



## Specialist Training Program Site Liaison Fact Sheet

### What is the Specialist Training Program?

The Specialist Training Program (STP) is a Commonwealth initiative providing an annual trainee salary contribution of \$100,000 for training posts in expanded settings outside traditional public teaching hospitals.

The STP also provides:

- Rural Support Loading (RSL) of up to \$20,000 for Trainee expenses in regional, rural, and remote settings. Please refer to the RSL Guidelines for important information on the use of RSL funds.
- Private Infrastructure and Clinical Supervision (PICS) allowance, of up to \$30,000 per annum for clinical supervision, and \$10,000 every three years for private infrastructure. PICS is administered by the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators (RACMA).

For more information on STP, please see the [STP Operational Framework](#) on the Department of Health website.

### Funding and Administration Agreements (FAA)

RACP administers STP funds by entering into a Funding and Administration Agreement (FAA) with 'sites', who are the employers of trainees in STP posts. The FAA is signed by the legal entity and includes information about the new training position (also referred to as the STP Post), training location (rotational facilities) where the trainee will rotate to while in this STP funded position and other details about the training position. An FAA may include one or more STP training position as well as all the funds to be paid to the legal entity for the current funding cycle.

Funding agreements are assigned a number e.g. FA-NSW-100 and each training position or STP Post is assigned a unique identifier e.g. #1234.

STP funding is announced by the Department of Health and the period of funding or funding cycle will vary. Previously the Department has announced funding for two years. At the end of the funding cycle the Department may announce funding for a further 12 months as was the case in 2016 and 2017. The timing of funding announcements is managed by the Department of Health.

FAAs are contracts that cover the current funding cycle. When further funding is announced RACP will issue new funding agreements or amendments to funding agreements as required.

The funding agreement includes all the contractual obligations of each legal entity including reporting requirements and it is vital that these contracts are read and understood by the organisation (or legal entity).

A key contractual obligation is that the legal entity assigns a site Liaison Officer as the key contact between the legal entity and the RACP. It is advisable that only one site Liaison officer is assigned per FAA.



## Roles and responsibilities of the Site Liaison Officer

The Site Liaison Officer has several key responsibilities as follows:

- Ensure reporting requirements outlined in the funding agreement are met by submitting accurately completed progress reports for each academic semester by the deadlines set out in the FAA (this should include all relevant information for each STP Post).
- Ensure all information on the legal entity and training posts is up-to-date at all times.
- Ensure new funding agreements are reviewed by the relevant officers, key information such as the ABN and legal entity name are correct and that the FAA is signed by an authorised officer of the legal entity (Director/CEO/Other).
- Submit all other the relevant documentation as required by RACP such as the RSL Annual Report.
- Ensure STP funding is expended as per requirements set out by the Department of Health in the STP Operational Framework and the RACP RSL Guidelines.
- Ensure all communications sent by RACP are noted as these may contain information about important upcoming changes to the management of the STP by the College.
- Notify RACP of changes to rotational facilities immediately as this may affect RSL and PICS payments.
- Notify RACP when there is a change of Liaison Officer due to extended leave or when the current officer leaves the organisation.

## What can STP Salary Support funding be used for?

STP salary support funding can only be used as a salary contribution for RACP trainees (including Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMG)) rotating through the post. Funding is paid to the employer of the trainee (in some cases this will be a public teaching hospital, while the trainee rotates to the expanded setting).

STP salary support funding cannot be used for:

- post-Fellowship training
- general practice training
- direct costs associated with accreditation of training posts
- overseas Trainees employed by hospitals in other countries seeking a rotation through expanded settings within Australia
- training posts which are not considered to be new posts (refer to the STP Operational Framework).

## STP Vacant Training Post policy

STP training positions that report a vacancy for six months will receive an email with a request to notify RACP STP if a trainee is planned to fill the training position in the next period/semester. If the training position is not filled in the next period/semester, funding for the vacant training position will be discontinued.



### How is funding administered?

The RACP administers the STP via individual Funding and Administration Agreements. An STP post is an individual training position eligible for a salary contribution of up to \$100,000 per annum per one full-time equivalent (FTE) Trainee.

Multiple trainees can rotate or share the STP post, which can be structured across multiple facilities. The position can only be in the specialty, and for the level of training stipulated in the FAA (based on information provided in the application for STP funding) between the RACP and the relevant site.

### How and when is funding paid to sites?

STP funding is paid twice per year by the College, in 50 per cent instalments, following receipt of a Progress Report per 'semester' in February and August.

STP payments are only made for posts within sites with which the RACP holds a signed Funding and Administration Agreement. Payments are made for all posts listed in a funding agreement and not per individual post.

To receive funding:

- the site liaison officer submits a Progress Report (February and August) to the STP Unit
- the STP Unit processes the report
- when the report is approved, the STP Unit emails the site requesting an invoice for STP funds due
- upon receipt of an invoice, the site is paid.

RSL payments have been processed separate to the progress report previously however in 2017 these will be processed and paid in conjunction with the progress report. RSL payments will also be made in two instalments.

### How is funding calculated?

The STP Unit calculates the funding owing to each site based on information provided in Progress Reports. Funds can be affected by:

- the number of posts operated by the site
- trainee(s) placed over the current semester
- full-time equivalency of the trainees
- trainees' eligibility for funding i.e. the trainee must be registered with the RACP



### How do I complete and submit the Progress Report?

Progress reports are emailed by RACP to each site in January and July each year.

Each Progress Report requires you to:

- validate the trainee information for the previous semester that was provided in the previous progress report
- submit start and finish dates of trainees for the current semester
- validate the financial information for each post – confirm funds were spent for STP purposes
- confirm the rotational facilities (note any changes must be reported to RACP immediately)
- complete the RSL Estimate of Expenditure section, if relevant for the training posts
- add any comments you may have about the STP
- sign that all information provided in the Progress Report is accurate.

A signed updated version of the Progress Report should be returned to the STP Unit via email by the due date. Following approval of the progress report, the STP Unit will invite you to submit an invoice for the funding due for the organisation. Invoices submitted prior to this will not be paid. Invoices should be emailed (not posted) and must match the information requested by the STP Unit.

**NOTE:** Liaison officers must nominate a delegate when on extended leave, to enable timely submission of progress reports.

### Accreditation

As most training facilities vary their training locations to encompass a broad spectrum of experiences, all STP settings and rotational facilities must be accredited by the RACP before trainees can be placed there. Changes in training locations should be reported to the STP Unit immediately, as they may affect a number of aspects of STP administration, including eligibility for RSL payments, eligibility for PICS payments (administered by RACMA), site accreditation and in some cases, eligibility to participate in the STP.

### Changes to the administration of STP 2017

RACP has communicated information about changes to the administration of the STP from 2017 onwards and these include:

- the introduction of recipient created tax invoices in semester two of 2017
- RSL reporting and payments incorporated into progress reports (RSL payments will be made in two instalments)
- Electronic reporting on the STP online web portal for progress reports due to commence semester two 2017

Any questions about the STP changes being implemented in 2017 can be directed to [stp@racp.edu.au](mailto:stp@racp.edu.au)