



Aboriginal Medical Workforce pathway

NSW MEDICAL INTERN RECRUITMENT
PROCEDURE FOR THE 2025 CLINICAL YEAR

MARCH 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Health Education and Training Institute acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

NSW Ministry of Health and HETI acknowledges the people of the many traditional countries and language groups of New South Wales. It acknowledges the wisdom of *Elders* who have passed, those of today and tomorrow and pays respect to Aboriginal communities of the land.

Aboriginal people are the *First Peoples* of Australia and have maintained a strong culture through a continuous connection to *Country*. The resilience of Aboriginal people provides the foundation upon which to build further efforts to improve Aboriginal health and wellbeing.

Before European invasion¹, Aboriginal peoples inhabited most areas of what today is referred to as NSW; each speaking one or more different languages, with distinct lifestyles, religious and cultural traditions. The *First Peoples* of Australia were adaptable and creative, with simple but highly efficient technology, complex social systems and highly developed traditions reflecting their deep connection with the land and the environment.

Whilst it is a responsibility of all health workers to provide culturally competent services and quality care to the Aboriginal community, it is imperative that the number of Aboriginal people commencing and continuing with a career in health is increased². This is to enable Aboriginal people access to a culturally competent and culturally safe health workforce.

To build capacity and the success of the Aboriginal health workforce, it is important to recognise the importance of cultural issues. This includes fulfilling family responsibilities, participating in the community and having access to country. In addition, it is important to ensure the workplace is a culturally safe environment, and that Aboriginal people are provided with the necessary support to succeed.

The development and implementation of an Aboriginal medical graduate program by the Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) is informed by key partners including Aboriginal medical students, Aboriginal medical graduates, the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) and NSW Ministry of Health Aboriginal Workforce Unit.

The NSW Ministry of Health, Local Health Districts, Specialist Health Networks and other Health Organisations are committed to deliver the Aboriginal medical graduate workforce recruitment initiative under the NSW Aboriginal Workforce Composition Policy Directive [Aboriginal Workforce Composition \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

¹ Refer to City of Sydney Online Resource *Barani* for interactive examples:

<http://www.sydneybarani.com.au/>

² National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Council (NATSIHC) (2008). A blueprint for action: Pathways into the health workforce for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Accessed on 18 November 2009 from

https://www.natsihwa.org.au/sites/default/files/aida_blueprint_for_action_pathways.pdf

2 INTRODUCTION

The Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) has delegated authority from the NSW Ministry of Health to allocate medical graduates to intern positions in NSW on behalf of Local Health Districts (LHDs) or Public Health Organisations or as otherwise determined by HETI.

HETI coordinates the allocation of medical graduates from the Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited Australian and New Zealand Universities seeking their initial training position as a doctor.

There are four recruitment pathways to obtain a prevocational training position in NSW. Within each offer round positions are offered sequentially in the following order and as per the NSW priority list:

1. Aboriginal Medical Workforce (AMW) pathway
2. Rural Preferential Recruitment (RPR) pathway
3. Direct Regional Allocation (DRA) pathway
4. Optimised Allocation (OA) pathway

The Aboriginal Medical Workforce (AMW) pathway facilitates recruitment of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander medical graduates to prevocational training positions across 15 networks within NSW Health.

The following principles underpin the development and review of the AMW pathway:

- Aboriginal medical graduates are supported to obtain a prevocational training position in an area where they have access to support.
- Fairness and transparency are applied to all medical intern recruitment procedures.
- Aboriginal medical graduates are supported throughout their prevocational training.
- Support for Aboriginal medical graduates aim to build the capacity of Aboriginal doctors in the NSW Health workforce and improve cultural safety.
- Increased capacity of Aboriginal doctors in the NSW Health workforce will improve culturally competent service provision to Aboriginal people and support the national agenda of closing the gap in health outcomes for the Aboriginal population.

Applicants must read and understand the procedures for each pathway before submitting their application.

3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to inform medical graduates about medical intern recruitment in NSW through the AMW pathway. This pathway promotes the success of Aboriginal medical graduates in the NSW Health workforce by recruiting them to prevocational training positions in a prevocational training network or RPR hospital of their choice.

4 DISTRIBUTION

This document will be made available to all relevant groups and individuals via the HETI website.

- Applicants
- Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) members
- LHDs, Specialist Health Networks and other NSW Health Organisations
- NSW Ministry of Health
- NSW University Medical Schools
- HETI employees

5 PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

5.1 PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING POSITIONS

The number of prevocational training positions available in NSW for the clinical year is published on the HETI Medical Intern Recruitment website. The number of positions displayed represents a count of the fulltime equivalency.

5.2 ABORIGINAL MEDICAL WORKFORCE PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING POSITIONS

Positions are allocated through the Aboriginal Medical Workforce (AMW) pathway before any other pathway.

5.3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Any applicant wishing to access the AMW pathway must:

1. Meet eligibility and NSW Health Priority List criteria.
2. Be expected to complete their medical degree this year or have completed their medical degree in the past two years.
3. Not previously have worked as a doctor.
4. Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

5.4 WORKFORCE FLEXIBILITY

To support the needs of applicants, part time positions can be requested in the online application. Access to reduced hours of work is dependent on the ability of the employer to accommodate the request and cannot be assumed.

5.5 IMPAIRMENT, HEALTH CONDITIONS AND DISABILITY RELATED APPLICATIONS

The transition from medical student to medical practitioner must be smooth and well supported. An applicant who is participating in an impaired registrants (health) program and/or has conditions on their registration is to inform HETI of their status in their online application.

The National Law defines 'impairment' as 'a physical or mental impairment, disability, condition or disorder (including substance abuse or dependence) that detrimentally affects or is likely to detrimentally affect the person's capacity to practice the profession'.

For more information, please refer to:

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/mandatorynotifications/Mandatory-notifications.aspx>

In addition to this, applicants are strongly recommended to read the Extenuating Circumstances (EC) Procedure and apply if they believe they meet the criteria.

<https://www.heti.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/courses-and-programs/medical-graduate-recruitment/extenuating-circumstances>

5.6 COMMUNICATION WITH APPLICANTS

Communication from HETI about applications is by email and short message service (SMS). All applicants must have and maintain a valid email address and mobile phone number prior to starting their internship; applicants are responsible for ensuring this information is current in the online application system.

6 APPLICATION PROCESS

6.1 APPLICATION FORM

Applicants must complete the Aboriginal Medical Workforce pathway in NSW – Application Form within their online application.

On this application form, the applicants are required to:

- Provide their personal story including connections to family, culture, country, and how they celebrate their Aboriginality. It must include any planned career progression (if currently known) outlining what actions have been taken to support their progression.
 - Outline their specific reasons for their choice of prevocational training network or rural preferential hospital.
 - Outline how they have shown commitment to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.
 - Outline what being an Aboriginal doctor means to them and what their goals are as an Aboriginal health practitioner.
 - Comment on their association/membership to organisations such as AIDA, IAHA, NATSIHWA, AMS, NSWALC or other community groups and their period of engagement.
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6.2 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Applicants will upload certified copies of supporting documentation that corroborates Aboriginality. See link for further information and assistance:

<https://www.stepsup.health.nsw.gov.au/help-me-hire/Pages/Aboriginality.aspx>

HETI and NSW Health recognise that for Aboriginal applicants, there may be barriers to gaining access to documents such as those that can assist with corroboration of Aboriginality.

The link to the Stepping Up website will assist with exploring a few ways to make the provision of supporting documentation more flexible. In this regard, the Stepping Up website has listed a few options for Corroborating Aboriginality.

These options are:

- Community advice
- Referee checks
- Family history and contacts
- Statutory declaration

If an applicant is providing a statutory declaration to corroborate their Aboriginality, it must outline how and why that individual identifies as an Aboriginal person.

6.3 PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING NETWORK PREFERENCES

If an applicant chooses a prevocational training network as first choice on their Aboriginal Medical Workforce Pathway Application Form, the same network preference is to be submitted as their first preference on the online application system.

It should be noted that applicants will not be able to change their network preferences after the application period has closed.

6.4 RURAL PREFERENTIAL RECRUITMENT (RPR)

If an applicant chooses a RPR hospital through the Aboriginal Medical Workforce pathway, they ONLY need to write the name of the RPR hospital on the Aboriginal Medical Workforce application form. They are not required to tick any of the networks.

If an applicant is successful in gaining a position through the AMW pathway at a RPR hospital and applied through the RPR pathway, HETI will inform the RPR hospital as the applicant will not be required to complete an interview.

Following acceptance of a position offer at a RPR hospital, applicants are requested to contact the hospital directly to introduce themselves prior to commencement of internship.

6.5 ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

All applications are assessed by the Aboriginal Medical Workforce Committee. The Committee has a minimum of four members including:

- An Aboriginal representative from the Aboriginal Medical Workforce Development Unit – NSW Ministry of Health,
- An Indigenous representative of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) or their delegate,
- A JMO that who has used the Aboriginal Medical Workforce pathway to apply for an internship in NSW in the previous five years,
- A representative from the HETI Medical Portfolio.

The Committee will review all documentation provided with each application and will outline the reasons for its decision.

The Committee will make one of three possible decisions:

- Application successful
- Application unsuccessful
- More information required – the Committee may determine that for the application to be properly assessed, additional information and/or an interview with the applicant may be required. Applicants will be contacted and given a period of five days to provide the requested information.

The decision of the Committee cannot be appealed.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after the Committee has made a decision.

6.6 NOTIFICATION OF OFFERS

All offers will be made as per the key dates published on the HETI Medical Intern Recruitment website. All communication regarding offers will be made by email and SMS.

Note: HETI will not inform applicants of their offered position through any other forms of communication including by phone.

6.7 POSITION OFFERS

On the first day of offer period one all successful applicants will be offered a position through the AMW pathway.

It is possible that some applicants will be unsuccessful in gaining an intern position offer through the AMW pathway. In this situation, applicants are automatically moved to the DRA or OA pathways based on their first prevocational training network preference in their online application.

6.8 OFFER ACCEPTANCE

It is the applicant's responsibility to respond to their position offer through the online application system by the specified date and time outlined in the notification email. Offers are made using Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).

Applicants have 48 hours to accept or decline a position offer in the online application system. If an applicant has not accepted or declined their offer within 24 hours, a reminder email is sent from the online application system reminding the applicant to act on their offer.

The online application system will automatically send an acknowledgment email of an acceptance offer. Applicants who do not receive an email should contact HETI.

If an applicant does not accept/decline their offer by the nominated deadline an email will be generated from the online application system to the applicant confirming that the position has been declined on their behalf.

All successful applicants will **only receive one position offer** from HETI per year. If an applicant declines or does not accept a position offer, they are not eligible to receive any further offers from HETI for that clinical year. The applicant will have to wait until the following year to reapply if they still meet the eligibility criteria.

6.9 FORMAL OFFER

As the employers, the Local Health Districts (LHDs) will directly supply pre-employment paperwork for completion and commence the pre-employment checks. In addition, they will also issue a formal letter of offer. These processes will commence from late September each year.

7 RESPONSIBILITIES

Implementation of the procedure is dependent on three key stakeholders:

- Applicants
- Employers (LHDs, Specialty Health Networks and other NSW Health Organisation and their participating facilities)
- HETI

Applicants will:

- Read and understand the procedures underpinning medical intern recruitment in NSW and seek clarification from HETI if there is a lack of understanding or clarity within the procedures.

- Complete an application via the online application system and submit by the closing date.
- Behave ethically through the application process and order network preferences genuinely in the order in which they would prefer to work.
- Follow the NSW Health Code of Conduct and HETI Swaps Guidelines when requesting to be part of a swap. This includes not offering or accepting any form of payment for a swap request.
- Keep contact details including email address and phone number current in the online application system and regularly check emails and phone on the dates when offers are made.
- Accept or decline their position offer within 48 hours.
- Ensure that they complete all necessary pre-employment paperwork prior to commencing employment.
- Be required to participate in overtime, on call and shift rosters including evenings, nights and weekends and to undertake rotations at facilities other than their home hospital.
- Advise HETI if they are not completing all requirements of their degree before the end of the year, and subsequently decline their position offer in the online application system and notify the employer. Note that if HETI is advised by a university that a student will not complete the requirements of their degree and the applicant does not decline their offer HETI will decline the offer on their behalf.

HETI will:

- Lead and coordinate the medical intern recruitment process.
- Communicate the procedures and dates to the NSW Ministry of Health, LHDs, medical schools and potential applicants. This will include presentations on the HETI website and answering enquiries by telephone and email.
- Ensure all providers and networks participating are appropriately accredited facilities.
- Advise the employer of applicants who are granted Extenuating Circumstances or a Change in Circumstances and the criteria under which it was granted.
- Provide all relevant information about medical intern recruitment, procedures and dates on the HETI website.
- Communicate with applicants by email and SMS about the status of their application.
- Ensure all eligible guaranteed applicants are offered a position.
- Ensure applicants are only offered one position offer for the clinical year.
- Ensure applications are verified prior to offers being made for applicants applying through the Extenuating Circumstances process, Aboriginal Medical Workforce pathway, the Rural Preferential Recruitment pathway and all category 1 applicants.
- Ensure applications are verified for all remaining applicants following acceptance of an offer.

Employers will:

- Adhere to all procedures supporting medical graduate allocation in NSW.
- Negotiate conditions of employment directly with applicants and provide advice regarding visas and employment conditions.
- Communicate directly with applicants regarding specific requirements if allocated through the Extenuating Circumstances process or Change in Circumstances.
- Contact applicants to confirm an offer of employment and undertake necessary pre-employment checks and paperwork.

- Make a formal position offer.
 - Ensure that applicants are employed in facilities that are accredited for prevocational training. If a post or facility becomes unaccredited the trainees will be moved to another accredited post and/or provider.
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8 GLOSSARY

Applicant - An applicant is an eligible medical graduate who formally applies for a prevocational training position through the online application system.

Hospital Administering Employment - The hospital administering employment (administrative hospital) is where the prevocational trainees spend the majority of their time within a prevocational training network. It is primarily responsible for managing the prevocational trainees' employment such as employment contract, leave arrangements and salary. In addition, they ensure that the trainees receive effective orientation, supervision, education and training, and PGY1s meet the requirements for general registration.

Local Health District - There are 15 Local Health Districts that are responsible for providing health services in a wide range of settings, from primary care posts in the remote outback to metropolitan tertiary health centres. Eight Local Health Districts cover the greater Sydney metropolitan regions and seven cover rural and regional NSW. Local Health Districts employ prevocational trainees.

Medical Graduate - A medical graduate is an individual who has completed the requirements of a medical degree but has not commenced practising as a doctor.

Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY1) - Postgraduate Year 1 is the first year of medical practice undertaken by a prevocational trainee following their graduation from medical school. The year is also referred to as an internship.

Prevocational Trainee - A prevocational trainee is a medical practitioner completing their first two years of supervised medical practice.

Prevocational Training Provider - Is the facility where the prevocational trainees work and train. The training provider can be a hospital, general practice, community health centre or other accredited health facilities. The training provider governs and/or provides some or all aspects of the prevocational education and training program.

Prevocational Training Network - A group of prevocational training providers that work together to provide a range of clinical rotations. They also ensure effective education and training is provided to prevocational trainees.

Public Health Organisation (PHO) - A PHO is either:

- A Local Health District, or
- A statutory health corporation
- An affiliated health organisation in respect to its recognised establishments and recognised services.

Recruitment Pathway - Recruitment pathways are recruitment options an eligible medical graduate can utilise to seek a prevocational training position in NSW.

Term - A component of the prevocational training program, usually a nominated number of weeks in a particular area of practice, also called a clinical rotation, post, or placement.

9 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Procedures

- Aboriginal Medical Workforce in NSW
- Rural Preferential Recruitment in NSW
- Direct Regional Allocation in NSW
- Extenuating Circumstances and Change in Personal Circumstances in NSW

Other Documents

- Applicant Guide for Medical Intern Recruitment in NSW
- Key Dates for Medical Intern Recruitment for 2025 clinical year
- NSW Health Priority List for 2025 Medical Intern Recruitment
- Prevocational Training Networks and Accredited Facilities in NSW
- Guidelines for Requesting an Intern Position Swap in NSW

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