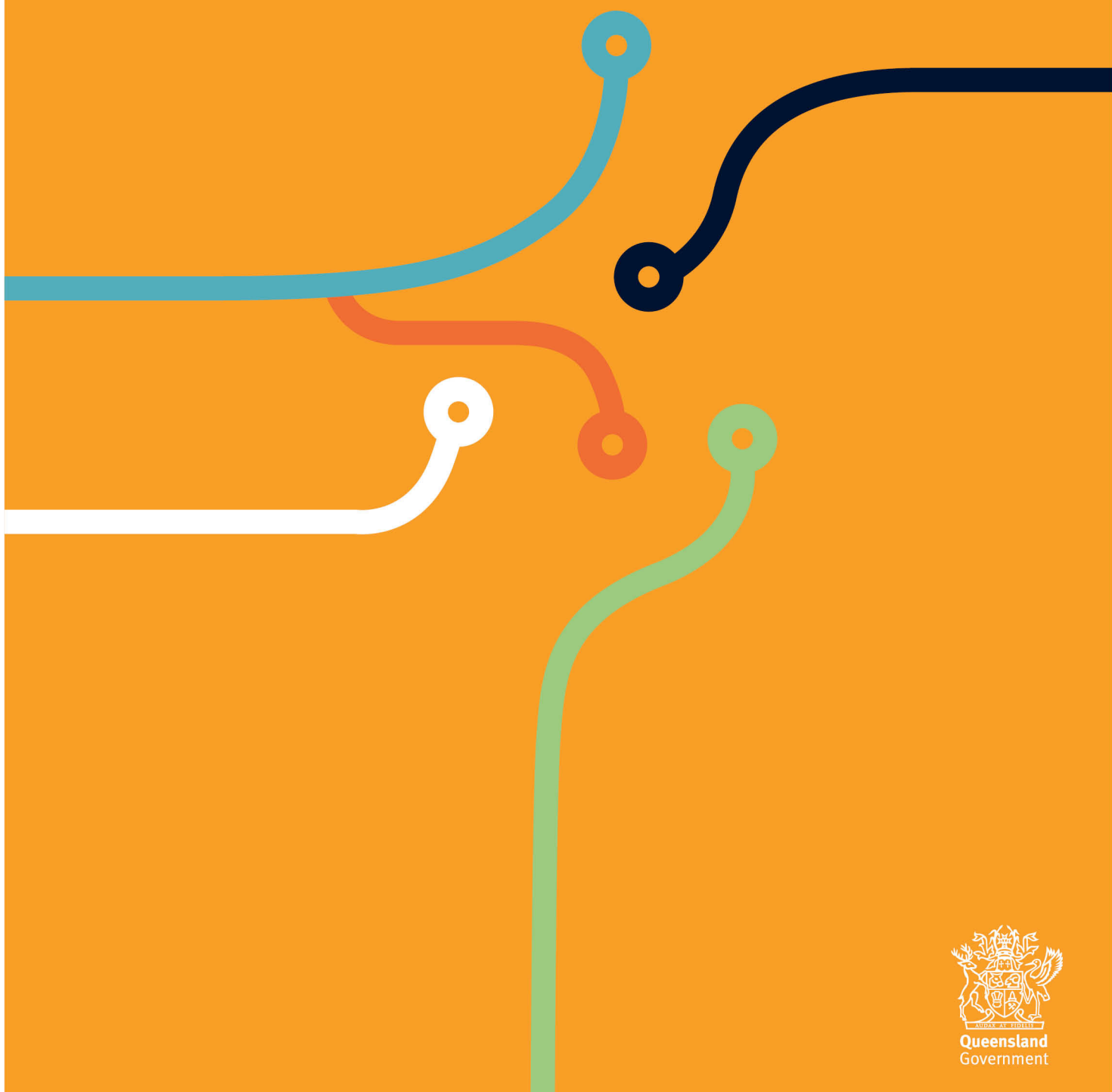


**Guide to maintaining your advanced skills  
in internal medicine, paediatrics, mental  
health and palliative care**



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE</b> .....	4
<b>CONSULTATION</b> .....	5
<b>OVERVIEW OF CPD REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	6
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR MOPS ACCORDING TO ACTIVITY TYPE .....	7
<b>RECOMMENDED MINIMUM CPD REQUIREMENT TO ACHIEVE MOPS</b> .....	8
<b>PRACTICALITIES</b> .....	9
LODGING YOUR MOPS CPD .....	9
APPLYING FOR FUNDING TO SUPPORT ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL CPD ACTIVITIES .....	9
TIPS .....	9
<b>SUGGESTED CPD/MOPS ACTIVITIES   DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC</b> .....	10
PAEDIATRICS .....	10
INTERNAL MEDICINE .....	11
MENTAL HEALTH .....	11
PALLIATIVE CARE .....	14

## Background and purpose

This document offers guidance on suitable activities for Maintenance of Professional Standards (MOPS) for the advanced skill disciplines of internal medicine, paediatrics, mental health and palliative care. It outlines the continuing professional development (CPD) requirements set by the Medical Board of Australia and makes recommendations about the amount and type of CPD activities we suggest to maintain your advanced skills.

This document also provides discipline specific suggestions on activities, resources and placements that we hope is of use in developing your annual Professional Development Plan.

## Consultation

The following people were consulted in compiling this document:

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We welcome feedback from our QRGP trainees and fellows with the relevant advanced skills. Please contact the team via [rural\\_generalist@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:rural_generalist@health.qld.gov.au) if you have additional comments or suggestions.

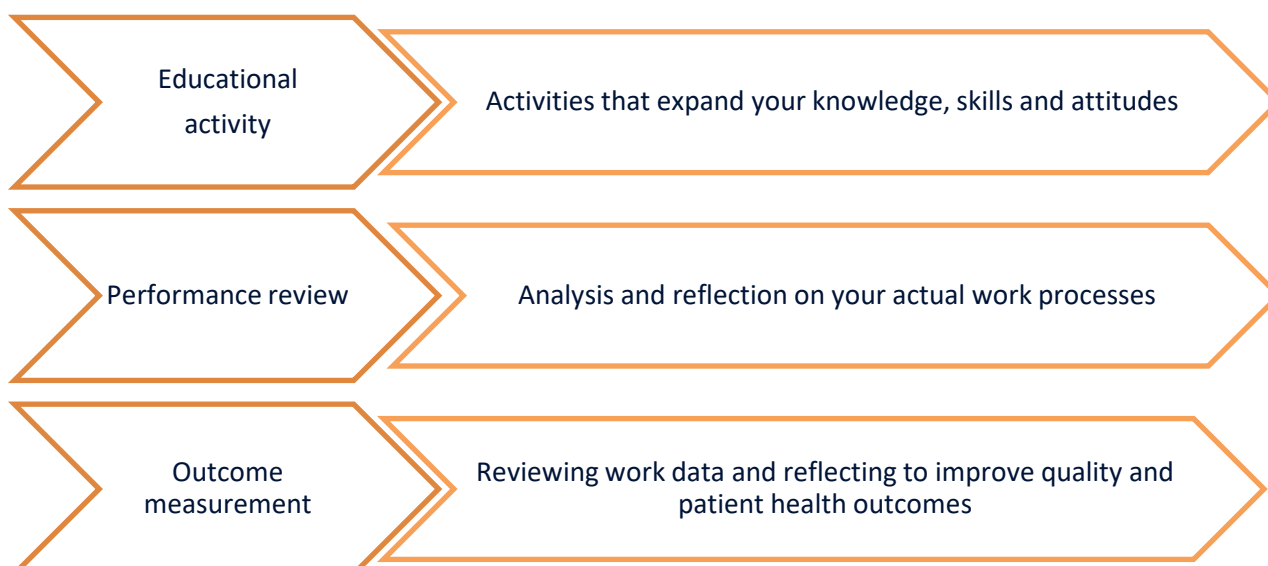
## Overview of CPD requirements

When thinking about what to plan for your CPD activities relating to maintaining your advanced skill it is important to consider the varying requirements of:

1. The Medical Board of Australia (MBA)
2. College - RACGP or ACRRM
3. Medicare (e.g. Level 2 Focused Psychological Skills CPD)
4. Credentialling (Queensland Health facility specific)

Of course, tailor what you focus on to your specific learning needs, relevant areas of clinical practice and community need. It is likely that no 2 rural generalists will have the same MOPS requirements as our practices and communities are inherently diverse.

In line with the updated MBA requirements as of January 2023 the domains of CPD have been streamlined into 3 categories as outlined below. When thinking about what to plan for your CPD activities relating to maintaining your skill it is important to consider the varying requirements of:



Many of these activities qualify for MOPS however there is an emphasis on performance review and outcome measurement.

Further details about the categories of professional development and what activities are suggested can be found on your college guidelines:

- RACGP
- ACRRM

The following table has been collated to combine ACRRM and RACGP suggested CPD activities that would be suitable for MOPS across the disciplines. Keep in mind that every activity listed is likely to be suitable to both colleges but would be subject to approval once lodged via the respective college CPD logging applications.

## Suggested activities that would be suitable for MOPS according to activity type

A = ACRRM. R = RACGP

Activity	Educational activity	Performance review	Outcome measurement
PDP creation and maintenance		A/R	
Conference workshop, course, seminar	A/R		R
Distance based education modules	A/R		
Higher education professional certification	R	R	R
Development of clinical guidelines, teaching materials, Quality Improvement Activities	R	R	R
Educator, supervisor, examiner, coaching, mentor		R	
Journal club		R	
Research in AST/ARST, publications	R	R	R
Committee/Board/Council organisation representation	R		
Multi-source feedback, patient feedback		A/R	A/R
Observation of clinical practice (peer review)		A	
Case Based Discussion (Peer review)/ Peer Group Learning (PGL)/Random Case Analysis (RCA)	R	A/R	A/R
MDT case conferences		R	
Assessment of skills/simulation/practical training		A/R	
Clinical Attachment		A/R	
Locum improvement tool		A	A
Clinical Audit			A/R
Maintain and reflect on case logbook		A	A
Critical Event Analysis (CEA), Morbidity and Mortality meetings		R	R

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.racgp.org.au/getmedia/4a05ccf3-7cbc-4cd6-a27c-7b68b972fde9/CPD-activity-options-by-your-scope-of-practice\\_3.pdf.aspx](https://www.racgp.org.au/getmedia/4a05ccf3-7cbc-4cd6-a27c-7b68b972fde9/CPD-activity-options-by-your-scope-of-practice_3.pdf.aspx)<sup>2</sup><https://www.acrrm.org.au/CPDHome/professional-development-program/pdp-matrix-of-activities>

## Recommended minimum CPD requirement to achieve MOPS

1. 6 hours (cumulative) per year of performance review and/or outcome measurement activities relevant to your chosen AST discipline, such as through the activities outlined below:
  - a) Case based discussion/peer group learning
  - b) Clinical audit
  - c) Multisource feedback/Patient survey
  - d) Observation of clinical practice (peer review)/MDT case conference
  - e) Reflection on and maintenance of case logbook
  - f) Formal Supervision
2. While the same activity can be repeated, 2 different activities are encouraged per triennium.
3. 6 hours of clinical/educational experiences involving practical training/skill development/maintenance relevant to the AST, can include providing education to others per triennium:
  - g) Clinical attachment
  - h) Suitable conference/course
  - i) Higher educational learning
4. Total MOPS equivalent to 24 hours per triennium - (18 hours/triennium or 6 hours/year of performance review or outcome measurement; 6 hours/triennium of clinical/educational training).
5. The wording of these suggested requirements has intentionally been left quite broad to allow individuals flexibility in tailoring their selected activities to specific learning needs and scope of practice.

We hope that formalising these requirements with support of the colleges will allow rural generalists with these advanced skills greater priority when applying for professional development leave and eventually additional funding and support programs in line with those that exist for procedural upskilling for anaesthetics and obstetrics.

Aligning CPD MOPS requirements for these disciplines with the procedural disciplines will assist in cementing recognition of the role of a rural generalist with these advanced skills in rural and remote service provision from the relevant specialty colleges.



## Practicalities

### Lodging your MOPS CPD

- You are responsible for entering the data/evidence/logging via your online 'portfolio' usually hosted by your college known as your CPD Home.
- For mental health special billing codes, the college also needs to lodge your approved MOPS activity with the General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration (GPMHSC) who then lodge that with Medicare.
  - Sometimes you need to check that ACRRM is aware.
  - Because RACGP is linked to GPMHSC it happens automatically.

### Applying for funding to support access to essential CPD activities

- The Rural Procedural Grants Program is available to support relevant course attendance and observership experiences if you work in ED or emergency mental health care settings regularly.
- Health Workforce Queensland grants are available if you work primarily outside of Queensland Health.

### Tips

- Plan early and apply for the necessary leave early.
- Reach out to colleagues with the same advanced skill to discuss what activities they have/haven't found helpful. If you need help connecting with colleagues, contact the QRGF team.
- Attempt to undertake activities at your referral tertiary centre where possible to help improve your relationship with referral teams and consultants.
- Try to arrange activities that align with your interests and specific application of your skill within your current community.

## Suggested CPD/MOPS activities | discipline specific

### Paediatrics

#### 1. Suggested courses/educational opportunities

- Advanced Paediatric Life Support
- Paediatric BASIC
  - This is focused on the critical care setting, basically an intro to ICU care for paediatric patients. Extremely good course if you deal with paed in a rural ED as it gives you an understanding of how to stabilise and manage the paed patient whilst awaiting a retrieval, or to at least have some idea what the retrieval team is talking about.
- Paediatric BLS and ALS
- Neonatal resus
  - Usually delivered by your HHS
- Optimus PRIME
  - State run Paeds ALS training accessible through your HHS
- Graduate diploma in Child Health/Sydney Child Health Program
  - Various organisations offer this qualification but most commonly delivered by:
    - The Sydney Children Hospitals Network
  - Can be studied during or following the AST year, helpful for achieving structure in your study
  - Opportunities for continuing involvement with the content via examining new trainees following completion of the qualification
- Northern Australian Regional Paediatrician Network/Annual Conference
- ECHO series from Queensland Children's Hospital
- FASD training (Gold Coast University Hospital)
- Mental Health upskilling for young people and adolescents
  - Various providers
- Training in developmental assessments
  - Various providers/methods e.g. ADOS, Bayley, Griffiths
- Explore potential for credentialing/recognition with PBS 'in accordance with state or territory law' to commence stimulant therapy if completed appropriate community/developmental training

#### 2. Resources/Activities

- RACP website and learning resources, journals, conference
- <https://auspaediatrics.org.au/>
- MDT discussions
- Morbidity and Mortality meetings

#### 3. Great placements and contacts in paediatrics

- Paediatrics department in Cairns
  - Open to upskilling with the department of paed and happy to set agendas based on the individuals' learning objectives
- Cairns ED/Townsville ED
  - Colleagues have gone and done placements in the various EDs to see how it ran and what the consultants were doing
  - This could be arranged to be time in the Paeds ED

- For those with dual AST Paeds and anaesthetics Morbidity and Mortality meetings
  - Paediatric Anaesthetic upskilling at the Children’s Hospital Queensland
  - There is a long waitlist so sign up early
- Developmental Paeds placement - Gold Coast University Hospital
- Mount Isa Department of Paediatrics
- Swap with a Paediatrics AST colleague to cover each other’s leave
- Consider attachments with community Paeds rotations/VOICED clinic to upskill in developmental paediatrics

## Internal medicine

### 1. Suggested courses/activities

- Palliative care placement/education through PEPA placements and courses
- TTE training/POCUS for echocardiography training (various providers)
- Advance Life Support
- Journal club/Infectious Disease grand rounds with tertiary hospital or similar linking in via videoconference
- MDT discussions
- Morbidity and Mortality meetings
- Royal Australian College of Physician resources and CPD activities
- Running general medicine clinics with telehealth support by specialist physician on a regular basis

### 2. Resources

- [European society of cardiology guidelines](#)
- Local HealthPathways resources (often do have a big focus on internal medicine topics and are reviewed and updated regularly)
- UpToDate
- [Endocrinology society guidelines](#)
- [British Thoracic Society guidelines](#)

### 3. Great placements and contacts in internal medicine

- Cairns Department of Internal Medicine
- Toowoomba and Kingaroy Department of Internal Medicine
- Prince Charles Department of Internal Medicine
- Townsville Hospital General Medical Team
- Princess Alexandra Hospital Endocrinology team and Internal medicine teams
- SPARTA and Pallcare Doctor consult
- Ideally hospitals that offer IM AST would routinely facilitate 'upskilling'

## Mental health

### 1. Suggested course contacts and activities

- MDT discussions
- Morbidity and Mortality meetings/Critical Event Analysis
- Australian Society of Psychological Medicine
  - Great courses and communities of practice/case discussion groups

- Annual conference and monthly webinars
- GPs who provide psychological care in varying forms
- James Cook University Mental Health Upskilling
  - Course designed by RG/Rural GP with MH AST for upskilling
- General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration
  - Details all accredited mental health courses RACGP/ACRRM depending on level required - useful for maintaining Medicare billing rights for specialty item numbers etc.
  - Level 1 MHST and Level 2 - FPS training
- Formal supervision
  - Usually undertaken privately, many clinicians will offer supervision via formal arrangement for a private fee which is tax deductible
  - Could be psychotherapist or psychiatrist or other suitable clinician able to provide supervision
- Balint groups/Case discussion groups/Peer review groups
  - Various organisations run these or you could start your own
- College of Educational and Clinical Art Therapy
  - Offer certificate or diploma level courses in Art Therapy
- Masters/Graduate Certificate/or other formal qualification
  - Various organisations offer this qualification with options for subspecialisation in various fields e.g. psychotherapy, trauma
    - Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Masters of Psychiatric Medicine (Rural and Remote Medicine specialisation) courses, HETI Higher Education
    - Master of Mental Health - University of Queensland
    - Master of Mental Health Science - Monash University
    - Master of Mental Health Sciences - Flinders University
    - Master of Science in Addiction Studies - University of Adelaide
    - Master of Health Studies (Addiction Sciences) - University of Queensland School of Public Health
- AODS Courses
  - RACGP
  - ACRRM
- Narrative Therapy Course
- CBT/ACT/DBT/EMDR/Family Therapy/Couples/mediation/CBT-E etc. skills training courses
  - Russ Harris's ACT courses are recommended
  - Motivational Interviewing
  - CBT Websites
    - Australian Association for Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy
    - The Beck Institute
    - Albert Ellis Institute
- Psychiatry/Rural Mental Health conferences annually
  - Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association host an annual Rural and Remote Mental Health symposium
    - <https://anzmh.asn.au/rrmh-2022>
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatry
  - Hosts annual congress

## 2. Resources

- eMHPrac - guide to digital mental health resources

- <https://www.emhprac.org.au/>
- Blackdog institute - lots of resources and training in MH
  - <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/education-services/health-professionals/>
- Think GP - lots of online MH courses
  - <https://www.thinkgp.com.au/education/mental-health-skills-training>
- My mental health website - resources and tools for GPs
  - <https://mymentalhealth.org.au/about-the-sector/gp-tools-and-resources>
- Menzies Institute
- Developing range of culturally adapted resources around mental health and wellbeing and AODS
  - <https://www.menzies.edu.au/page/Resources/>
- Phoenix Australia
  - Information and training around Trauma and PTSD
  - <https://www.phoenixaustralia.org/>
- Mental Health Professionals Network (MHPN)
  - Large library of mental health specific webinars, podcasts and annual online conference
  - Host networks of likeminded interdisciplinary networks of Clinicians who work in mental health - which you can join or use their platform to start your own network
  - <https://www.mhpn.org.au/>
- Insight
  - Everything you could want to know about addiction medicine and the Opiate Substitute Program Prescribers courses, huge range of well put together educational content
  - <https://insight.qld.edu.au/>
- RANZCP
  - <https://www.ranzcp.org/quick-links/health-professionals>
- Online CBT for patients
  - <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/education-training/health-professionals/psychological-toolkit>
  - <https://www.mycompass.org.au/>
  - [www.mindspot.org.au](http://www.mindspot.org.au)
  - [www.thiswayup.org.au](http://www.thiswayup.org.au)
  - [www.moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au)
  - [www.cci.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au)
  - <http://psychology.tools/cbt.html>

#### Other resources:

- [www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au)
- Queensland Alcohol and Drug Withdrawal Clinical Practice Guidelines
- <https://adf.org.au/>
- <https://adis.health.qld.gov.au/health-professionals/adcas>
- Key Australian Websites and their focus
- [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) Consumer info, guidelines
- <https://www.uow.edu.au/project-air/> Personality Disorders
- [www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au) 12-25-year-old MH
- [www.phoenixaustralia.org](http://www.phoenixaustralia.org) PTSD info and guidelines
- [www.copmi.net.au](http://www.copmi.net.au) Children of parents with MI
- [www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com) Youth Info
- [www.nps.org.au](http://www.nps.org.au) Nat. Prescribing Service
- [www.mifa.org.au](http://www.mifa.org.au) Support for Families

- [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au) Parenting Information
- <https://mantherapy.org/> MH Info for Men
- <https://www.blueknot.org.au/> Complex Trauma
- [www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au) Bullying info and support
- [www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au](http://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au) Perinatal MH support and info

### 3. Great placements and contacts in Psychiatry/AODS

- Cairns Acute Mental Health, ACT, inpatient and AODS
- Townsville University Hospital department of Mental Health and AODS
- Swap places with a fellow MH AST e.g. cover each other's leave
- Acute Care Team Rockhampton Hospital

## Palliative care

### 1. Suggested courses/educational opportunities

- PEPA | <https://pepaeducation.com>  
This organisation provides education workshops, notably they have been to Emerald in 2024 and Roma 2023. They provide avenues for clinicians to travel to and spend time in palliative care units. They also do a lot in the way of cultural education in palliative care.
- ANZSPM | <https://www.anzspm.org.au>  
This is a great group. They run conference and forums also.

### 2. Resources/Activities

- <https://rightdecisions.scot.nhs.uk/scottish-palliative-care-guidelines>
- <https://www.anzspm.org.au>
- <https://www.amazon.com.au/Palliative-Care-Formulary-Sarah-Charlesworth/dp/0857114379>
- <https://paediatricpalliativecare.org.au/resource/a-practical-guide-to-palliative-care-in-paediatrics/>
- MDT discussions
- Morbidity and Mortality meetings

### 3. Great placements and contacts in palliative care

- Swap with a palliative care AST colleague to cover each other's leave
- Consider attachments with community VAD or Palliative Care Service