



HEALTH PROFESSIONS LICENSING AUTHORITY	
TITLE: Northern Territory Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interview (NT PESCI)	
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2009	
BOARD:	MEDICAL BOARD OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Background

The Medical Board of the Northern Territory (the Board) is the statutory authority authorised pursuant to the *Health Practitioners Act* to regulate medical practitioners in this jurisdiction. It is committed to ensuring International Medical Graduates (IMGs) have the skills, knowledge and experience required to safely and effectively perform the requirements of a specific Area of Need (AoN) position in the Northern Territory (NT).

In order to do this, in 2006 the Board in collaboration with General Practice Network Northern Territory (GPNNT) has developed a pre-registration assessment process, titled the 'Northern Territory Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interview' (NT PESCI) (previously known as the International Medical Graduate Pre-registration Assessment Committee (IMGPAC)). This assessment model applies to IMGs seeking employment in General Practice AoN localities and it is required to meet the Australian Medical Council (AMC) accreditation standards.

Associated Policies and Guidelines

Area of Need Policy; Entitlement to Registration Policy; English Language Requirements for International Medical Graduates Policy; Competent Authority Pathway; Standard Pathway; NT PESCI Information Sheet; and RACGP NCP Categories.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the NT PESCI is to establish whether an IMG has the ability to adequately meet the requirements of a particular AoN position in the community for which conditional registration will be/has been sought.

1. POLICY:

- 1.1 The Board requires the following IMGs to successfully complete the NT PESCI prior to being eligible to apply for registration to work in a nominated AoN position in the Northern Territory. This policy applies to IMGs who are eligible to follow the Competent Authority or Standard Pathway to the AMC Certificate.
 - a. All IMGs seeking employment in a General Practice AoN locality, who do not qualify for the General Practice Specialist Pathway. (*refer exemptions below*)
 - b. All IMGs seeking or securing an employment contract as a District Medical Officer (DMO) or regional/remote Hospital Medical Officer (HMO) positions, which are required to provide some level of general practice medical care as

identified in the job description eg: conducting community clinics. (*refer exemptions below*)

- 1.2 The Board authorises GPNNT to manage the NT PESCI on its behalf under the terms specified in the Memorandum of Cooperation signed by both parties.
- 1.3 The Board delegates to its 'Board Approved Assessors' the authority to conduct the NT PESCI (the Interview) on its behalf in accordance with the Assessors Terms of Reference.

2. Who Is Eligible To Undertake the NT PESCI (*refer 1. above*)

- 2.1 IMGs who have more than five years General Practice experience are eligible to undertake the Interview. Refer Attachment A – categories 3 & 4.
- 2.2 IMGs who qualify as a Category 5 (*refer Attachment A*) will only be eligible for the Interview if they can provide the Board with evidence of significant periods of experience and training in the areas of medical practice relevant to General Practice.
- 2.3 IMGs who provide evidence of meeting the Board's current English Language Requirements for International Medical Graduates Policy.

3. Exemptions from NT PESCI

- 3.1 The Board reserves to right to exempt an IMG from the Interview. The decision to give an exemption will be made by the Board in rare instances and on a case by case basis. The Board will consider the risks associated with the position and the relevance of the IMG's qualification and experience.
- 3.2 All IMGs seeking employment at either Alice Springs or Darwin hospitals in an AoN position are not required to undertake the Interview.
- 3.3 Those IMGs who qualify for the Specialist Pathway (General Practice), are not required to undertake the Interview and may apply directly to the AMC for specialist recognition (*refer to the AMC website: amc.org.au*). The Board may require IMG's in this category that can not provide evidence of having practiced in this specialty in the preceding 5 years to undertake the Interview.
- 3.4 IMGs who have successfully completed the AMC Multiple Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) and the AMC Clinical Examinations, but not completed a minimum of 12 months Board approved supervised practice, may be considered by the Board for an exemption.
- 3.5 IMGs who provide evidence of having successfully worked in General Practice for longer than 12 months in another Australian jurisdiction, may be considered by the Board for an exemption.

4. What is the NT PESCI (the Interview)

The Interview, which is conducted by the Interview Panel, is a clinical assessment tool. Clinical scenarios will be presented by panel members during the Interview. The IMG will be required to demonstrate his/her knowledge of clinical signs and symptoms, investigations, analysis of investigation results, differential diagnosis, appropriate treatment and/or medical advice and likely outcomes of several clinical scenarios, which have been selected due to their relevance to the nominated AoN locality.

The Interview is designed to identify the IMG's strengths, weaknesses, critical failures, omissions and any general concerns. The standard expected of the IMG is one of safe practice with reference to the level of supervision requirements and orientation.

The interview is not designed to replace or make redundant any other recruitment processes that a recruiter / sponsor / employer would normally perform in relation to assessing the suitability of an IMG for a position.

5. NT PESCI Secretariat Role

- 5.1 The Board has delegated to GPNNT the responsibility to coordinate the NT PESCI process. GPNNT has the following secretariat responsibilities:
- Processing applications to undertake the Interview;
 - Coordinating interview panels from the cohort of Board approved Assessors;
 - Convening/chairing interview panels (GPNNT Medical Adviser or his/her delegate); and
 - Forwarding the Interview Report to the Board.
- 5.2 All financial transactions are between GPNNT and the IMG or his/her recruiting agency/sponsor/employer.
- 5.3 Clinical interviews will be between one and two hours duration, they are conducted face to face and are audio taped. The recording along with the Interview Report remains the property of the MBNT. If an IMG has objections to recording of the interview, they are required to notify GPNNT at the time of making the application to undertake the NT PESCI.
- 5.4 The Interview Report is submitted directly from the NT PESCI secretariat at GPNNT to the Board.
- 5.5 The IMG or his or her authorised agent will be notified of the outcome of the Interview by the NT PESCI secretariat at GPNNT. Only those IMGs who successfully complete the Interview are entitled to make an Application for Area of Need Registration in the Northern Territory.
- 5.6 The MBNT retains the right to decide on an applicant's suitability for AoN conditional registration.

6. Interview Panel Members

- 6.1 The Board approves only those suitably qualified and experienced medical practitioners and other persons with relevant experience and involvement in General Practice nominated by GPNNT as Assessors. The Board delegates the authority to the Assessors to participate as Interview Panel members.
- 6.2 The NT PESCI secretariat selects panel members with relevant experience and knowledge of the nominated AoN location's practice environment.
- 6.3 GPNNT is responsible for all financial arrangements with Assessors and ensuring Assessors are familiar with the Interview process and resources.
- 6.4 Interview panel members are responsible to the Board, act on behalf of the Board in this process in accordance with the Assessors Terms of Reference and have the following responsibilities:
- To declare a conflict of interest as appropriate in relation to an applicant IMG or the practice to which the IMG is proposing to work;
 - To gather information relevant to the identification of whether the IMG has the ability to meet the performance requirements of nominated AoN position;
 - To ensure consistency in pre registration clinical skills and knowledge assessment of IMGs seeking to work in general practice AoN localities;
 - To ensure objectivity of the assessments;
 - To ensure the assessments reflect the practice environment of the nominated AoN position;

- To ensure assessments reflect the Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and / or the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Professional Practice Standards;
- To utilise the Board's policies to guide the assessment process;
- To maintain confidentiality;
- To provide recommendations on the level of supervision or further training requirements;
- To participate in periodic reviews of the NT PESCI process, and
- To identify opportunities to improve clinical assessments of IMGs.

6.5 Using the results from the Interview, each panel will come to an individual member and consensus decision on whether or not the IMG is suitable for the nominated AoN position for which conditional registration is to be sought taking into account the following:

- IMG's work experience outlined in the curriculum vitae;
- Position description of the nominate position;
- Responses to the clinical scenarios at the Interview;
- Risk associated with the position description (eg: working in a rural or remote area, with limited supervision etc); and
- Supervision arrangements.

7. Interview Outcomes

7.1 Interview Reports must be provided in the format approved by the Board and must identify if the IMG is suitable, or not, for the nominated AoN position and provide a summary of the IMGs performance and any specific recommendations (if any) for the Board to consider.

7.2 Successful NT PESCI results are valid for twelve months. If the IMG does not commence employment in an Area of Need position within this timeframe, he or she will be required to successfully complete another Interview prior to being entitled to apply for AoN conditional registration. The Board may consider a submission from a candidate who has successfully completed the assessment in the preceding two years, if it is supported by evidence of exceptional circumstances as to why employment in the Northern Territory has not commenced.

7.3 IMG's who have been unsuccessful at the Interview may undertake successive Interviews at any time for either the original nominated position or other AoN positions.

8. Appeals

8.1 If an IMG has concerns about the NT PESCI process or the individuals delegated to conduct or coordinate the Interview, their concerns may be conveyed in writing to the Board for consideration, within three months of the Interview in question;

8.3 The Board will consider each appeal on its merits;

8.4 Process of reviewing the appeal:

- a) The review will be conducted by the Board or its delegate;
- b) It will not include a fresh interview of the IMG;
- c) It will examine the processes undertaken by the panel in arriving at the Interview outcome. In doing so it will examine whether, in reaching the outcome the panel:
 - Took into account an irrelevant consideration;
 - Failed to take into account a relevant consideration;

- Failed to give the IGM a reasonable opportunity to answer the questions put to him/her; or
 - Was biased against the IMG.
- d) The review will consider all documentation available to the Interview panel and if required the audiotape of the interview;
- e) The review details will remain confidential to the Board, which will determine what information it should forward to the NT PESCI secretariat and or panel members.
- 8.5 Following consideration of relevant information the Board will notify the IMG or his/her nominated contact person of the Board's decision, which may include one or more of the following:
- a) appeal dismissed on the grounds that it is not valid;
 - b) appeal dismissed on the grounds that the issues raised by the IMG, did not have significant impact on the outcomes of the interview;
 - c) issues associated with requirements for quality improvement of the NT PESCI process with GPNNT / Board Assessors have been identified;
 - d) Recommendation that the IMG undertake another NT PESCI interview; and/or
 - e) Determination of any other action as appropriate given the nature of the appeal.
- 8.6 The IMG is responsible for costs associated with the Interview or repeat interview. Any compromise must be negotiated directly with GPNNT. The Board has no authority to determine costs nor will it be involved in discussions relating to fees .

Want to know more?

The application to undertake the NT PESCI can be accessed from the GPNNT website:

www.gpnnt.org.au

For further information regarding NT PESCI and the clinical assessment process, please contact:

GENERAL PRACTICE NETWORK NT

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Attachment A

ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTICE

International Medical Graduate (IMG), (Previously Titled Overseas Trained Doctors (OTD))
Categories for Assessing Suitability for Conditional Registration

International medical graduates with any of the following qualifications and experience are exempt from undertaking the IMG PAC clinical interview and may apply for AoN registration directly with the Board. These applicants must be eligible for the Australian Medical Council Specialist Pathway and apply to the RACGP for assessment of qualifications and experience to determine equivalency to the Fellowship RACGP and / or requirements to complete this Fellowship Pathway and are recognised as meeting requirements of the RACGP-NRP Categories 1 and 2:

- UK - Holders of Certificate of the Joint Committee on Postgraduate Training for General Practice (JCPTGP) both membership of the college (MRCGP);
- CANADA - Holders of the Certificate in Family Practice from the College of Family Physicians (CFPC)
- IRELAND - Holders Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) and membership of the college (MICGP);
- USA - Certificate of the American Board of Family Practice;
- SOUTH AFRICA - Master of Family Medicine, South Africa; Master of PRAX Medicine, South Africa; and Membership of the College of Family Practitioners; Holders of registration as a Family Physician with the Health Professions Council of South Africa;
- SINGAPORE - Master of Medicine (Family Medicine) from the National University of Singapore;
- BELGIUM, Specialist Certificate in General Practice / Family Medicine;
- NETHERLANDS, Certificate of Specific Training for General Practice;
- DENMARK, Specialist Certificate in Family Medicine;
- NORWAY, Certificate of Specific Training for General Medical Practice; or
- SWEDEN, Certificate of Specific Training for General Practice.

All other applicants for General Practice Area of Need positions must be able to demonstrate:

1. Relevant qualifications and / or more than five years of equivalent full time GP experience;
2. GP training or postgraduate qualifications and less than five years equivalent full time GP experience in another country; or
3. Relevant medical practice experience of more than five years post graduate duration.

Category 3 and 4 and category 5 IMGs, who can demonstrate more than 5 years post graduate medical practice experience relevant to general practice, must undertake a clinical skills assessment by the Northern Territory.

Category 5 International Medical Graduates are those who have no General Practice training or postgraduate qualifications and less than five years equivalent full time General Practice experience in another country.

The Board notes the following advice in regards to the Health Insurance Commission recognition of consultant physician or specialist. Applicants will be granted specialist recognition if they meet the criterion which includes:

They are registered with the relevant State or Territory Medical Board to practise in a medical specialty listed in the Health Insurance Regulations 1975: Declared Professional Organisation, specialty and qualifications; and they are or will be employed to practise as a specialist or consultant physician.