

Mid North Coast
Local Health District



Rural Preferential Recruitment Guide

Coffs Harbour Health Campus

Why choose us?

The Junior Medical Officer (JMO) Unit at Coffs Harbour Health Campus is an award-winning, dynamic hub dedicated to nurturing the next generation of medical professionals. In 2023, we were presented with the prestigious Judy Muller Award.

The Coffs Harbour Health Campus is an acute regional teaching hospital with 355 beds, located approximately halfway between Sydney and Brisbane on the Mid North Coast.

Coffs Harbour Health Campus facilities and services include operating theatres, a Coronary Care Unit (including Coronary Angiography Suite), an Intensive Care Unit, a 24-hour Emergency Department, Radiology (including CT, MRI and Interventional Suite), Pathology North, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Anaesthetics, Rehabilitation and a Stroke Unit. There is also access to outpatient services such as the Ambulatory Care Unit, Renal Dialysis Unit, Dental Services and a Refugee Clinic.

Also situated on the grounds of Coffs Harbour Health Campus are the Aboriginal and Cultural Wellbeing Centre (Maam Darruyaygamba), Mid North Coast Cancer Institute (haematology, medical oncology and radiation oncology facilities), Mental Health Unit, BreastScreen, the Specialist Medical Centre and University of NSW Regional Medical School.

Our Emergency Department (ED) is the largest trauma centre outside Brisbane and Sydney, with more than 46,485 presentations in 2023.

Coffs Harbour Health Campus delivered 996 babies and had more than 33,000 admissions.

Coffs Harbour Health Campus is the hub of the Coffs Clinical Network which also includes smaller facilities such as the Bellinger River and Macksville District hospitals, Bowraville and Nambucca HealthOne facilities and Dorrigo Multi-Purpose Service (MPS).

A recent redevelopment of Coffs Harbour Health Campus also saw the opening of the new state-of-the-art Clinical Services Building consisting of operating theatres, surgical departments, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics and an Intensive Care Unit.



Hear from our doctors



RMO
DR SWATHI
EKAMBARESHWAR
2023

Choosing to come to Coffs Harbour to do my intern and resident years has been one of the best decisions I've made. I'm surrounded by a group of JMOs and RMOs who work together and support each other. All the interns help each other out so no one stays back late on their own. The JMO Unit has been so wonderful. One of the things that drew me here was the resident terms in critical care and paediatrics which are almost impossible to get at other hospitals.

Further to this, the JMO Unit will help you get the terms you need for your chosen career path. They will also work with you to make sure you can go away on holidays when you need to. Working in a smaller hospital has meant every face is a friendly face. Nursing staff are your gym buddies, the medical registrars are your trivia opponents, and the radiographers are your neighbours. I cannot speak highly enough of my experience at Coffs Harbour.



BPT
DR PAUL LIRA
2023

Coffs Harbour is the fourth hospital I have worked at in as many years and it has by far been the most functional JMO Unit, with easily the best reputation among my colleagues. From my point of view this is on several fronts:

First, the unit is very receptive to JMO feedback and problems that JMOs are experiencing. When we raise concerns the responses are extremely quick.

Second, the unit seems to be particularly efficient. Given that public hospitals feel plagued by chronic inefficiencies, it is very refreshing to meet people interested in avoiding wasted resources and keeping an eye on how best to distribute the JMOs.

Third, and probably most importantly, an effort is made to make JMOs feel valued and respected as real people rather than just another cog in the system. That feels very refreshing and is quite a different relationship to other JMO units I've encountered in the past.



VMO
DR ADARSH ARAVIND
2024

Having worked as a Consultant in the UK and NZ, I can say by far that the JMOs in Coffs are the best!

Their work ethic, dedication and always going the extra mile make them stand out! I wouldn't have managed the workload without them.

We are also lucky to have an excellent JMO admin team who have been so proactive and exceptional! The unit's kindness and positive attitude to get things done is always appreciated.

Not surprised that you were elected as the best in NSW!

Local area

The Coffs Coast is Australia's pocket of paradise. Woven between the mountains and the sea, the region is a breathtaking tapestry of colour, encompassing quaint villages, national parks, mountain escarpments, 90km of sandy beaches, islands and marine reserves.

It's perfectly located halfway between Sydney and Brisbane on the Mid North Coast of NSW. Coffs Harbour is the region's city hub, surrounded by the delightful seaside and hinterland communities of Bellingen, Sawtell and Coramba.

The population of the Coffs Harbour area is approximately 78,000. It is one of the fastest growing and most dynamic areas within regional NSW.



Term rotations

Coffs Harbour Health Campus is a Level 5 teaching hospital with a five-term rotational roster meeting the new national framework standards set by the Medical Board of Australia.

Post graduate year one

- General medicine including respiratory, gastroenterology, renal, neurology, geriatrics, cardiology and Medical Assessment Unit (MAU)
- General surgery including urology, vascular, upper GI, endocrine/ENT/breast
- Orthopaedics
- Rehabilitation
- Emergency Department
- Palliative Care
- Nights/relief
- Medical oncology/haematology

Post graduate year two

- General medicine including respiratory, gastroenterology, renal, neurology, geriatrics, cardiology and Medical Assessment Unit (MAU)
- General surgery including urology, vascular, upper GI, endocrine/ENT/breast
- Psychiatry
- Medical oncology/haematology
- ICU
- Anaesthetics
- Paediatrics
- Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Macksville ED
- Macksville medical ward
- Macksville GP
- Nights/relief

Possible rotations to metro hospitals if you can find a swap

Post graduate year three

- Emergency Department
- ICU
- Rural GP
- Surgical
- Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Radiation Oncology



Vocational training

The career pathway for Rural Preferential Resident Medical Officers in regional and rural NSW is based on the broad experience and generalist exposure over the two years at Coffs Harbour Health Campus. There are dedicated educational activities and close mentoring by a multitude of specialists across a broad spectrum of specialties.

Following the completion of PGY2, there are opportunities for further training in Emergency Medicine, Intensive Care Medicine, Radiation Oncology, Surgery, and Palliative Care. There are also many opportunities for entry into General Practice as part of the RACGP, ACCRM and HETI Rural Generalist training programs in the Coffs Harbour area and surrounds.

In addition, there are also options for further training in PGY3 within the hospital service as Career Medical Officers or Registrars across a multitude of specialties which form part of a structured network with metropolitan centres rotating to Coffs Harbour for variable periods.

The UNSW Medical Training Hub received funding from the Department of Health to support regional and rural medical trainees in their pursuit of their generalist or specialist training.

For JMOs wishing to continue their academia, there are teaching opportunities at the UNSW Rural Clinical School located on the Coffs Harbour Health Campus grounds. The Rural Clinical School has been open in Coffs Harbour since 2004 and has years 3, 5 and 6, comprising about 50 students. For more information phone: 6652 0411.



Roster and education

The JMO Unit at Coffs Harbour Health Campus has a rostering officer dedicated to intern and resident rostering. We plan our rosters to ensure that trainees can maintain a great work-life balance.

The rosters are based on JMO term dates and include some after-hours work. Every JMO gets an ADO (Allocated Day Off) every four weeks, and you can request dates to make them work for you.

In addition to grand rounds, time is allocated twice a week for intern and resident education sessions, which are catered. All of these sessions are protected teaching time and are presented by a combination of specialists and registrars. Session content is based on topics listed in the Australian Curriculum Framework.

Coffs Harbour Health Campus also has an education officer for coordinating Intern and Resident education and wellbeing.

Emergency Department

A full-time Director and 17 staff specialists run and supervise the Emergency Department. Junior medical staff include emergency trainees, CMOs, RMOs, interns and locum medical officers.

The department is accredited for 12 months of advanced training with the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine.

The interns/RMOs work a rotating roster gaining exposure in a wide range of presentations. Under Consultant supervision, they are also responsible for the management of the 10-bed Emergency Medical Unit (EMU).

Department of Medicine and Intensive Care Unit

Fully accredited by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP), the department comprises general medicine, cardiology, geriatrics, endocrine, medical oncology/haematology, paediatrics, rehabilitation and critical care services.

There are six general medical teams plus cardiology, oncology/haematology, rehabilitation, palliative care and MAU. Each team consists of a Medical Registrar, an Intern/RMO and a Consultant.

There is a 76-bed medical in-patient ward, and rehab ward, (including an eight-bed monitored unit, four-bed stroke unit, MAU and CAPACS).

The Palliative Care Team provides a network service with patients at Coffs Harbour, Bellingen and Macksville hospitals. The team comprises one consultant, three registrars and an Intern/RMO. The team also provides an on-call service for palliative care across the network.

The Intensive Care Unit is supported by seven CMOs/registrar and one RMO. Specialised cardiac services are provided, including coronary angiography and angioplasty, stress ECG and echo and trans-oesophageal echo. These services and acute admissions are managed by five cardiologists and two registrars in a 14-bed Coronary Care unit.

Department of Surgery

The department comprises a 62-bed surgical inpatient unit, 10 operating theatres, an endoscopy suite, a recovery room and a day surgery unit.

Surgical services include general surgery, orthopaedics, gynaecology, obstetrics, ear, nose and throat (ENT), urology, endocrine, trauma and vascular surgery involving 19 consultant surgeons and seven training registrars who provide hands-on supervision to five interns/RMOs.

A surgical term comprising general surgical cases related to the allocated team, on elective lists, with some specialty surgery.

The VMO general surgeons participate in an on-call roster providing exposure to acute surgical cases and trauma.

Mental Health Inpatient Unit

The Mental Health Inpatient Unit at Coffs Harbour Health Campus is accredited by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP).

The unit provides comprehensive inpatient multidisciplinary mental health treatment for the Coffs Clinical Network.

The network service also includes child and adolescent, indigenous and community-based mental health services.

The RMO is based in the 50-bed Inpatient Unit which is an acute ward that accepts voluntary and involuntary admissions primarily from within the Coffs Clinical Network.

Common procedures such as psychiatric assessments and Mental Health Act presentations are performed by the RMO (with supervision).

Department of Anaesthetics

The Anaesthetics Department is accredited by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA). The department has 15 consultants and eight registrars (including an ED/ICU registrar).

The department provides anaesthesia for general urological, vascular, orthopaedic, trauma, psychiatry, ENT, paediatric and obstetric surgical specialities.

The 10 theatres and one endoscopy theatre average 9,500 cases annually, both elective and emergency, and there is a 20-bed post-anaesthetic recovery unit.

Other services include pre-anaesthetic clinic, adult and paediatric MRI under anaesthesia, acute pain service, interventional radiology and cardiology services.

Paediatric, Obstetrics and Gynaecology departments

The Paediatric Unit (16-bed unit) and Special Care Nursery are serviced by five Paediatricians, four training Registrars and an RMO, and take admissions from the network including 25 per cent of the total admissions through ED.

The Obstetrics and Gynaecology Unit is a 28-bed facility with four labour wards. There are five VMO Consultants, six registrars and an RMO providing obstetric and gynaecology services to the Coffs Clinical Network.

Wellbeing and support

Mentoring

When you start with the Coffs Harbour Health Campus you will be paired up with one of our experienced JMOs to support you through your PGY1 and hopefully make lifelong friends.

Twice per term dedicated time with the DPET

Not only is there an open-door policy for the JMO Unit but you will also have one-on-one allocated time to meet up with the JMO Manager and DPET twice per term to discuss your training and wellbeing.

Skills sessions and Simulation Centre

Twice weekly protected teaching time will consist of targeted skills sessions and simulation training.

Rural Hub

The Rural Hub provides support and teaching opportunities for those who wish to expand their skills.

Coffs Queens

A social group to support female doctors and their training.

Active RMOA social club

Active HETI representative

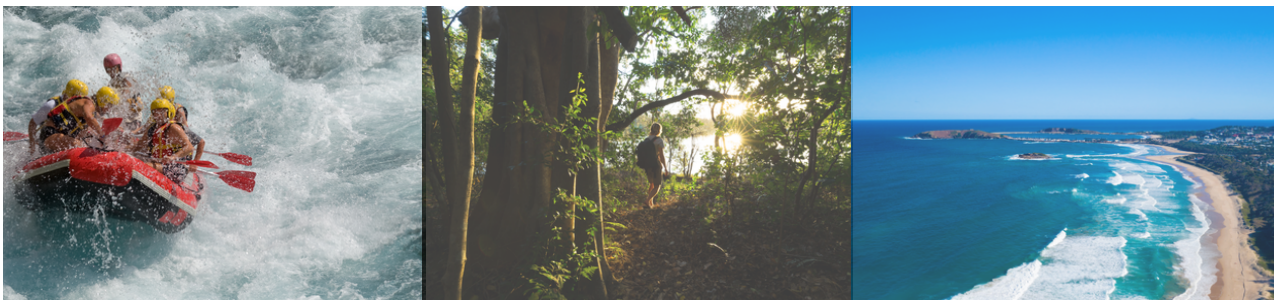
Nature's playground

Coffs Harbour is home to more than 20 national parks, state forests and nature reserves which boast a variety of fauna and flora some of which are unique to the area.

The Solitary Island Marine Park, located offshore from Coffs Harbour, incorporates 71,000 hectares of protected habitat. The marine park has five islands, several significant rocky outcrops, submerged reefs, estuary and beach zones.

Dorrigo National Park is only an hour's drive from Coffs Harbour and yet it feels miles away. Visit World Heritage listed rainforests taking in magnificent waterfall walks and scenic barbecue areas. Enjoy the spectacular natural beauty of New England National Park which boasts magnificent views, and fantastic walking trails, with various accommodation options including lovely, secluded campgrounds.

The area supports commercial and recreational fishing, diving, whale and dolphin watching, research, boating, surfing and beach activities. Secluded beaches, forests and rocky headlands are perfect for bushwalking, bike riding and four-wheel driving - all popular activities. If you're into extreme experiences, choose a local operator who will guide you in skydiving, swimming with sharks, white water rafting or standup paddle boarding – the choices are yours.



Hear from our doctors



RMO
DR CHRIS HAGAN
2022

Working in Coffs Harbour allows you to work closely with consultants and with Indigenous and refugee communities. I have the flexibility to complete my entire training here or arrange terms in the city. Our team is small but collaborative and cohesive, working seamlessly together, especially during well-supported night terms. The hospital's location near the beach and beautiful rainforest walks adds a delightful touch.

Gone are the 14-hour weekend shifts - our schedule is thoughtfully split, allowing me to enjoy my weekends even when I'm working. What's truly refreshing is the JMO Unit's receptiveness to feedback. They actively advocate for our needs and get things done, creating a supportive environment for all JMOs. Joining this team has been an enriching experience.



INTERN
DR MARIAM EBRAHIM
2024

Why Coffs Harbour is the best!

An extremely supportive environment. You have the perfect balance of being part of a small enough team that you know everyone yet also large enough to have an interesting variety of cases and patients. There are passionate consultants who will discuss patient cases and support you in learning new skills.

There is a great group of nurses and allied health staff who are eager to help and teach.

There's a healthy work/life balance - management staff push for you to have teaching time, sim labs and not too much overtime.



RMO
DR TAIT HEARPS
2023

Coffs Harbour Health Campus is a wonderful place to train as a junior doctor. It's a great place to get hands-on experience, interesting rotations as a junior and well-supported after-hours shifts.

The culture there is fantastic with a JMO Unit that is not only supportive and enthusiastic but rapidly becoming friends and confidants.

It also has the added bonus of being surrounded by stunning natural beauty with good surf and rainforest trails at your doorstep!

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to work after-hours?

Interns do partake in an after-hours roster. The shifts rostered are: 4.30pm to 8.30 pm Monday to Friday, and there are a variety of Saturday and Sunday shifts. Interns have the opportunity to work nights on Saturday and Sunday shifts.

How often am I required to work a weekend shift?

The weekends are split between approximately 42 interns/RMOs. The allocation of weekend shifts is also dependent on which rotation you undertake. However, the roster is fairly divided and workload is evenly spread across all JMOs.

What leave am I entitled to?

As a full-time employee, you are entitled to four weeks of annual leave per year. two weeks of sick leave and an ADO every 28 days.

I am keen to undertake a term at Westmead Hospital in Sydney, is this likely to happen?

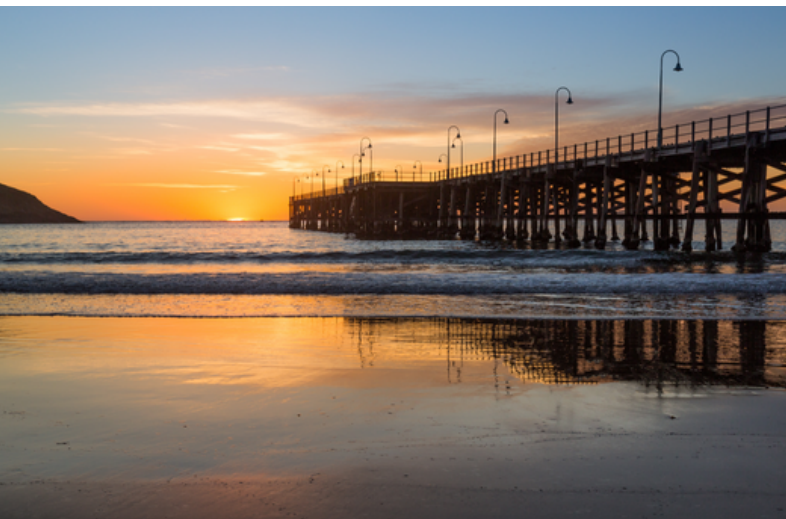
Coffs Coast Health Campus has an excellent relationship with our Network 13 Hospital, Westmead. Interns are allowed to rotate to Westmead or any of the hospitals contained in Network 13 (Auburn and Orange) in their second year.

Will my overtime be paid?

If you follow the correct procedure, you will be paid for overtime. Don't worry you will be paid for all your hard work!

What other opportunities are available?

JMO Forum representatives, elected by their peers, to sit on an advisory committee of the NSW Prevocational Training Council each term. The forum discusses and actions issues relevant to prevocational supervision, education and training, accreditation and welfare. General Clinical Training Committee — Term Supervisors, DPET, JMO Manager and JMOs meet each term to discuss local issues.



Please reach out to our team if you have any questions.

JMO Manager: mnclhd-chhc-jmomanager@health.nsw.gov.au

DPET: mnclhd-chhc-dpet@health.nsw.gov.au

DPET: Dr William Fox 0421 350 322

JMO Manager: Alicia Butchers 6656 7042

JMO Support: Kieren Pedelty 6656 7034