

## **SPECIFICATION FOR ADVANCED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (AVE) IN GENERAL PRACTICE**

### **1. PREAMBLE**

This specification describes Advanced Vocational Education (AVE). AVE is Stage II of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) General Practice Education Programme (GPEP). Most candidates are required to spend a minimum of two years full time in the AVE programme. The exact amount of time depends on their previous training and experience as a general practitioner. A number of AVE pathways are available, depending on the candidate's previous experience and current work in general practice. The structure and regulations of the programme are described in the 'Advanced Vocational Education Information Handbook' published by the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners.

The AVE programme leads to Fellowship of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (FRNZCGP).

In this specification, the term 'candidate' means candidate for Fellowship as defined in Section 3.1 Eligibility.

Other terms are defined in the CTA Head Agreement and/or Service Agreement.

### **2. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE**

Vocational education in general practice requires a minimum of five full-time equivalent years post graduation. The base vocational education is a minimum of two years hospital based experience (house officer or registrar years) followed by practice based training leading to the Primary Membership Examination (Primex) of the RNZCGP. Practice based training includes candidates in the RNZCGP's Intensive Clinical Training Programme (ICTP) as registrars or seminar attenders and those who train independently while practising. Advanced Vocational Education (AVE) is usually a minimum of two years of general practice, following the sitting of Primex, during which time advanced vocational education activities required for Fellowship as determined by the RNZCGP are completed. Experienced GPs may in some cases complete AVE in one year. A complete pass in Primex and successful completion of all parts of the Advanced Vocational Education programme entitles candidates to use the qualification Fellow of the Royal New Zealand RNZCGP of General Practitioners (FRNZCGP).

The Advanced Vocational Education programme is managed nationally by the Director of Professional Development of the RNZCGP. Regional facilitators, who report to the Director of Professional Development, assist candidates with their AVE programme.

## Competencies required for Fellowship

On attainment of Fellowship candidates will have demonstrated to the RNZCGP the competence to practise as independent general practitioners, through the demonstration of:

1. Advanced consulting skills in practice. The candidate must be able to demonstrate to an independent observer:
  - A thorough knowledge of the range of normality, and skills for clinical judgement of earliest deviation from health.
  - The skills for the recognition and management of disease and illness common to general practice.
  - The skills for the recognition and urgent management of conditions threatening serious disability.
  - The skills for the recognition and emergency management of life threatening conditions (resuscitation skills certification will be required).
  - The skills for the provision of effective care in chronic conditions, including the provision of support for patients (especially those with disabilities) when cure is not possible.
  - The knowledge and skills to utilise ancillary services and other resources to assist in patient management.
2. Skills for determining and implementing acceptable screening programmes.
3. Skills for health education and preventive care.
4. Skills to obtain feedback on their performance from patients and peers, and to respond to this feedback with changes to improve their practice.
5. Competence to reflect critically on their practice, and incorporate new learning from guidelines, audit and research into their practice.
6. Adequate practice management systems, e.g. vaccine cold chain, sterilisation procedures.
7. The ability to work co-operatively with other members of a health care team.
8. The critical faculties required for continuing professional development and lifelong learning based on the principles of general practice, including self-reflection and self-appraisal.
9. The skills to work within the limitations of their capability, through a clear awareness of these limits.
10. An awareness of the importance of a balance between professional and personal maintenance, with respect to a balance between their professional and personal life.

These are underpinned by the philosophical foundation of general practice – communication and reflection, conceptual basis of general practice, and critical thinking and research.

## **2.1 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Vocational training is considered to be a part of continuing life long professional development, based on the philosophical foundation of general practice. Training and education takes place in the candidate's own practice environment, with support from the AVE regional facilitators.

The programme uses a comprehensive integrated approach to education, which includes processes which are:

- Learner directed
- Negotiated
- Critically reflective
- Practice based

The five integral components to AVE are:

- Professional Report and Plan (PRPs)
- Patient Survey modules
- Facilitator visits, including review of consultation skills, patient records, practice equipment and practice facilities
- Continuing Medical Education activities
- Peer Review activities

The key components of the training programme are:

- The candidate meets prerequisites set by the RNZCGP
- Learning in a general practice environment
- Attainment of self-knowledge
- Candidate self assessment and review of personal learning needs
- Candidates assisted by trained facilitators during the programme
- Candidate assessed by trained vocationally registered Fellows at end of programme
- Flexible programme to cater for candidates' needs and circumstances
- RNZCGP endorsed CME activities
- RNZCGP registered peer review group activities

AVE takes the form of self-directed learning and candidates develop their own learning objectives in consultation with the regional facilitator. These must fit within the goals and objectives of the AVE programme and be underpinned by the philosophical basis of general practice. The learning objectives are recorded in the annual Professional Report and Plan (PRP).

## **Professional Report and Plan**

The focal point of the AVE programme is the Professional Report and Plan (PRP). Completing a plan for each part of AVE helps candidates to decide which professional development activities they need to undertake to develop their professional knowledge and skills. The aims of the PRP are to enable candidates to:

- Analyse areas of individual strengths and weaknesses
- Identify learning needs and areas requiring improvement
- Plan professional development.
- Each Professional Report and Plan has a “life” of 18 months.

## **Patient Surveys**

AVE candidates complete a patient survey – either the Better Practice Patient Questionnaire (BPPQ) or the Doctors Interpersonal Skills Questionnaire (DISQ) – in each of Parts 1 and 2 of AVE.

The DISQ is a subset of the BPPQ. In the BPPQ, patients are asked to respond to questions about the doctor, the practice staff and the practice itself. The DISQ excludes those parts of the BPPQ that deal with the practice staff and the practice. Candidates working as locums or working short-term in a practice may get their patients to complete the DISQ; other candidates use the BPPQ.

Candidates are sent a package of 60 questionnaires for patients, of which at least 50 must be completed and returned.

Following processing of the results by the RNZCGP, candidates are sent a detailed analysis of the results and are asked to reflect and comment on the analysis.

## **Professional Development Activities**

AVE candidates need to participate in a minimum of 20 hours (= 40 credits) of professional development activities per 12 month period, starting from when the first PRP is sent to the RNZCGP. Professional development activities may include RNZCGP endorsed continuing medical education (CME), including seminars, meetings, workshops, professional gatherings of local doctors etc, and also university courses and other approved professional activities. Once candidates have submitted their PRP to the RNZCGP, the AVE facilitator contacts them to discuss the professional development activities that will best meet their needs.

All CME must be undertaken through a RNZCGP registered provider.

Reports of professional development activities, plus appropriate certificates from endorsed CME providers, must be provided to the RNZCGP at the end of each part of AVE.

Candidates are also encouraged, as part of their professional development activities, to read at least three medical journals regularly. However activities such as journal reading and internet searches cannot be used for credits towards the required professional development hours.

## **Peer Review**

Candidates are required to participate in a minimum of 15 hours of peer review activities per 12 month period. Peer Review Groups are registered with the RNZCGP and can include clinically orientated groups of general practitioners meeting regularly to review and improve their skills, and Balint type groups.

Candidates provide a report of their Peer Review Group activities at the end of each of Parts 1 and 2 of AVE. A peer review report form includes records for each meeting specifying:

- the date and number of hours
- a brief description of the content
- an evaluation in 2 or 3 sentences of its value to the candidate.

### **2.1.1 Clinical Placements**

#### **General requirements**

AVE is based in the general practice environment and can be completed in a minimum of two years by newer doctors, or one year full time by general practitioners with at least five years previous general practice experience. However, the AVE programme is flexible as regards the time taken to complete it. The only restriction is that modules have a “life” of 10 years; if the programme is not completed within this period candidates have to repeat activities done more than 10 years ago. The two key factors are that candidates must complete all the modules and activities as required by the programme, and candidates must spend the minimum time in the programme as is appropriate for their general practice training and experience.

#### **Specific requirements**

For each period of 12 months they spend in the AVE programme, candidates must take part in and report on a minimum of 20 hours of approved CME and a minimum of 15 hours of activities in a registered Peer Review Group. They must also complete all the AVE programme modules.

Following satisfactory completion of all other parts of the AVE programme, candidates must pass a summative assessment visit by an experienced Fellow of the RNZCGP.

## **2.2 SUPERVISION**

### **2.2.1 Education Support**

Education support in the context of AVE is the responsibility of the AVE facilitators. A facilitator must:

- be a fully registered New Zealand medical practitioner at all times throughout the term of appointment;
- be a Fellow of the RNZCGP (FRNZCGP)
- normally work a minimum of 2/10<sup>ths</sup> in general practice throughout the term of their appointment.

The AVE facilitator appointed by the RNZCGP visits each candidate in their practice at least once in each of Parts 1 and 2 of their AVE programme. AVE facilitators are required to:

- observe a series of the candidate's consultations;
- assist the candidate to video consultations;
- inspect the practice premises;
- review a selection of the candidate's patient records;
- discuss with the candidate what the facilitator has observed during the visit;
- assist the candidate to prepare for the assessment visit at the end of the AVE programme; and
- provide other information and advice to the candidate as appropriate.

Candidates are encouraged to have the observed consultations video-taped, so that they can subsequently review the video in their own time, and reflect on what the facilitator has said about each consultation.

Following the visit, the facilitator completes a report on the visit and sends it to the RNZCGP. The candidate completes a "Reflecting on the visit" report and returns it to the RNZCGP.

A visit normally takes place about half way through each of Parts 1 and 2 of the candidate's AVE programme, at a time mutually agreed between the facilitator and the candidate.

## **2.3 PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATION**

The programme is co-ordinated nationally by the Director of Professional Development. Regional Facilitators assist locally, and are responsible to the Director of Professional Development.

The Director of Professional Development is responsible for:

- all implementation and management issues
- education development and research
- evaluation
- training of regional facilitators
- All aspects of the CTA contract for AVE in General Practice

The regional facilitators are responsible for:

- initiating and maintaining contact with candidates;
- assisting candidates with AVE modules and professional development activities;
- reporting annually to the RNZCGP on each candidate; and
- reporting quarterly and annually to the RNZCGP about their work as a facilitator and any issues that are relevant to the RNZCGP as a whole.

The Director of Professional Development reviews each facilitator's performance annually.

## **2.4 EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

General practitioners who successfully complete the General Practice Education Programme gain the qualification Fellow of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (FRNZCGP). Candidates gain this qualification by demonstrating to the RNZCGP that they have the skills and abilities necessary to practise as independent general practitioners.

Fellowship is awarded once candidates have passed Primex, completed all the AVE modules, activities and time requirements to the satisfaction of the RNZCGP's Board of Studies, and evidence of good standing with the Medical Council of New Zealand has been sighted by the Board.

## **3. ELIGIBILITY**

### **3.1 CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY**

Any registered general practitioner who has sat the Primex examination (whether or not they gained a complete pass in Primex) can enter the AVE programme. Candidates may be working full-time or part-time (.5 full time minimum) in general practice.

The Fellowship Regulations detail the programme to be followed by general practitioners wishing to become Fellows of the RNZCGP. Different pathways are available depending on individual circumstances. Upon receipt of the application form, the RNZCGP determines the most appropriate pathway for each candidate, according to their training, experience and number of tenths currently being worked in general practice.

### **3.2 PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY**

The AVE programme is provided by the RNZCGP. The satisfactory completion of all modules is verified by the RNZCGP. All CME must be undertaken through RNZCGP registered providers or RNZCGP endorsed national courses. All peer review activities must be undertaken in RNZCGP registered Peer Review Groups. All assessment visits are carried out by trained Fellows of the RNZCGP.

### **4. LOCATION AND SETTING**

Advanced Vocational Education takes place in the candidate's general practice setting.

### **5. ASSOCIATED LINKAGES**

The provider has links with:

- Other specialty training programmes as appropriate.
- Schools of Medicine.
- Individuals and Centres with expertise, medical and non medical.
- PHOs

There are links between the regional facilitators and between the facilitators and National Office staff for co-ordination of training activities.

### **6. PURCHASE UNIT AND REPORTING UNIT**

#### **6.1 PURCHASE UNIT**

A general practitioner enrolled in the AVE Programme following an approved programme.

Part time candidates who are funded under this contract will be funded on a pro rata training unit basis.

#### **6.2 REPORTING UNIT**

The reporting units include the:

- number of candidates in the programme
- details of employment, e.g. full or part time
- geographic distribution
- gender
- names
- self declared ethnicity
- number of fellowships awarded

## **7. PROGRAMME SPECIFIC QUALITY STANDARDS**

### **7.1 EDUCATION PROVISION & SUPPORT**

Rigorous continuous quality improvement processes are incorporated into the AVE programme. Candidates are required to report on the strengths and weaknesses of their patient services, and how they will overcome the weaknesses. Facilitators are required to identify how they assisted candidates to improve their practice. Any risks to patient services will be identified through reporting requirements and managed by the RNZCGP.

### **7.2 PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATION**

Programme co-ordination will be provided by the Director of Professional Development and the AVE facilitators to a standard to ensure:

- Facilitators are trained to a standard that meets RNZCGP standards.
- Candidates' evaluation of facilitators is discussed with facilitators.
- Facilitators and candidates are given support.

Programme co-ordination nationally is provided at a level that ensures:

- AVE facilitators are trained to a satisfactory standard.
- The programme content and facilitation methods are continually reviewed and updated.
- Records and statistics are kept on the national programme.

## **8. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: PROGRAMME SPECIFIC**

### **8.1 PROGRESS REPORTING**

Section 2.4 of the specification outlines the outcomes of the training programme.

General reporting requirements will be as per Schedule 1 Part C of the CTA Head Agreement as well as those listed below:

The RNZCGP will report quarterly to the CTA on the AVE programme. Reports will be made in July 2003, October 2003, January 2004 and April 2004. The reports will include milestone information for the previous quarter on the:

- number of candidates active in the AVE programme at the end of each quarter.
- numbers of visits to candidates carried out by facilitators during the quarter.
- other pertinent information concerning the progress of AVE candidates.

The report from the RNZCGP to the CTA in April 2004 will:

- review the AVE programme for the previous 12 months.
- summarise the performance of AVE facilitators against their expected outcomes.
- include information on the number of RNZCGP members who were awarded Fellowship during the previous 12 months.

Ensure that, in respect of any training you are paid to provide under this contract all trainees have access to a formal complaints process.