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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking on the role of an RVTS supervisor. The RVTS Supervisor Handbook is provided to assist you in this role.

Much of the information you need to know about the organisation, the staff, and the educational processes of RVTS can be found in the RVTS Handbook. Electronic copies can be accessed from the RVTS website.

THE RVTS SUPERVISOR

Supervisor’s Roles and Responsibilities

RVTS supervisors have a unique role in the Australian general practice training landscape. It is one of the core strengths of the RVTS program that supervisors are able to mentor, support, train and teach their registrars remotely. Wherever possible, supervisors practise in similar or comparable locations to their registrar, which strengthens the commonality of experience.

While remote supervision is ideally suited to newer technologies and internet based facilities, the telephone remains its cornerstone.

Supervisors provide distance supervision, professional role modelling, one-to-one teleconference teaching, feedback, along with regular telephone/skype/email advice and professional support to the registrar.

To ensure that registrars are well-supported and have reliable access to guidance and advice throughout the duration of their studies the supervisor is required to:

1. maintain regular contact with their registrar as follows:
   - in the first six months: 1 hour per week
   - in the second six months: 1 hour per fortnight
   - for the remainder of the program: 1 hour per month.

2. The Supervisor is not required to maintain contact with the registrar while the registrar is undertaking advanced skills training or while the registrar is on leave from RVTS

3. be available to provide clinical advice and assistance when required by the registrar while the registrar is undertaking clinical duties

4. participate in twice-yearly training reviews between the registrar and supervisor and RVTS. These are arranged by the RVTS office and form part of the regular contact between the supervisor and the registrar

5. visit the registrar once per year as part of a Clinical Teaching Visit, and provide a written report on the visit to the RVTS office. These visits are arranged in conjunction with the RVTS office. In situations where the supervisor works in the same practice as the registrar, the supervisor will not be required to conduct CTVs with the registrar.

6. join the weekly webinar when their registrar presents a case. (This is considered part of the regular contact between the supervisor and registrar)

7. assist the registrar in developing their learning plan, and with progress in RVTS Online modules.
8. attend at least one of the RVTS face to face registrar training workshops each year. (QA/CPD points and Procedural Training Grants may be available). Attendance is funded for one workshop per year

9. participate in appropriate teacher training provided by, but not limited to, RVTS

10. inform RVTS if they are going to be absent for a period greater than 2 weeks so that alternative supervision arrangements can be put in place

11. inform RVTS immediately of any issues of concern in their role as a supervisor and provide regular feedback to RVTS on their registrar

12. participate in the twice-yearly RVTS supervisor teleconferences

13. where possible, contribute to the workshops either by facilitating or presenting sessions

14. advise RVTS of any conditions on their medical registration

In exceptional circumstances variations to these requirements may be negotiated between RVTS, the supervisor and the registrar.

RVTS supervisors develop a solid working relationship with their registrars, which gives them a unique insight into the registrar’s working life. From time to time, registrars may struggle in their practices for a variety of reasons, most commonly workload issues, cultural or family issues or issues pertaining to exam pressure. The supervisor’s role is as much to identify that the learner is in difficulty as to assist with the problems. The registrar’s Registrar Training Coordinator (RTC) should be informed and any necessary assistance can then be provided for the registrar.

It is important that supervisors be familiar with RVTS Registrar Support Policy & Procedure and RVTS Remediation Policy and Procedure.

What's expected of an RVTS supervisor

**Regular registrar contact**

The model of supervision for RVTS may be different to your previous experiences as a supervisor as you may be located some distance from your registrar. The contact will generally be by phone, and this will work best if you set up a regular session on a specific time of the day or evening. Your contract outlines the required amount of contact time for each year.

**Clinical Teaching Visits (CTVs)**

If you work in a different practice to your registrar, you will be asked if you can undertake a clinical teaching visit to your registrar early in their training time and probably a second one later in their training. You will be contacted by the RVTS office and separately remunerated for your time and travel. You will be provided with a CTV guide which outlines the processes and requirements. The visit provides an opportunity to get to know your registrar better and allows you to provide a valuable learning experience for your registrar.

A Clinical Teaching Visit Guide provides information on preparation, conduct and reporting requirements for CTVs.
**Training Reviews**

Periodically, the supervisor, registrar and registrar’s training coordinator will have a training review, arranged by the RVTS office, to look specifically at the registrar’s learning plan, provide an overview of their training performance and address any outstanding issues.

**Webinars**

Each year your registrar will present at least one case during their regular webinar sessions. Supervisors should assist the registrar with development of their topic, addressing the learning goals and providing expert advice. Supervisors are often asked to facilitate at their registrar’s presentation. The supervisor’s input is especially valuable to the registrar group.

**RVTS Online**

RVTS online is the virtual “go to” place for Registrar and Supervisor training. It acts as a home for a variety of learning resources including a series of self-directed modules developed by RVTS, support material for the webinar series, interactive discussion areas and much more. RVTS will arrange a username and password for your access to RVTS Online.

**Workshops**

Supervisors are encouraged and funded to attend one workshop per year. Supervisors may attend both workshops in the year, but funding may only be available for one. The workshops are a first class opportunity to engage with registrars and the RVTS team. With remote supervision, these face to face workshops are especially valuable. Integral in the workshops is a continuing supervisor education program specifically targeting the educational needs of supervisors. In addition, these supervisor workshop sessions provide a forum for supervisors to share experiences. Supervisors are heavily involved in teaching sessions during the workshops and their contextual experience is invaluable. Supervisors are often asked to assist in the delivery of teaching or be involved in the clinical case practise. Separate remuneration for workshop attendance is available as described in your contract. CPD points and Procedural Grants may also be available.

**Supervisor teleconferences**

These are held twice yearly. In conjunction with the workshops these provide an opportunity for supervisors to give feedback to the education team and to share registrar experiences. In particular, these teleconferences enable the education team to update supervisors in regards to changes and developments in registrar education.

**Let us know if you’re taking leave**

To ensure your registrar always has access to a supervisor, we need to be informed when you are taking leave for any period greater than 2 weeks. This will allow us to put other arrangements in place. For shorter periods of time, the Registrar Training Coordinator can provide any support required.
How to engage your registrar

Methods of remote support and supervision
As well as RVTS Online, some other suggestions of what to cover during the regular supervisor contact can include:

• Case reviews
• Help with exam preparation
• Call for topical issues or concerns which have arisen since the last contact with the registrar
• Learning objectives which may be evident from the training review and learning plan
• Tips and tricks
• Ask the registrar to keep a pad on the desk to jot down issues which arise in between contacts
• Schedule into the appointment book a regular session that is mutually convenient, with a back up time if emergencies arise.

Selection of Supervisors
Registrars in the RVTS usually work in solo practice in rural and remote locations or in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and are matched with a supervisor for the duration of their training. The supervisor should:

• be registered with AHPRA;
• be a Fellow of ACRRM or RACGP;
• have experience in rural and remote general practice for registrars in the Remote Stream or experience in Aboriginal Health for the AMS Stream;
• have past or present experience in supervising/mentoring; and
• have appropriate medical indemnity cover

It is preferable, but not mandatory, that the supervisor practices in the same region and state as the registrar.

As the supervisor must be able to undertake all of the required registrar support activities, an RVTS supervisor can not be supervising more than two registrars.

Appointment of Supervisors
RVTS appoints a supervisor preferably prior to commencement of the registrar’s training. The registrar is consulted on the selection of a suitable supervisor. Often this is an existing supervisor/mentor and the intent is to preserve this relationship. The supervisor is not to be the employer/line manager of the registrar, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the RVTS Director of Training. If possible, registrars are matched with supervisors located in the same or a similar geographical region to the registrar’s location. When necessary, recommendations are sought from other sources such as Regional Training Organisations, Workforce Agencies and Primary Health Networks.

RVTS contacts the nominated doctor and, if they are interested in taking on the role, sends details about the program, RVTS supervisor requirements, and a supervisor profile form for completion and return to the RVTS office. If necessary, RVTS then undertakes referee checks.
Once the Director of Training has approved the supervisor’s appointment, RVTS sends an agreement for signature and return to the RVTS office. A copy of the countersigned agreement is returned to the supervisor.

**Supervisor Orientation**

Once the agreement has been signed by both parties, RVTS sends orientation material such as the Clinical Teaching Visit Guide to the supervisor. A training review is arranged with the supervisor, RVTS and the registrar.

**Supervisor Support and Professional Development**

To ensure that supervisors are supported in their role, one of the RVTS Medical Educators, has responsibility for professional development and support of supervisors.

The administration team provides the support supervisors need for the office aspects of their work. In particular they can be contacted regarding remuneration for supervision and the administrative issues that need to be addressed as registrars are guided through the complexities of Australian general practice training.

In addition, RVTS provides the following support:

1. A structured program of supervisor/teacher training held in parallel to registrar training at the twice-yearly face to face workshops.

2. Supervisor Liaison Officers. The role of the SLO is to provide a link between RVTS supervisors and the RVTS management and educators. The SLO may be called upon to represent RVTS at national meetings. The SLO is appointed from within the supervisor group. The current RVTS Supervisor Liaison Officers are Dr Taras Mikulin (Remote Stream) and Dr Marguerite Tracy (AMS Stream).

**Supervisor Resources**

It is important that RVTS supervisors are provided with relevant resources to assist in delivery of training services to RVTS Registrars. Following signing of an RVTS Supervision Agreement, each supervisor will be provided with the following resources as required:

Access to RVTS Online, an online learning portal that enables users to engage in online modules, webinar material and online groups. RVTS will arrange a username and password for your access to RVTS Online.

Medical Reference Books

- Practice-Based Teaching – a Guide for GP’s 2nd edition by Richard Hays
- John Murtagh’s General Practice – electronic copy

Any other resources that a Supervisor may require will need prospective approval from the CEO.

**Supervisor Payments**

RVTS makes payments to supervisors in accordance with the supervisor contract.
Other Useful Information

The Role of the Registrar Training Coordinator
Registrar Training Coordinators (RTCs) are experienced members of our administration staff. Each registrar has an allocated RTC.

The role of the RTC is to be an accessible first point of contact for registrars, providing training advice, monitoring registrar progress and to be a referral point for registrars to specialised training advice within the organisation.

Role of learning plans
The learning plan provides an outline of the individual learning objectives that each registrar would like to achieve during their training time. It is developed during a “3 way” training review between the registrar, the supervisor and an RVTS representative. It is then reviewed twice yearly to assess progress and be updated.

Membership of RVTS
RVTS Ltd is a company limited by guarantee. It has 3 classes of primary membership.

- Class A is comprised of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- Class B is comprised of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
- Class C is made up of RVTS registrars and supervisors

All RVTS registrars and supervisors are encouraged to apply for admission as primary class C members. Members are entitled to vote at general meetings of RVTS Ltd as well as nominate as directors of the RVTS Ltd Board. The company constitution allows for two Class C nominees to be appointed to the board.


COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
In the event of a dispute arising involving a registrar, supervisor or member of the RVTS staff the Complaints and Grievances Policy and Procedure outlined on the RVTS website at http://rvts.org.au/downloads/policies/Complaints_Grievances_Policy.pdf is to be followed.
# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACRRM</td>
<td>Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGPT</td>
<td>Australian General Practice Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>AKT</td>
<td>Applied Knowledge Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALS</td>
<td>Advanced Life Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMS</td>
<td>Aboriginal Medical Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>APLS</td>
<td>Advanced Paediatric Life Support (Course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARSP</td>
<td>Advanced Rural Skills Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>AST</td>
<td>Advanced Skills Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Case Based Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>CME</td>
<td>Continuing Medical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Clinical Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTV</td>
<td>Clinical Teaching Visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOT</td>
<td>Director of Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMST</td>
<td>Early Management of Severe Trauma (Course)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FACRRM</td>
<td>Fellowship of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARGP</td>
<td>Fellowship of Advanced Rural General Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRACGP</td>
<td>Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full time equivalent</td>
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<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>General Practitioner</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPR</td>
<td>General Practice Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPRA</td>
<td>General Practice Registrars’ Association</td>
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<td>GPRIP</td>
<td>General Practice Rural Incentives Payment</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
<td>General Practice Supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPPTSP</td>
<td>General Practitioner Procedural Training Support Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>HECS</td>
<td>Higher Education Contribution Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMG</td>
<td>International Medical Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>KFP</td>
<td>Key Feature Problems</td>
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<td>MA</td>
<td>Medicare Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCQ</td>
<td>Multiple Choice Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDO</td>
<td>Medical Defence Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>Medical Educator</td>
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<tr>
<td>MiniCEX</td>
<td>Mini Clinical Evaluation Exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRC</td>
<td>National Resource Centre – RACGP John Murtagh Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBS</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>RACGP</td>
<td>Royal Australian College of General Practitioners</td>
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<td>RDA</td>
<td>Rural Doctors Association</td>
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<td>RHTU</td>
<td>Rural Health Training Unit</td>
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<td>RLO</td>
<td>Registrar Liaison Officer</td>
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<td>RMS</td>
<td>Registrar Management System</td>
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<td>RPL</td>
<td>Recognition of Prior Learning</td>
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<td>RRMA</td>
<td>Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Area</td>
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<td>RRMEO</td>
<td>Rural and Remote Medical Education Online</td>
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<td>RTC</td>
<td>Registrar Training Coordinator</td>
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<td>RVTS</td>
<td>Remote Vocational Training Scheme</td>
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<td>SLO</td>
<td>Supervisor Liaison Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Senior Medical Educator</td>
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<tr>
<td>StAMPS</td>
<td>Structured Assessment using Multiple Patient Scenarios</td>
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<tr>
<td>VR</td>
<td>Vocational Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>WONCA</td>
<td>World Organisation of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians</td>
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