

OPTIMISED ALLOCATION PATHWAY

NSW MEDICAL INTERN RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE FOR THE 2027 CLINICAL YEAR

MARCH 2026

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 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 Health 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 OA pathway predominately facilitates the allocation of medical graduates to positions in outer and inner metropolitan Sydney in the prevocational training networks. It is also used to fill positions in regional networks where there is an oversupply of guaranteed applicants in round one and following the exhaustion of eligible applicants in the DRA pathway.

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

All applicants are automatically included in this pathway. Applicants applying through other pathways will only be offered through the OA pathway if they are unsuccessful, or there are insufficient positions available through their preferred pathway.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to inform medical graduates about medical intern recruitment in NSW. through the Optimised Allocation pathway for the 2027 clinical year.

3 DISTRIBUTION

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

- Applicants
- LHDs, Specialist Health Networks and other NSW Health Organisations
- NSW Ministry of Health
- NSW University Medical Schools
- HETI employees

4 PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

4.1 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 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions available.

4.2 OPTIMISED PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING POSITIONS

Positions are allocated through the OA pathway after the AMW, RPR and the DRA pathways. The number of positions available for allocation via the OA pathway are determined by the total number of network positions less any positions filled by the other three pathways mentioned above.

For the first round of offers to category 1 (guaranteed) applicants this may mean that in addition to the positions available in metropolitan networks, remaining vacancies in regional networks will also be allocated through the OA pathway. If applicants are placed in a regional network through the algorithm the allocation will be recorded as the OA pathway.

After the first round of offers, the algorithm will be run separately for OA pathway offers and DRA pathway offers according to the NSW Health Priority List and the DRA pathway eligibility. Should a regional network exhaust its eligible applicant pool (category 1 to 4 applicants) any remaining vacancies will be considered by the algorithm as part of the OA pathway.

4.3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for the OA pathway applicants must:

- Meet the NSW Health Priority Category criteria.
 - Be expected to complete a medical degree this year or have completed their medical degree in the previous two years from an Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited Australian or New Zealand medical school.
 - Not previously have worked as a doctor.
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4.4 PARTICIPATING PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING NETWORKS

The OA pathway prevocational training networks are - Network 1, Network 3, Network 5, Network 6, Network 8, Network 9, Network 10 and Network 13. All applicants remain eligible for the OA pathway even if they are unsuccessful in being offered through one of the other pathways.

If applicants are not applying through the AMW pathway, RPR pathway or DRA pathway their network preferences must have an OA network as their first preference. Applicants must preference all 15 prevocational training networks in the order in which they would like to work.

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

OA - Optimised Prevocational Training Networks	
Network 1	Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Dubbo Hospital
Network 3	Concord Hospital, Canterbury Hospital and Broken Hill Base Hospital
Network 5	Royal North Shore Hospital, Ryde Hospital and Port Macquarie Base Hospital
Network 6	Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital, Mona Vale Hospital, Northern Beaches Hospital and Sydney Adventist Hospital
Network 8	St George Hospital and Community Health Service, Griffith Base Hospital, Sutherland Hospital and Albury Wodonga Health – Albury Campus
Network 9	Prince of Wales Hospital and Lismore Base Hospital
Network 10	St Vincent’s Hospital and Wagga Wagga Health Service
Network 13	Westmead Hospital, Auburn Hospital, Coffs Harbour Health Campus and Orange Health Service

4.5 WORKFORCE FLEXIBILITY

To support the needs of applicants, joint, job share and part time positions can be requested through the OA pathway. Access to reduced hours of work is dependent on the ability of the employer to accommodate the request and cannot be assumed.

4.6 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.

4.7 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.

4.8 APPLICATION PERIOD

Eligible applicants must submit an online application to the Medical Intern Recruitment campaign by the close of the application period. The key dates are available on the HETI Medical Intern Recruitment website.

No late applications will be accepted.

5 OFFERS

Dates for offer periods are specified through a national process. All offers will be made within the agreed national timeframes. For the 2027 clinical year, there are three national offer periods followed by the national Late Vacancy Management Process.

5.1 POSITION OFFERS TO GUARANTEED APPLICANTS – CATEGORY 1 APPLICANTS

Offers are made to all guaranteed applicants in the first week of offer period one. These are medical graduates of NSW universities who are Australian/New Zealand citizens or Australian permanent residents (Commonwealth Supported Place and Domestic Full Fee paying) as defined in the NSW Health Priority List. Offers are made to all guaranteed applicants in the first week of offer period one.

The OA pathway is used to fill positions in optimised networks along with vacancies in regional networks where there were not enough category 1 applicants who had selected the network as their first preference to fill available positions.

5.2 POSITION OFFERS TO NON-GUARANTEED APPLICANTS – CATEGORY 2 TO 6 APPLICANTS

If there are vacancies in OA networks after all category 1 applicants have received a position offer, HETI will make offers to the next category of applicants as per the NSW Health Priority list. Should a regional network exhaust its applicant pool then any further vacancies in that network will be filled through the OA pathway as per the NSW Health Priority list.

5.3 ALGORITHM

The algorithm used in the allocation to intern positions is designed to deliver the best outcome and fairest result for all applicants in the same priority group. The allocation of applicants to prevocational training positions is optimised so that it maximises the number of applicants receiving the best preference possible.

The algorithm results are audited prior to the release of offers to ensure the algorithm has performed as expected.

5.4 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.

5.5 JOINT APPLICANTS

Joint applicants are run through the algorithm in the same way as all other applicants. Before the algorithm is finalised it will check that joint applicants are in the same prevocational training network. If this is the case no further processing is required, however, if joint applicants have been allocated to different networks, the program searches to identify other allocated applicants who would benefit most from a swap with one of the joint applicants.

In situations where there are more applicants than positions, both applicants may not be offered a position in the same offer round, and it may not be possible to allocate both applicants to the same network.

5.6 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 or 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 for the recruitment campaign. If an applicant declines or does not accept a position offer through the OA pathway, they are not eligible to receive any further offers from HETI for that clinical year through any other pathway. The applicant will have to reapply the following year if they still meet the eligibility criteria.

5.7 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.

6 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 the hospital administering their employment.
- 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 intern recruitment in NSW.
- 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.

7 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 contracts, 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.

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 internship.

Prevocational Trainee - A prevocational trainee is a medical graduate 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.

8 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 2027 clinical year
- NSW Health Priority List for Medical Intern Recruitment Campaign for the 2027 clinical year
- Prevocational Training Networks and Accredited Facilities in NSW
- Guidelines for Requesting an Intern Position Swap in NSW

Heath Education and Training Institute
1 Reserve Road
ST LEONARDS NSW 2069

LOCKED BAG 2030
ST LEONARDS NSW 1590

W: <https://heti.nsw.gov.au/>
