

INFORMATION
for accrediting agencies
and general practices

Managing conflicts of interest in accreditation

This fact sheet outlines a range of strategies to reduce potential and real conflicts of interest that are associated with the accreditation processes of general practices.

General practice consultants not to participate in assessments

A general practice may engage a variety of consultants to support its operations and prepare for an assessment to Standards, including completing self-assessment requirements.

Such consultants may have previously participated in accreditation assessments, responding directly to enquiries from assessors on behalf of the general practice.

Under the National General Practice Accreditation (NGPA) Scheme, consultants engaged by a general practice, to assist with an assessment, are not permitted to attend or participate in the assessment process under the NGPA Scheme.

General practice accreditation consultants are permitted to:

- Complete and submit self-assessments on behalf of the general practice once reviewed and approved by the practice principals
- Assist the general practice with corrective actions.

A general practice accreditation consultant is a person who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is not identified on the organisational chart
- Is not an employee
- Has no line management responsibilities in the organisation
- Does not provide regular and ongoing technical support for the delivery of patient care.

This strategy is aimed at consultants whose primary role is to achieve accreditation, who do not provide or support direct patient care, and who do not have as a primary responsibility the transfer of expert knowledge and/or skill to the general practice's workforce.

This requirement does not apply to consultants who may be engaged by general practices to support clinical care or provide ongoing technical advice and expertise.

Accrediting agencies are required to notify general practices of these requirements before commencing an assessment.

Accrediting agencies consulting on the RACGP Standards for general practices

A known conflict of interest exists in situations where an accrediting agency or an assessor support a general practice to implement the Standards and then assess them against those Standards.

To reduce the likelihood of this conflict of interest occurring, accrediting agencies are to:

- Have processes in place to ensure that assessors who provide general practice accreditation consulting services do not assess the general practices for the purpose of accreditation, where they have consulted
- Provide the Commission with information on how they prevent conflicts of interest occurring when assessors provide consulting services on the Standards and assess to the Standards.

Accrediting agencies must ensure there is no conflict of interest, or bias, on the part of the accrediting agency or its assessors in conducting assessments and awarding accreditation. Any conflict of interest must be immediately acknowledged and addressed by the accrediting agency.

Questions?

For more information, please visit the [NGPA webpage](#) on the Commission's website.

You can also email the Commission's Safety and Quality Advice Centre at AdviceCentre@safetyandquality.gov.au or call 1800 304 056.

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