

MEDIA RELEASE

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GP training placements must prioritise need and quality, not bulk billing

AMA Queensland has urged the federal government to prioritise needs-based registrar placements and quality of training – or risk reducing the future pool of general practitioners.

GP training is delivered by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM).

The next federal grant tender – funding GP training from 2026 to 2030 – includes a guideline that would require the colleges to prioritise training places in practices that bulk bill only.

AMA Queensland President Dr Nick Yim said it's a concerning development.

"We know the federal government wants to build Australia's GP workforce, particularly in rural and regional areas and we support that aim," he said.

"But prioritising bulk billing practices for trainee placements has the potential to backfire.

"It is harder for practices that 100% bulk bill to operate in smaller centres, particularly in a decentralised state like Queensland.

"Each practice will have different structures, along with different staffing requirements and hence different expenses.

"This guideline could see deserving clinics that offer high quality training and supervision, including a broad scope of practice for trainee GPs, miss out on being able to develop that critical relationship with new doctors."

Dr Yim also said the move to limit GP placements to bulk billing practices could disincentivise new registrars.

"We know many doctors choose general practice because of the variety of the work – including rural medicine," he said.

"If they feel their training options might be narrowed, they may choose another speciality altogether."

Dr Yim said the priority of placements should be determined by demand and quality of training, including range of practice, quality of supervision and the needs of the registrar.

"Canberra must listen to RACGP and ACRRM to ensure the best needs of practices, trainees and communities are matched as much as possible.

"At a time when retiring GPs are simply closing their practices because they cannot find younger doctors to take over, we cannot afford to impose measures that could negatively affect our medical workforce."

Background

Australian Medical Association Queensland – Media Release

Page 13 of the Australian General Practice Training Program – Grant Opportunity Guidelines – DRAFT 2 document available via [the federal government's grants website](#) contains the guideline.