

Transitional arrangements

November 2015

Transitional arrangements for *Guidelines - Supervised practice for international medical graduates*

Introduction

The Medical Board of Australia's *Guidelines - Supervised practice for international medical graduates* come into effect on 4 January 2016.

The Guidelines apply to international medical graduates (IMGs) with limited registration or provisional registration.

The Board expects all IMGs and their supervisors to follow the revised Guidelines from 4 January 2016.

Requirements for new IMGs and new supervisors

New IMG

All IMGs submitting an application for limited or provisional registration for the first time from 4 January 2016 must ensure that their proposed position, supervision arrangements and their supervisor meet the requirements in the revised Guidelines.

A supervisor who does not meet the requirements in the Guidelines will not be approved as a supervisor for a new IMG even if they are already approved as a supervisor for current IMGs. A supervisor can continue to supervise the current IMGs but they will not be approved to supervise any new IMGs until they meet the requirements for supervisors or they make a proposal to the Board as to why they are suitable to be a supervisor for the new IMG and the Board accepts that proposal.

New supervisor

Medical practitioners who are proposing to be a supervisor for the first time from 4 January 2016 must ensure that they meet the requirements for supervisors outlined in the revised Guidelines.

Purpose of transitional arrangements

The Board expects all IMGs and their supervisors to follow the revised Guidelines from 4 January 2016.

Recognising that there are current IMGs (who were registered before 4 January 2016) already in positions with approved supervision arrangements, the Board has approved transitional arrangements for these IMGs and their supervisors.

The transitional arrangements allow a current supervisor to continue supervising and they allow an IMG to continue in their current approved position with existing supervision arrangements for a limited period of time. When the transitional period ends or if the IMG wishes to change their position or supervision arrangements, the IMG must ensure their position, their supervisor and their supervision arrangements meet all the requirements in the revised Guidelines.

The following outlines the transitional arrangements that apply for IMGs and their supervisors.

FAQs are available to help IMGs to determine what they need to do when applying to renew their registration or making a new application for registration.

Transitional arrangements for current IMGs

A current IMG is an IMG whose limited or provisional registration was granted (or approved in-principle) before 4 January 2016.

The Board expects current IMGs and their supervisors to follow the revised Guidelines from 4 January 2016.

1. Continuing registration in their current position with the same supervision arrangements

Transitional arrangements allow a current IMG to continue in their current position, under their current supervision arrangements until they have exhausted their renewals of limited or provisional registration or for two years from 4 January 2016 (the date of effect of the revised Guidelines), whichever is the greater.

At renewal of registration

When the IMG applies to renew their registration, the IMG must ensure that their supervisor meets the new requirements for supervisors.

Under the new requirements, supervisors:

- should have specialist registration,
- must be appropriately qualified, preferably in the same field of medicine as the position proposed for the IMG, and
- should have a minimum of three years full time equivalent practice with general and/or specialist registration in Australia prior to being appointed as a supervisor.

If, at the time of the IMG's renewal, the supervisor cannot meet the requirements for supervisors, they must provide a proposal to the Board as to why they are suitable to be a supervisor and how effective supervision will be provided (as permitted in the revised Guidelines).

After an IMG has exhausted their renewals of limited or provisional registration

When the IMG makes a new application after they have exhausted their renewals of limited or provisional registration, they must ensure that their position, their supervision arrangements and their supervisor meet the requirements in the revised Guidelines.

The revised Guidelines permit a supervisor who cannot meet the requirements for supervisors, to provide a proposal to the Board as to why they are suitable to be a supervisor and how effective supervision will be provided.

Exception for current IMGs who exhaust their renewals of limited or provisional registration before 4 January 2018

If a current IMG exhausts their renewals of registration in the first two years of the revised Guidelines they may make a new application for registration to continue in their current position under their current supervision arrangements.

If, at the time of this new application, the supervisor cannot meet the requirements for supervisors, they must provide a proposal to the Board as to why they are suitable to be a supervisor and how effective supervision will be provided (as permitted in the revised Guidelines).

When the IMG next renews their registration after 4 January 2018, they must ensure that their position, their supervision arrangements and their supervisor meet the requirements in the revised Guidelines.

2. Change in circumstances

A request for a change in circumstances can be made by:

- request for change of circumstances – form ACCL-30
- application to renew registration with a change in circumstances/new supervision arrangements
- new application for registration with a change in circumstances/new supervision arrangements

Major change

An IMG who is currently under supervision, who wishes to change their employment or position, practise, supervisor and/or supervision arrangements at any time after 4 January 2016, must ensure that their position, their supervision arrangements and their supervisor meet the requirements in the revised Guidelines. For example, moving to a new position in a new organisation.

Minor change

An IMG currently under supervision may make minor changes to their circumstances and continue under their current supervision arrangements. For example, removing sites of practice or making a change to their position title. A request for a minor change in circumstances must be approved by the Board (using form ACCL-30).

Change in exceptional circumstances

If an IMG who is currently under supervision has an unexpected significant change to their circumstances which is beyond their control, and they cannot make new supervision arrangements that will meet the revised Guidelines, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For example, their supervisor suffers a sudden long term incapacitation and a new supervisor must be appointed, but the only available supervisor is not qualified in the same field of medicine as the IMG.

An IMG and their supervisor may make a submission to the Board to demonstrate how the proposed supervision arrangements will ensure safe practice and a proposal for how they will meet the revised Guidelines in the future.

Note – restrictions on types of positions

An IMG who is currently under supervision will not have a new application for limited or provisional registration approved if it is for a new position that the revised Guidelines do not allow.

For example, a current IMG who requires level two supervision will not be approved to work in a locum position after the revised Guidelines come into effect, regardless of their current approved position.

Transitional arrangements for current supervisors

A current supervisor is a supervisor who was approved as a supervisor of an IMG before 4 January 2016.

The Board expects current IMGs and their supervisors to follow the revised Guidelines from 4 January 2016.

1. Requirements for supervisors

Transitional arrangements allow a current supervisor to continue to supervise their current IMGs until each IMG applies to renew their registration or makes a new application for registration or requests a change in circumstance.

When the IMG applies to renew their registration or makes a new application for registration or requests a change in circumstance, the supervisor must meet the new requirements for supervisors.

Under the new requirements, supervisors:

- should have specialist registration,
- must be appropriately qualified, preferably in the same field of medicine as the position proposed for the IMG, and
- should have a minimum of three years full time equivalent practice with general and/or specialist registration in Australia prior to being appointed as a supervisor

If, at the time of the IMG's renewal, new application or request for change in circumstances, the supervisor cannot meet the requirements for supervisors, they must provide a proposal to the Board as to why they are suitable to be a supervisor and how effective supervision will be provided (as permitted in the revised Guidelines).

2. Numbers of IMGs permitted per supervisor

Supervisors will not normally be permitted to supervise more than four IMGs. Further limits apply depending on what level of supervision the IMG is on.

Note - these limits do not apply to Directors of Medical Services or Directors of Clinical Training (or equivalent) in hospitals.

Supervisors who concurrently consults with (their own) patients

If a supervisor who concurrently consults with (their own) patients while supervising IMGs, is currently approved to supervise more than one IMG on level one, they are permitted to continue to supervise all their current IMGs, but will not be approved as supervisor for any additional IMGs until the number of IMGs and their levels comply with the revised Guidelines (i.e. they have only one IMG on level one).

Supervising more than four IMGs

If a supervisor who is already approved to supervise more than four IMGs is proposing to supervise additional IMGs after 4 January 2016, they must provide a proposal to the Board about how they will provide supervision to each IMG (as permitted in the revised Guidelines).

IMGs in general practice – general practice accreditation

The Board prefers that IMGs with limited or provisional registration work in general practices that are currently accredited to the *RACGP Standards for General Practices* (4th edition).

Transitional arrangements allow an IMG who is currently working in a general practice that is not accredited to continue to work in that practice.

The IMG and the supervisor must:

- ensure that the general practice becomes accredited by 4 January 2017, or
- submit a proposal to the Board by 4 January 2017, to satisfy the Board that they have structures in place to support safe practice.