatrists.

Provide the highest quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for members.

Promote the role of psychiatrists as leaders in mental health care.

IMPROVE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY:
Develop and promote best practice standards and partner with people who are experiencing mental illness, their families and carers.

Advocate for equitable access to services.

MEET THE NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE MEMBERSHIP:
Respond to member needs through new initiatives, advocacy and representation and ensure a range of opportunities are available for member input into the direction of the College.

Improve member engagement and support throughout all stages of their career.

ENHANCE EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS:
Inform and influence mental health policy in Australia and New Zealand.

Enhance external engagement by building domestic and international relationships that strengthen the College’s influence and leadership across the mental health sector.

The most up-to-date version of this guide is also available at www.ranzcp.org/support, along with a range of other useful resources.
The RANZCP aims to keep its members informed and up to date on their training, clinical practice and advocacy work. It is important to read communications from the College as they often contain valuable information relating to your training, or other important updates.

The RANZCP is governed by a Board of seven elected directors, who are Fellows of the College. The Board is led by the College President. The College’s activities are supported by the Chief Executive Officer and staff of the College, and are driven by a large number of committees that operate with significant contributions made by members.

THERE ARE SIX MAIN COMMITTEES WHICH REPORT TO THE BOARD:

- Audit Committee
- Corporate Governance and Risk Committee
- Education Committee
- Finance Committee
- Membership Engagement Committee
- Practice, Policy and Partnerships Committee.

The Board is provided with information and advice by the Members’ Advisory Council, which also acts as a forum for College members to raise issues.

In addition, there are also subcommittees such as the Trainee Representative Committee and the Overseas Trained Psychiatrists Representative Committee that report directly to the Board.

Within the College, there are six Faculties and twelve Sections to represent specialist aspects of psychiatry.

The College has local offices in most states of Australia, and a head office in Melbourne. There is a national office in New Zealand. Local offices organise events, which can be a great way to participate in professional development, networking and to meet other trainees.

For more information visit
the College website at
www.ranzcp.org/governance

Communicating with our members

The RANZCP aims to keep its members informed and up to date on their training, clinical practice and advocacy work.

It is important to read communications from the College as they often contain valuable information relating to your training, or other important updates.

KEY COLLEGE PUBLICATIONS

Trainee and SIMG newsletter: Provides trainees, SIMG’s, supervisors and Directors of Training with essential updates and news about the training program and requirements to obtain Fellowship.

Psyche: Monthly electronic newsletter that informs members of the wide range of activities and opportunities available to them as well as the work undertaken by the College and its members.

Branch newsletters: News and upcoming events relevant to your state.

Faculty and section newsletters: Written by members, for members. They inform members of each group of the wide range of activities and work undertaken by the Faculty/Section, as well as available opportunities related to the group’s area of expertise.

RANZCP Annual Review: A yearly overview of the College including activities, developments and financials.

www.ranzcp.org: Provides comprehensive information and resources on the College for members and the community.

Twitter @ranzcp: Follow the College on Twitter for College broadcasts to the public on mental health.
RANZCP website

www.ranzcp.org is a comprehensive portal providing information and resources for members and the community.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES FOR TRAINEES AND SIMG’S ON THE WEBSITE ARE:
- information on the stages of training and assessments
- the regulations, policies and procedures that govern the RANZCP Fellowship Program
- past exams and tips for exam preparation
- forms and documents required for the Fellowship Program
- information on Certificates of Advanced Training
- fee schedules
- the RANZCP’s clinical practice guidelines, position statements, ethical guidelines and other publications
- an events calendar of upcoming conferences and meetings
- information on the RANZCP’s awards, grants and prizes
- a job board with current vacancies for psychiatrists in Australia and New Zealand.

MEMBERS CAN ALSO ACCESS THE FOLLOWING ONLINE MEMBER BENEFITS:
- LearnIt, the RANZCP’s e-learning platform – providing access to hundreds of learning activities including modules, podcasts, videos and webinars
- online discussion forums – for the exclusive use of members to discuss issues of professional concern with their peers
- the RANZCP’s journals – The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry and Australasian Psychiatry
- information from the New Zealand National Office, Branches, Faculties, and Sections.

My RANZCP

As a member of the College, you will receive a member login to the RANZCP website.

This login provides you with access to additional material which is restricted to RANZCP members.

IN THE MY RANZCP SECTION OF THE WEBSITE YOU CAN:
- update your contact details
- check your training record
- pay your training fees
- reset your password.

HOW TO LOG IN TO YOUR RANZCP ACCOUNT

1. Visit www.ranzcp.org
2. Select the green Member Access button in the top right corner. The log-in box will expand out.
3. To log in to the website, you will need:
   - User ID – a 4 or 5-digit number that’s the same as your RANZCP member number. This number appears on College mail such as your annual subscription notice or annual training fee notice.
   - Password – if you’ve forgotten your password, you can reset your password using the prompt.
   - Optional: You can also choose to check the keep me logged in box if you wish to remain logged in to the website for an extended period of time.
4. Click Log in.

For more information visit the College website at www.ranzcp.org

If you don’t know your User ID or if you need more assistance on how to log in to your My RANZCP account, contact the College on 1800 337 448 (AU) or 0800 443 827 (NZ)
Congress and other conferences
The RANZCP’s annual Congress is the leading educational and social gathering of the College’s membership across Australia and New Zealand.

Over 1000 psychiatrists, trainees and other health professionals, including many from outside Australia and New Zealand, attend each year. Congress’ varied themes, symposia, workshops and key note speakers make it a rewarding educational and networking opportunity for all College members.

In addition, a number of other regional and sub-specialty conferences are held throughout the year.

Trainees and overseas trained psychiatrists are offered discounted registration fees to attend the RANZCP Congress and other conferences.

Membership benefits

**NETWORK, CONNECT & SOCIALISE WITH YOUR PEERS**
- Congress and other conferences
- membership of Branches, Faculties and Sections
- member-only discussion forums
- opportunities to get involved, and have a say in the College.

**ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND CAREER**
- online learning modules and conference recordings
- scientific journals published by the College – The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry and Australasian Psychiatry
- regular communications from the College on changes in mental health policy
- job postings.

**DISCOUNTS AND SAVINGS**
- discounted subscriptions to journals and books
- discounted rates to RANZCP Congress and other conferences
- savings and special offers on lifestyle and business products and services, through the RANZCP Member Advantage Program.

**UPDATES ON THE LATEST RESEARCH, EVENTS AND ISSUES IN PSYCHIATRY**
- local continuing medical education events, and continuing professional development provided by the College
- online access to international journals
- e-learning modules & webinars
- clinical practice guidelines and a range of resources that support psychiatric practice.

**ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR AFFILIATE MEMBERS**
- SIMGs who have opted to become Affiliate Members of the College can also access the above member benefits along with access to RANZCP’s Continuing Professional Development program.

For more information on becoming an Affiliate Member of the College visit www.ranzcp.org/becoming-a-member
Supporting our members

Member Welfare Support Line
For confidential support and advice contact the MEMBER WELFARE SUPPORT LINE on 1800 941 002 (AUS) and 0800 220 784 (NZ) or support@ranzcp.org.
This is a dedicated support line available to all members of the RANZCP. All calls are separate to the main College telephone line. Calls are answered by the service manager during business hours. If appropriate, you will be put in touch with a Support Fellow who will be able to provide you with further support and refer you to appropriate services.

Key contacts
IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY PROBLEMS DURING YOUR TRAINING ASK FOR HELP EARLY ON

Training
The training team at RANZCP can answer any questions you might have about the Fellowship program.
Tel: +61 (03) 9640 0646
training@ranzcp.org

Exams
The Exams team at RANZCP can answer any questions about the assessment requirements of the Fellowship Program.
Tel: +61 (03) 9640 0646
exams@ranzcp.org

Specialist International Medical Graduate Education (SIMGE)
If you are a specialist international medical graduate and you have any questions about your pathway to Fellowship, please contact the SIMGE team at the College.
Tel: +61 (03) 9640 0646
simge@ranzcp.org

Branch Training Committees and New Zealand Training Committee
The Branch Training Committees (BTC’s) and the New Zealand Training Committee (NZTC) are responsible for local oversight of the Fellowship training program, including the application and selection process for new trainees.
To be directed to your local BTC or NZTC contact training@ranzcp.org
Trainee Representative Committee (TRC)
The TRC provides formal representation for trainees within the College and reports to the RANZCP Board. The TRC works to improve the trainee experience and its members are always keen to obtain feedback on matters that affect you.

Contact the TRC on trc@ranzcp.org

Overseas Trained Psychiatrists’ (OTP) Representative Committee
The OTP Committee provides formal representation for all overseas trained psychiatrists within the College and reports to the RANZCP Board. The OTP Committee consists of overseas trained psychiatrists from each Australian state and territory and New Zealand.

Contact the OTP Committee on otp@ranzcp.org

Where to get help

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORTS
- Doctors Health Advisory Services
- Associations of Psychiatrists in Training
- medical indemnity insurers
- peer support groups
- general practitioner
- mentors.

PERSONAL SUPPORTS
- friends
- family
- personal interest groups
- religious or spiritual leaders
- colleagues.

WORKPLACE SUPPORTS
- human resources department
- employee assistance program
- workplace wellbeing programs
- senior staff and clinical director
- union representatives.

RANZCP SUPPORTS
- supervisors
- Director of Training
- Member Welfare Support Line
- Branch Training Committee
- support for psychiatrists and self-help for psychiatrists webpage www.ranzcp.org/support.

“What has kept me on track while completing the Fellowship program is excellent support and help from my Director of Training, Clinical Director and my colleagues from different disciplines.”

(Specialist international medicate graduate)

For more support and information visit www.ranzcp.org/support
Staying on track

5 ways to stay on track in the Fellowship Program

01 PLAN YOUR PROGRESS

Take the time to familiarise yourself with all the training program requirements, regulations and procedures. This includes watching the e-learning modules on required assessments available on LearnIt.

Create a personalised timeline of when you will complete each assessment and enter all important dates into your calendar.

Discuss your progress with your supervisor and regularly log in to your My RANZCP account to track your progress.

02 CONNECT WITH OTHER TRAINEES

During your training your peers are going through the same process. To help you stay on track and keep you connected with your peers and colleagues, exchange contact information and join a study or peer support group.

03 TAKE CARE OF YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH

A busy lifestyle is no excuse to neglect your health. Throughout your training make sure you regularly check in with your GP, keep up your exercise routine and maintain a healthy diet.

04 ENJOY YOUR LIFE OUTSIDE MEDICINE

The Fellowship program is only one part of your life. Determine those things in your life that are important to you and prioritise them to ensure you achieve a career-life balance.

Cultivate healthy work practices such as taking breaks, planning admin time in your schedule and transitioning into your social role with a relaxing activity such as a gym session or a walk home.

05 KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Be self-aware and acknowledge when you are unable to work effectively due to physical or mental reasons and seek help early on.

Work with your supervisors and the College to get yourself back on track.

“It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the big hurdles and put off starting them. I found that I learnt through doing; and so it is better to get stuck in early and give things a go, rather than waiting endlessly and hoping you will be better placed to attempt training tasks a few years down the track. Preparing early gives you time to consolidate knowledge, and a buffer if things don’t go exactly to plan.”

(Stage 3 trainee)
Trainee progress trajectory

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT FOR POLICY ON PROGRESSION THROUGH TRAINING AND POLICY ON FAILURE TO PROGRESS (EFFECTIVE 2017)

Intended to provide a trainee (or trainees) with a baseline against which their progress will be monitored to ensure a steady progression

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Trainee reminders:

After 60 FTE months trainees must ensure their continued placement in an accredited training post with their service/BTC if Fellowship requirements are still to be completed.

- Summative assessments may be submitted while on a BIT.
- Targeted Learning is not permitted on a BIT. The content and duration of the Targeted Learning depends on each trainee’s circumstances. Case-by-case exceptions can be considered by the Committee for Training.

TL = Targeted Learning (mandatory)
SC = Show Cause to Committee for Training (mandatory)
BIT = Break in Training

1 = Psychotherapy EPAs: Must attain any 2 of the 3 Psychotherapy EPAs by the end of Stage 2. The third one can be attained by the end of Stage 3, still to a proficient standard.
2 = The MCQ Exam is not a barrier to commence Stage 3 Generalist training. Effective mid-year 2016 intake, it is required for Certificate entry.
3 = There is an exception for attaining two EPAs per rotation for the first rotation only.
4 = Allow time for marking.
Keeping yourself well

Looking after your health, your mental health and each other

Together with your supervisors and Directors of Training, the College aims to enhance and support your development throughout the training program.

We also recognise that those working within the health care sector, including doctors and medical students report higher rates of psychological distress than other professions. Although low, research has found that doctors have higher rates of attempted suicide than the general population and other professions (Beyond Blue, 2013).

As trainees and SIMGs you are also faced with the additional challenge of balancing your Fellowship requirements with your career and personal life. The College exams are not easy, and undertaking specialist medical training in any discipline is a challenge that requires commitment and sacrifice.

Acknowledging that occasionally things are tough or that you are struggling can be difficult. One of the biggest barriers for doctors accessing support services is the perceived stigma associated with ‘stress’ or ‘mental illness.’

It’s OK to struggle and it’s OK to repeat an assessment. It’s NOT OK to suffer in silence. If you do not pass an assessment the first time around, you can learn from the experience by using the feedback you receive, and the support resources that are available, to improve at the next attempt.

It’s important to consider the timing of when you decide to sit your assessments early on in your training. Take on the advice of your supervisor and Director of Training as they can help you work through what would be the best trajectory for your unique situation.

Psychiatry is a wonderfully rewarding profession and here at the College we want you to take care of your health, wellbeing and support your peers throughout your training and into your Fellowship.

In your training, life may interfere with your big plan and you may end up finding yourself under-prepared for an assessment. We feel that it is better to delay doing it, rather than going in poorly prepared. We both failed the psychotherapy assessment during training, and failing an assessment knocks your confidence, and may increase subsequent stress. It is important to remember that it’s perfectly OK, sometimes better or even necessary, to take longer than five years to complete your training”

(L. Evans and S. Suetani, Stage 3 trainees)

Promote self-care activities

It’s time to book in that holiday you’ve been thinking about, or take a day off to spend time with loved ones. Prioritise those activities that help you relax.

Manage your time effectively

Ensure you schedule time for admin and learning during the day and delegate paperwork to practice staff where possible. Always aim to leave work on time.

Become self-aware

Practicing some form of spirituality, mindfulness or meditation can help you become aware of your stressors, coping styles and work towards a positive frame of mind and improve your mental resilience.

(Clode & Boldero, 2005).
Advice from trainees

“This stage of life can be a juggling act, in which you have numerous hats to wear; you wear a College trainee hat, hospital employee hat, for us in Victoria a master’s student hat. Not to mention other areas of your life such as parent hat!”

(Stage 3 trainee)

“Getting my own psychotherapy has been immensely helpful (which I only started this year) and I feel like it is great doing this whilst doing my own psychotherapy case.”

(Stage 3 trainee)

“Going on holidays as scheduled every 6 months and being mindful has helped me stay on track while completing the Fellowship program.”

(SIMG)

“Taking the time early in your term during supervision to discuss the EPAs you want to complete will hold you in good stead. Spending a few minutes during a supervision session each month to check on your progress is a good way to make sure you are on track and to remind your supervisor of what is still left to do!”

(Stage 2 trainee)

“I loved the formal education course each week, and found that hanging out with other trainees over lunch created some happy memories and lasting friendships, which have really helped me get through training.”

(Stage 3 trainee)

“Attending relevant training, workshops, peer review meetings programs and conferences along with the support and guidance from my supervisors and my mentor has helped me throughout my training”

(SIMG)

“I found conferences were great at reminding me of the bigger picture and inspiring me. I’d definitely recommend going to these and connecting with other trainees from different areas and stages of training.”

(Stage 3 trainee)

“I wish I’d known that it was OK to be confused about the requirements of training. Your supervisor should be able to answer most questions about exams, EPAs, etc. If they can’t help you, the site coordinator of training or Director of Training will probably be able to.”

(Stage 2 trainee)

“I wish I had done my psychotherapy case and scholarly project earlier even if the psychotherapy case write up was done in advanced training. At the moment I feel very stretched trying to do all these things in my final year.”

(Stage 3 trainee)

“There’s no ‘right’ way to do supervision. It can be used to get WBAs completed, talk about your troubling cases, and raise any concerns you have about your safety and how you’re coping with training. It can even be good to start planning out what your career could look like with someone who has been there and done it all before.”

(Stage 3 trainee)

“Going on holidays as scheduled every 6 months and being mindful has helped me stay on track while completing the Fellowship program.”

(SIMG)

“Attending relevant training, workshops, peer review meetings programs and conferences along with the support and guidance from my supervisors and my mentor has helped me throughout my training”

(SIMG)

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A good GP will get to know you as a person and be able to take a holistic approach to your health needs. It's not only important to have your own GP; it is also important to have a GP with whom you feel comfortable enough to share some of your innermost thoughts and anxieties. Sometimes this means moving on from the family GP that you've grown up with.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT GP FOR YOU

Choosing your GP can be a very personal decision and we all tend to look for different qualities or have a preference for a certain style.

Look for a GP who:

• is comfortable treating members of the medical profession
• appreciates that it’s hard making the transition from caregiver to care receiver
• allocates additional consulting time when necessary
• treats you like a patient and not a colleague (for example, arranges your follow up and explains things as if you have no prior knowledge).

Finding a GP that suits you is a personal choice and you may need to try several GPs before you find the one that suits you.

There are a growing number of GPs who have a keen interest in helping their colleagues and who have undergone specific training to be GPs for other doctors. Doctors Health Advisory Services can refer you to GPs who have a specific interest in this area. The contact numbers for the Doctors Health Advisory Services along with other useful services are available at [www.ranzcp.org/support](http://www.ranzcp.org/support)

The ‘Find a Psychiatrist’ feature on the RANZCP website [www.ranzcp.org/find](http://www.ranzcp.org/find) can also help you find a psychiatrist that is comfortable treating colleagues.

CONFIDENTIALITY WITH YOUR GP

The confidentiality of consultations with your GP is a given. Nothing you say or do should be disclosed to a third party unless:

1. You want it to be.
2. Your doctor is obliged to report under mandatory reporting laws. They are set out in the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) website [www.aphra.gov.au](http://www.aphra.gov.au) or the Medical Council of NZ (MCNZ) website [www.mcnz.org.nz](http://www.mcnz.org.nz).

Feeling stressed, depressed or having a mental illness are certainly not in themselves grounds for mandatory reporting.

Written by Dr Kym Jenkins

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None of us in the medical profession should ever be our own doctor – we all need and deserve good independent and objective medical advice”

(Dr Kym Jenkins)

FEATUR ES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO WORKPLACE BURNOUT:

- A lack of balance in your career/family/study life
- Problems with relationships with senior colleagues
- Fear of making mistakes
- Feeling tired even after sufficient sleep
- Feeling irritable with colleagues and patients
- Not feeling satisfied with your job
- Needing more time than usual to unwind from work

WHAT DOES BURNOUT LOOK LIKE?

- Feeling tired even after sufficient sleep
- Feeling irritable with colleagues and patients
- Not feeling satisfied with your job
- Needing more time than usual to unwind from work

Burnout and compassion fatigue

Burnout is a way of describing physical, mental and/or emotional exhaustion. Although burnout is not unique to doctors, a report from Beyond Blue (2013) found that doctors reported high levels of burnout across the domains of emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy.

WHAT DOES BURNOUT LOOK LIKE?

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- Not feeling satisfied with your job
- Needing more time than usual to unwind from work

COMPASSION FATIGUE

Helping people can be very rewarding, and even addictive, but it’s important to not overstretch your compassion as it can leave you feeling fatigued.

Written by Dr Kym Jenkins
Recognize that you may be burnt out. Take a burnout questionnaire and/or speak to your GP about how you have been feeling.

**SELF CARE**

Practicing effective self-care techniques such as mindfulness and regular debriefing are vital to helping you renew your energy.

**BOUNDARIES**

Develop clear boundaries between your role as a doctor and that of a friend or partner.

Write down stressful events you experienced that day and throw the paper away before heading home.

Build a relaxing activity into your routine to help transition into the social part of your day.

**CONNECT**

Your professional and social networks work to protect you from burnout.

Use your supervisor for support and debriefing. Join a peer support group or Balint group.

Prioritise time with your family and friends and allow these relationships to help you unwind.

Recognize that you may be burnt out. Take a burnout questionnaire and/or speak to your GP about how you have been feeling.

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**TOP 5 STRESSORS FOR RANZCP TRAINEES**

**WHAT DO YOU FIND STRESSFUL?**

Understanding and attending to how you feel, what your attitudes are and how you respond to particular situations will help build your resilience and ensure you keep on track throughout the Fellowship program.

**HOW DO YOU COPE?**

Everyone copes with stressful events differently. Some examples of coping mechanisms are

- breaking a problem down into smaller parts
- seeking assistance
- avoiding the issue
- becoming withdrawn
- consuming more indulgent food or drink
- sleeping more
- using alcohol or other drugs
- exercise.

**HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR COPING STYLE?**

Not all coping styles are healthy. Some coping styles may provide temporary relief, but leave you with much bigger problems down the track.

Consider how you may be able to adjust your coping style to incorporate more self-care activities, particularly during times of high stress.

RANZCP (2016). Membership Engagement Committee study into the welfare of psychiatrists and trainees.
Self-care

Self-care is simply any action you make to take care of your physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health.

It is unique for everyone and what works for you may not work for others.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- learn something new
- counselling
- mindfulness
- turn off all technology for an afternoon.

SPIRITUAL

- reflect on your work
- prayer
- meditation
- forgiveness
- find meaning and purpose.

EMOTIONAL

- positive self-talk
- laughter
- express how you feel.

WORKPLACE

- take regular breaks
- peer support
- supervision
- negotiate time off
- employee assistance program
- human resources.

RELATIONSHIPS

- spend time on meaningful relationships
- schedule a date night
- connect with friends on social media
- ask for support from friends and peers.

PHYSICAL

- nutrition
- sleep
- exercise
- routine health contacts
- utilise sick leave.

STRESS IS INEVITABLE AT TIMES.

Take a moment to remind yourself of some of the ways you can manage your stress.

Develop a strong network of peers and close friends

During training your peers are going through the same process and can provide you with valuable support and guidance.

Focus on achieving a career-life balance

Determine those things in your life that are important to you and make them a priority.

Consider lifestyle factors

Ensure you eat a balanced diet, maintain healthy sleep patterns and moderate your consumption of alcohol.

Develop healthy work routines

Implement healthy work practices such as taking breaks, planning admin time in advance and transitioning into your social role with a gym session or walk.

Focus on your achievements and strengths

At this stage of your career you have already achieved so much. Take a moment to reflect on your strengths and achievements.

Maintain your faith and spiritual values

Having faith and spiritual values can help you during times of stress.

Work on your professional relationships

Invest in your relationships with your supervisors as they are your ‘go to’ person throughout your training.

Know your limits

Acknowledge when you are unable work effectively and seek external help early.

RANZCP offers members additional resources and information to support their wellbeing.

Visit www.ranzcp.org/support

For more serious welfare concerns contact the Member Welfare Support Line on 1800 941 002 (AU) or 0800 220 784 (NZ)
Working in rural and remote locations

Working in a rural location is a great opportunity to expand your clinical skills, improve your knowledge on different health care models and learn about different communities. It can provide you with unique professional development opportunities, hands on learning and increased autonomy and responsibility.

As rewarding as it is, working in rural locations comes with its own unique challenges. It’s easy to become isolated from your usual support networks such as friends and family, resulting in increased occupational stress.

Below are some tips to reduce isolation and get the best out of your time living and working in a rural area.

- Keep in contact with your friends and family. They may be physically far away, but ensure you schedule regular video chats or telephone calls to keep you connected to those you care about.
- Keep your regular routine. If you normally love to exercise, cook or spend your weekends socialising try to continue those activities.
- Learn about the community and take the time to explore the local area. Speak with the hospital staff or local tourism operator to find out about local events, sporting events, markets etc. to find reasons to get out and meet new people.
- Bullying and harassment while you are completing your training with RANZCP will not be tolerated.
- Most instances of bullying or harassment tend to occur in the workplace and complaints will be handled within that organisation.
- However, if you experience an incident in the workplace that involves your supervisor or Director of Training you should refer to the RANZCP Bullying and Harassment in relation to Trainees and Specialist International Medical Graduates Policy located on the RANZCP website www.ranzcp.org/bullying

SO WHAT IS BULLYING AND HARASSMENT?

Harassment can involve unwanted behaviour and can take many forms but ultimately makes the victim feel offended and humiliated, intimidated or frightened, and/or uncomfortable at work.

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to health and safety.

Bullying behaviour includes, but is not limited to the following:

- manipulation
- intimidation
- offensive remarks or behaviour
- degrading remarks or behaviour
- belittling remarks; ridiculing someone’s opinion
- unreasonable persistent criticism which is not part of the performance review process
- nitpicking and fault finding without justification
- verbal and physical abuse (for example shouting or throwing things)
- isolation of colleagues
- withholding information employees need to perform their job
- setting unachievable targets with the intent of causing individuals to fail
- sabotaging someone’s work.

If you are experiencing bullying or harassment in the workplace, contact the MEMBER WELFARE SUPPORT LINE on 1800 941 002 (AU) 0800 220 784 (NZ) or support@ranzcp.org for a confidential discussion.

If you find yourself requiring assistance while working in a rural location contact CRANAplus Bush Support Services which provides free telephone counselling, debriefing, psychological interventions and support service to rural and remote area health professionals and their families.

CRANAplus Bush Support on 1800 805 391
Supporting each other

We all have periods in our lives that are more stressful or difficult than others, but it’s important to recognise – not only in yourself, but also your peers – when feelings of stress and anxiety could be signs of a more serious problem.

CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR TO KEEP AN EYE ON:

- Irritable or moody with patients and colleagues
- Easily distracted by things around you
- Decreased interest in attending social gatherings
- Changes in your appetite or weight
- Decrease in quality of documentation and clinical performance
- Changes in personal hygiene.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Helping a colleague can be as simple as just having an open and honest conversation.

01 Be prepared
You will need to be in a good head space for a meaningful conversation and ensure you start the conversation at a time and place that’s appropriate for both of you.

02 How to start the conversation
Start by mentioning the specific things you have noticed in your colleague that has concerned you. For example “You seem less chatty than usual. How are you going?”

03 Listen without judgement
Take the time to actively listen to what they are saying and resist the temptation to interrupt or rush the conversation.

04 Encourage action
In addition to encouraging them to engage in self-care activities, it’s important to emphasise the value of accessing support services early on.

05 Check in
After your initial conversation, stay in touch and check in on your colleague. The additional support can really make a difference.

There may be situations where the encouragement and support of your peers is not enough. Just like anyone else, doctors are also at risk of substance abuse disorders, professional misconduct or physical or mental impairment. If this is the case, you are encouraged to access professional support early on to ensure the situation does not escalate to a point where your ability to practice is compromised.


References

The College, along with your supervisors and Director of Training, are here to support your development. Psychiatry is a wonderful and rewarding profession and we want you to take care of your health, wellbeing and support your peers throughout your training and into your Fellowship.