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## Acknowledgement of Country

NTGPE wishes to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional owners and custodians both past and present across the lands that we live and work on. We acknowledge their protocols and practices and pay respect to their continuing cultures and the role they play in shaping our organisation's approach to general practice training in the NT.

# The Highlights



**2022 National Registrar Survey (NRS)** – Achieved a 86.7% satisfaction rate for supporting GP registrars to meet their training requirements (National average 80.5%)

**Fellowships** - 29 GP registrars awarded fellowship

**Accredited GP supervisors** - 20 NTGPE fellows became GP supervisors

**Regional coverage** - Over 56.7% of GP registrars worked in MMM6/7 locations in 2022

**Aboriginal Health Training (AHT) placements** - Over 30% of GP registrars undertook an AHT placement

**Knowledge sharing** - NTGPE facilitated handover and recognition of lessons learnt with college representatives in 12 remote communities

**Annual NTGPE awards and fellowship event** - recognised excellence of GP registrars, training posts and supervisors

**Change Management** - BEYOND program launched

**Cultural Education Framework** – New Cultural Framework launched

**Stakeholder recognition** – Noted the importance of community support at our stakeholder recognition event attended by representatives from across regional and remote NT communities

**Program Management** - Dedicated transition Program Management Office established

**AIDA Award** - NTGPE registrar awarded the Indigenous Doctor of the Year for 2022

**JFPP program** - successfully concluded after supporting more than 250 NT medical student placements

**Staff development** – Invested in retention, support and wellbeing for staff

**Stakeholder support** – Supported key fundraising events for stakeholders, such as the CareFlight and NAIDOC events

**Conferences** – NTGPE supported NTPHN as a platinum sponsor for the Teaching and Learning Conference



Photo Credit — Louise Denton©



**I**t's with great pleasure that I present the Northern Territory General Practice Education (NTGPE) Annual Report for 2022, the final report of my 7-year tenure as Board Chair. 2022 is the final year of operations for NTGPE ahead of the transition to college-led training in 2023.

I would like to extend the Board's full appreciation and gratitude to the staff of NTGPE for their ongoing commitment to the organisation to support the high-quality GP education and training that our organisation is renowned for, despite it being a significant year of transition and change. You will discover in this report another year of achievement and success for NTGPE, however I would like to focus this message on our journey as an organisation. And what a journey it's been.

NTGPE began in 2002 as a result of a Commonwealth Government funding initiative to develop regional GP training across Australia. Our goal was to train GP registrars to become clinically effective and culturally competent, to deliver quality healthcare in urban, rural and remote locations of the NT. NTGPE has been a consistent leader in quality medical and cultural education nationally, and our GP registrars have contributed significantly to the sustainable GP workforce. Our cultural educators are leaders of cultural training in general practice nationally, and the Northern Territory is recognised for excellence in remote area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health training, and as a regional training provider for GP registrars, prevocational doctors, international medical graduates and medical students.

Over this period, we've trained hundreds of GP registrars in the NT with a consistent distribution across the remote and regional geography. This has required adaptation, flexibility, and often innovation to ensure we met the supervision needs of the GP registrars and responded to the GP supervisors and placement challenges within the context of the health needs of the community. ►

Photo Credit — Louise Denton©

Our organisation strengthened the cultural education and pastoral support in response, and we note a large number of our graduates have become GP supervisors themselves across our NT communities.

In 2002, we started with 18 accredited training posts, 13 GP supervisors and 15 GP registrars in training. By the end of 2022, we had 145 training posts, 236 GP supervisors and 101 GP registrars in training. People living in regional, rural and remote areas deserve high quality health care and we're proud to have played such a significant role in the NT.

GP registrar remote community placements have been instrumental in giving our medical workforce an understanding of the challenges of service delivery in isolated areas, as well as important unique cultural connections. NTGPE has always had a deep and profound respect for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and its importance in health and wellbeing. One of our proudest achievements has been developing a cultural education program which is the envy of any training organisation across Australia. I acknowledge the partnership with Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory, which has strengthened this work for our GP registrars across the Territory.

This success over 20 years, providing quality training to sustain and strengthen general practice and primary health care in the Territory, is underpinned by our dedicated GP supervisors, practices and GP registrars. Their enthusiasm, determination and valued partnership has allowed the continuation of high-quality general practice training. I thank all our organisation's partners, including the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine who have set the end point of training for our GP registrars and ensured quality skills and competence are the bedrock of quality General Practice.

I acknowledge my fellow Directors and the Member organisations for their unerring

support once again in 2022. Their drive and commitment to excellence in governance has secured NTGPE's place as a significant and valued contributor in the history of Australian general practice training.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge and thank our CEO, Dr Richard Zanner, for his leadership and commitment to excellence through this year of transition and uncertainty.

To the entire team at NTGPE, I would simply like to say thank you. It's been quite the journey. ●●●

**Associate Professor Emma Kennedy** | Chair



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



The year 2022 will always be remembered for the word 'unprecedented'. Indeed, for NTGPE this was an extraordinary year. We emerged from a global pandemic, eager to re-energise relationships with our community stakeholders. It was also a year of radical transformation as we carefully planned and prepared for the transition to a new, national model of college-led training. NTGPE rose to the challenges, successfully completing its obligations, and reinforcing the NT's community of practice in education and training.

On 1 February 2023, we successfully transitioned the AGPT program to our college partners, having maintained our support for staff, GP registrars, GP supervisors, training posts, stakeholders and communities throughout the NT. We are proud to have contributed to the continued local success of the AGPT program in 2022 as captured in the colourful pages of this report.

The transition was marked by unparalleled change in the GP training landscape, and presented significant challenges for NTGPE. Accordingly, we established a dedicated program management office (PMO) tasked with transition oversight, allowing our program teams to conduct their business with minimal impact on participants and stakeholders.

NTGPE had always recognised that our strength lies in important community and stakeholder relationships. For the transition, we identified the preservation of these relationships as a crucial success factor. This was the basis for the launch of our transition change program, BEYOND.

Under the BEYOND banner, programs and incentives were developed to connect staff around NTGPE's purpose and the change in AGPT custodianship. This facilitated critical staff retention during a period of uncertainty.

Our BEYOND program permeated remote communities with its message of continuity in engagement. We invited senior members of the colleges as we toured across the NT to discuss college-led training with our important



stakeholders. I was privileged to accompany RACGP President Dr Nicole Higgins and Vice President Dr Bruce Willett as we met with primary health care centres, our doctors and other health professionals, as well as local traditional owners, Aboriginal elders and community members. This 'handover' was crucial for understanding 'what has worked' from a community perspective and what the key elements are that need to be preserved throughout the transition. Finally, BEYOND facilitated our gradual, culturally-respectful departure from communities with which we have engaged for two decades and without whom the training would not have been possible.

**During our work towards the transition, we were able to achieve other notable successes, including:**

- + processing training post accreditations due between 1 February and 31 July 2023
- + delivery of supervisor workshops and reinforcing our community of practice
- + our financial performance was better than budget with sufficient funds available to manage the final transition and wind-up processes;
- + a major transformation of the cultural program including development of a framework for cultural education in close consultation with communities;
- + appointment of several key leadership positions and the installation of a dedicated

Program Management Office (PMO) to achieve a smooth transition;

- + facilitation of housing transfers;
- + launch of BEYOND, setting up our people for success, with many staff joining the colleges, helping to preserve NTGPE's body of knowledge;
- + celebrating stakeholder relationships, broad representation from elders and traditional owners across the NT, truly representing our stakeholders;

These achievements have been made possible by the NTGPE board of directors, who have supported innovative ways to leave a proud legacy - thank you for your stewardship and governance during this extraordinary time.

On behalf of my executive team, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding contribution and efforts of all staff who have worked tirelessly over the past year to deliver a successful transition and presentation of world-class education and training across the NT.

I would also like to thank our dedicated GP registrars, GP supervisors and training posts and acknowledge the central role of the general practice specialty in the delivery of comprehensive health care across NT communities, particularly those in rural and remote locations. It has been an honour to lead NTGPE. ●●●

**Dr Richard Zanner** | CEO

# Our Purpose, Values and Goals

## Our purpose

Driven by the health needs of the NT community, we provide GP registrars with high quality training and a supportive learning environment, whilst seeking continuity of a responsive, locally based, culturally safe health training and education offering in the NT and remote Australia.

## Our values

NTGPE has a working environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all staff with a core set of shared values which guides our work and creates a safe and respectful environment that fosters the best in us all.

- + Respect
- + Fairness
- + Innovation
- + Wellness
- + Making a difference



## Our 2022 Strategic Goal and Outcomes

### Goal | 1. Maintain a high-quality training experience for GP registrars until 1 February 2023

**Outcome:** NTGPE has a proud history of delivering high-quality GP training. We delivered on our contractual obligations to the Department of Health to ensure that GP registrars received the best possible training experience in 2022 and continued to do so until 1 February 2023.

### Goal | 2. Ensure a smooth and effective handover of the AGPT Program to the colleges upon completion of our service delivery obligations

**Outcome:** In addition to service delivery obligations, NTGPE supported an effective transition of the AGPT Program. We closely managed a timely and cost effective transition in the NT to ensure minimal disruption to GP services and the GP registrar training experience, safeguarding the health needs of the NT community.

### Goal | 3. Retain and support our people through proactive management of staff wellbeing and career progression through the transition

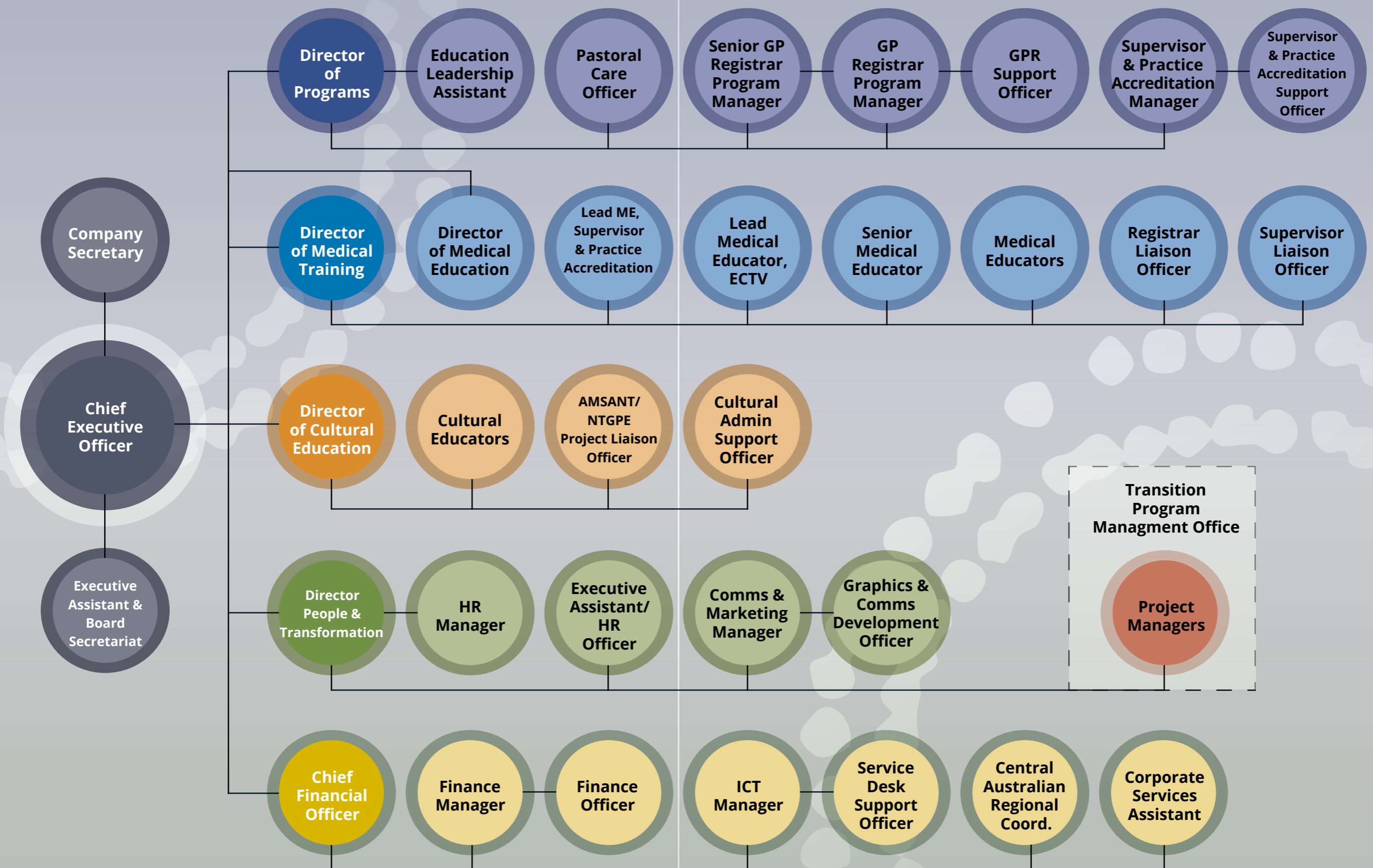
**Outcome:** Our people were critical to the achievement of our strategic goals. Our staff held critical knowledge and relationships across the sector, with the potential to influence our goal of continuity during and after their time with NTGPE. Retention and engagement of staff ensured high-quality service delivery and a successful transition.

### Goal | 4. Nurture our relationships with all relevant stakeholders in support of a successful transition that prioritises the health needs of the NT community

**Outcome:** NTGPE played a critical role in supporting a successful transition, on account of its relationships across the sector. We were a conduit, sharing critical information about transition amongst GP registrars, training posts, supervisors, the Department of Health and the colleges. We helped the colleges strengthen their relationships with NT communities and training posts to ensure that future services are responsive to local needs.

### Goal | 5. Seek continuity in the delivery of a responsive, locally based, culturally safe health training and education offering in the NT and remote Australia

**Outcome:** We continued to enhance our local model of cultural education, incorporating cultural educators and mentors at training posts, whilst promoting the value of cultural and Aboriginal health education at a national level. We delivered an effective transition, prioritising our staff and our relationships and promoting the importance of all that NTGPE offers, influencing the future quality and responsiveness of health training and education in the NT and remote Australia. ●●●





**Dr Richard Zanner**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**R**ichard is a management executive, consultant, educator, and administrator with more than 20 years of leadership and advisory in a broad range of sectors including Education, Healthcare, and Justice. He has managed complex organisational transformation and change programs, and established several leading-edge Centres of Excellence which provide leadership, best practice, standardisation, research and training in key focus areas.

Richard's experience spans urban, rural and remote Australia and leadership of multidisciplinary teams through highly challenging assignments in developing countries abroad. These include post-disaster infrastructure rehabilitation, mitigation planning, and programs to facilitate the strengthening of livelihood strategies in rural communities.



**David Benallack**

**Chief Financial Officer**

**D**avid has extensive financial experience at an executive level, with almost 30 years in leadership roles at government and non-government organisations prior to joining NTGPE. As CFO, David excels in change management and agile leadership skills, identifying and delivering improvement programs spanning the full value chain of operations, and is highly experienced in optimising operations, systems and processes.

Underpinning this is a pedigree chartered accounting background pinnacled at partner level with Grant Thornton, and career-defining experience driving significant growth at international services company Hogg Robinson.



**Renee Alexander**

**Director People and Transformation**

**R**enee has worked as an executive in a range of roles spanning multiple levels of government. Prior to joining NTGPE, Renee gained broad experience leading teams, strategic communications, designing change processes, influencing organisational cultures, and building people functions in various leadership roles.

She is passionate about optimising employee experience to empower people to deliver their best work through robust HR practice, strategic communication and contemporary change management practices. As a born and bred Territorian, she takes pride in understanding the benefits and challenges of working in remote and regional locations.

Additionally, Renee is involved with the Australian Human Resources Institute, sitting on the Council of State Presidents and holds the NT State Council President role.



**Dr Nigel Gray**

**Director of Medical Training**

**N**igel is proud to have served the NT health sector in a variety of roles for more than 20 years, including as an educator, accreditor, clinical advisor, training director and clinician. He returned to NTGPE in 2022 having gained extensive national and international experience working in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the UK. Having commenced with NTGPE at its inception, Nigel had previously held the Director of Training role at NTGPE, as well as a Senior Medical Educator role. He was part of the member accreditation committee which devised the current NTGPE accreditation model, and was involved in accrediting and reaccrediting training posts against this model.



**Christine Heatherington-Tait**

**Director of Programs**

**C**hristine has developed longstanding relationships with communities in the NT GP training landscape. She has a strong background in quality assurance, administration, adult education, and continuous improvement, and has been involved in setting and implementing the strategic direction of NTGPE since 2008.

Prior to joining NTGPE, she worked for the Law Society NT, and gained her professional qualifications from Charles Darwin University.

Christine is an analytical and results-oriented executive leader with extensive experience leading diverse teams in strategic development and operational management, working with teams to engender an ethos of collaboration, teamwork, and ownership.



**Peter Thomsen**

**Director of Cultural Education**

**P**eter has a long history of working in the health education sector and worked as a Cultural Educator for NTGPE in the early 2000s, as well as being a Liaison Officer with the Menzies School of Health Research.

Peter has led cultural education at NTGPE since 2020, and enjoys using his background in media and multimedia to improve communication and close the gap in health inequities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the NT.

Peter's Aboriginality comes from the Butchella tribe from Fraser Island in Queensland, and through his father's adoption and initiation process into the Gunibidji tribe in Maningrida.



*"The staff at NTGPE have always been accessible."*

Photo Credit — Louise Denton©

### Profile story: Dr Salman Junejo

**F**or Dr Salman Junejo, it is the opportunity to work as a GP in both remote Aboriginal communities and mainstream urban practice which convinced him he made the right decision to train as a GP in the Northern Territory.

The RACGP GP registrar, who was born in Pakistan and grew up there until moving to Australia as a teenager, had already undertaken medical studies in New South Wales and Queensland before arriving in Darwin as a fifth-year medical student.

"I really wanted to come to the NT as it is multi-cultural and one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world," he said.

"There are stark differences in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and my desire to help address and improve it is probably a driving force behind my choice to remain and live here.

"My ultimate goal is also to work as a remote GP in Indigenous communities part-time and to work as a mainstream urban GP the other half.

"I truly love the mix both spectrums bring, and feel I'd be unable to leave either completely behind. There are very few places I could easily do that besides Darwin."

Whether it is a smile on a dementia patient's face, or the ability to communicate with someone who has lost the ability to speak, Salman speaks passionately about his experience so far in the AGPT program.

"I have loved my time in both mainstream and Aboriginal Medical Services," he said.

"At the moment I am helping look after an elderly couple where one of them has dementia that is progressively worsening.

"We have been able to help manage some of their symptoms and organise support programs.

"The ability to help someone in distress and watch them progressively improve, to be able to bring joy into their lives, and to be able to have that continuity of care, is truly inspiring and makes me return each day to what I love doing.

"Last year, I also had a patient who had throat cancer and, after surgery and multiple rounds of radiotherapy, had lost the ability to speak.

"He had multiple co-morbidities and would bring a diary in with himself. I would speak, and he would write everything down and that is how all our conversations took place.

"For the six months that I looked after him I witnessed his health improve, and saw him regain weight and feel happy with life.

"It was truly humbling and a reminder why I began this journey in the first place." ►

Salman is undertaking a remote placement in his next term of training, working in Katherine West across Lajamanu and Kalkarindji, which provides new, yet exciting challenges.

"My biggest challenge, which is ironically what I am also looking forward to most, is my upcoming remote term," he said.

"My wife is an emergency medicine registrar and we have a seven-month old daughter.

"My family has been immensely supportive and my wife is working as a part-time doctor while I work full time and then head remote.

"Leaving them behind to work remote is difficult, though I am very excited for the upcoming term, working in parts of the NT I have not explored yet and am very keen to visit."

As a doctor in general but working remotely, Salman appreciates the importance of primary health care within the NT better than anywhere he has worked previously.

"GPs play a tremendous and very crucial role in preventing unnecessary presentations to our hospitals and emergency departments," he said.

"I've been able to prevent some hospital presentations by liaising with in-patient teams via phone and achieving outcomes that are positive not just for my patients, but the health care system within the NT."

Salman reserved particular praise for the support NTGPE has provided on his journey so far.

"The staff at NTGPE have always been accessible," he said.

"I've always felt supported by NTGPE staff, whether that's the registrar support team or the medical educators.

"It just goes to show how well the organisation works and if needed, there is always help out there."

Salman strongly encourages those targeting a career in general practice to consider the NT as their training base.

"Helping bring comfort into the lives of my patients and working as a team with them is very important to me," he said.

"It is quite humbling when I do make a difference in someone's life, and never have I had more opportunities to do that than being a doctor within general practice in the NT.

"Being a GP in NT is great – I still have the option to choose what sort of practise I would like to have.

"From mainstream general practice to remote medical practitioner jobs with FIFO schedules, the possibilities truly are endless." ●●●



*"NTGPE has always been extremely supportive throughout my training journey."*

Photo Credit — Louise Denton©

#### RLO profile: Dr Keturah Skov

**A**s a Registrar Liaison Officer (RLO) at NTGPE, Dr Keturah Skov's heart has always been in the NT.

NT local Keturah returned to the Territory in 2020 after a decade living in Melbourne for university and work, where she had a range of jobs including as a medical registrar and emergency registrar.

She is currently an ACRRM trainee in Alice Springs, where she was born before spending her childhood growing up in Darwin.

"I love living and working in Central Australia – it's a beautiful and diverse community," said Keturah.

"I spent 10 years away in Melbourne and overseas, but always felt myself drawn back to Central Australia.

"I love being able to give back to the community I grew up in, and it's a privilege to be able to live and work in a multicultural community."

Keturah speaks enthusiastically about her two years spent training at Alice Springs Hospital and her six months at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress.

"I particularly cherished my time as a medical registrar at Alice Springs Hospital," she said.

"I felt privileged to be afforded that opportunity as an ACRRM trainee, and I don't think it would have been possible if I wasn't in a rural location.

"It was an excellent learning experience. The opportunity to learn from consultants and other GP registrars and to take on a higher level of responsibility significantly developed my knowledge and clinical skills.

"I feel I have a better understanding of different medical conditions, and feel confident discussing cases with specialists as a result."

The RLO role at NTGPE provides a very important connection between registrars and those running the program.

It is an ideal role for Keturah, who has had first-hand experience of the support NTGPE provides its GP registrars.

"NTGPE has always been extremely supportive throughout my training journey," she said.

"I've been matched with a suitable training advisor who is easily contactable and has stayed with me throughout my training.

"The administrative staff are lovely, super organised, and reply quickly to any queries I might have. ►

"And the NTGPE medical educators are diverse and very experienced – it's a pleasure and an inspiration to learn from them.

"I'm excited to work with NTGPE to deliver their education program, and be an advocate for GP registrars across the Territory."

Keturah has faced many challenges on her journey so far, but believes it is those experiences which have steered her towards a career in general practice.

"The most challenging part for me when I worked in a hospital environment was the unsociable hours that I was required to work," she said. "I love being a doctor, but also love my social and personal life! The work-life balance available in general practice was a big draw card for me and I feel much better for it.

"In a hospital there are so many safety nets – nursing staff, allied health, residents, your consultant, and of course the GP! Once you're the GP, you are the safety net, and I enjoy that challenge."

Keturah believes that working in critical care and seeing the same patients present repeatedly made her realise how reactionary tertiary care can be.

"If we want to make a difference, we need to focus on preventative health strategies

implemented through primary health care, as well as public health policies to address the underlying socioeconomic determinants of health," she said.

For Keturah, the key to being an excellent GP is the ability to be flexible.

"We're often working in resource poor settings with different people, and being flexible is the difference between bending in the face of obstacles and snapping," she said.

"Recognising that everyone has a unique skill to bring to the table and being able to laugh at the absurdity of certain situations makes a big difference!"

And what does she think her work life will look like in five years' time?

"I see myself doing a combination of procedural and clinical work, with hopefully some medical education thrown in there too," she said.

"I'm passionate about general practice and being a GP.

"The reward of being able to support someone to better health, building a relationship, and hearing how grateful they are ... it definitely makes it all worth it." ●●●

# Supporting Primary Health Care in your Local Community

Since NTGPE was formed in 2002, we have been the sole provider of GP training and education in the NT. We work with the colleges, healthcare providers, medical and cultural educators, GP supervisors and clinic staff to offer a training program that leads the nation in culturally competent and varied training opportunities.

More broadly, we are a significant contributor to rural and remote health care in the NT. Our unique approach to the challenges of primary health care in Aboriginal communities means NTGPE is the leader when it comes to supplying GP registrars to care for the most vulnerable and least accessible people in Australia.

The delivery of world-class training and high-level support to GP registrars in the NT has been built on a foundation of experience, relationships, and local knowledge of healthcare delivery, especially in rural and remote Australia.

**Passionate, skilled and innovative people make up NTGPE staff**

We offer training and support services to GP registrars, GP supervisors and training posts. To do this, our people are experts in medical education, management, administration, finance, counselling and wellbeing, communications and marketing, events management, human resource management, and information technology.

**In 2022, NTGPE employed 53 corporate staff and 15 casuals/contractors, with six of our staff identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people:**

- + 6 executive
- + 15 medical educators and 15 casuals
- + 5 cultural educators\*
- + 11 program staff
- + 16 corporate staff

\* Includes a contractor in a shared services agreement with AMSANT

NTGPE recognises the critical role our team plays in the successful delivery of the program, and in 2022 placed significant weight on engagement and retention of this important cohort. This is particularly critical in the maintenance and transition of corporate knowledge in the transition year.

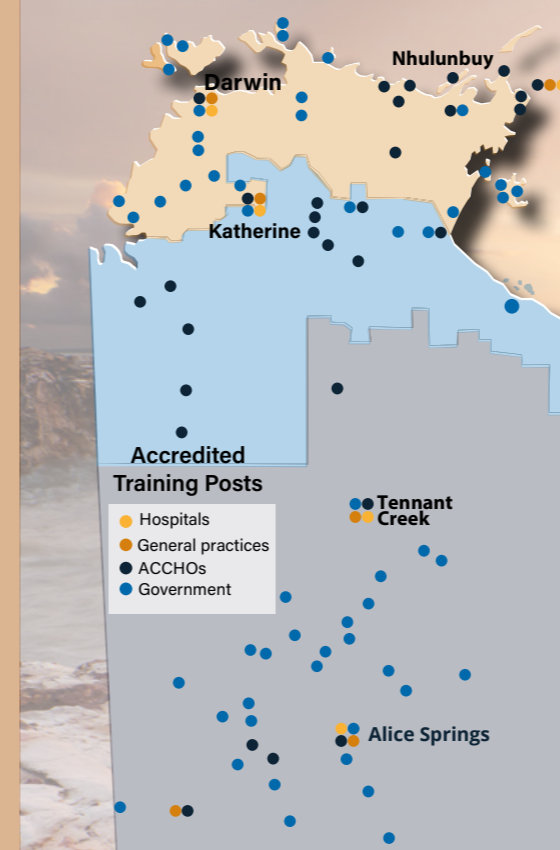
Our staff are highly skilled, committed, hardworking and very experienced in the NT context. They respond to the needs of GP registrars, GP supervisors and training posts, and consider all aspects of education and training.

In a GP's training journey, there is no substitute for real-life experience, NTGPE's knowledge and expertise in navigating GP registrar placements has been acquired from many years of working with training posts, medical educators, and GP supervisors.

NTGPE employs medical educators who are experienced, passionate, and well-respected GPs with a vast range of skills and knowledge in GP education and training. They sit on a range of national committees, and bring knowledge of the local training and working context from all regions of the NT.

In 2022, NTGPE recognised long-serving staff milestones, with awards for three staff completing five years and three staff achieving 10 years of service at NTGPE. ...

# Key Contributions to GP Training



145 Accredited Training Posts

236 Accredited GP Supervisors

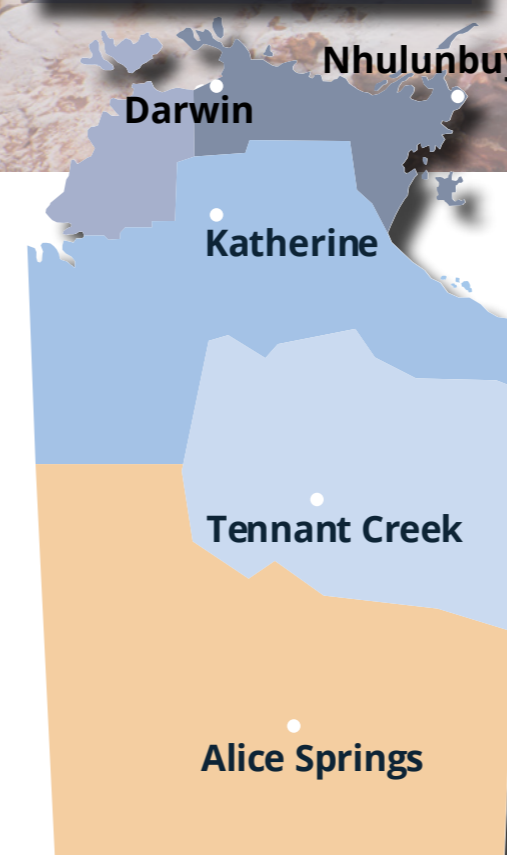
101 GP Registrars 2022.1 Term

110 GP Registrars 2022.2 Term

20 NTGPE fellows became GP Supervisors

27 current medical educators followed with NTGPE

Photo Credit — Louise Denton©



## Training the next generation of Territory GPs

### 2022.1 Training Term

20	Central Australia
49	Darwin
9	East Arnhem
5	Barkly
8	Katherine
4	Darwin Remote (Jabiru/Oenpelli/FIFO/Nguiu/Mala'la)
6	On leave

### 2022.2 Training Term

28	Central Australia
52.5	Darwin
6	East Arnhem
3	Barkly
8.5	Katherine
5	Darwin Remote (Jabiru/Oenpelli/FIFO/Nguiu/Mala'la)
7	On leave



*"NTGPE has been a main pillar in providing constant support, motivation and encouragement to myself as a registrar."*

### Profile story: Dr Sandhli Sharma

American writer Clarence Budington Kelland once said "My father didn't tell me how to live. He lived and let me watch him do it."

Inspired by her father's work with Aboriginal people in Broome in Western Australia's Kimberley region, Dr Sandhli Sharma's journey to becoming a GP started as a young child.

"Growing up, my father was working at Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) in Broome, which aimed to provide health services to Aboriginal people in remote WA communities," she explained.

"In social events, I tagged along with my father and found myself surrounded by GPs. I found them to be so open, humble, and compassionate, and I wanted to be able to provide the same level of care to people as they did.

"Because I was curious, during school holidays I used to do voluntary work experience at a dialysis centre, Aboriginal health centres shadowing GPs and Aboriginal health practitioners, social emotional wellbeing units, and pharmacies.

"This is when I realised what an important role GPs play working at ground level with patients.

"My first vision of myself as a doctor was as a GP, and I am very glad I maintained that vision throughout my medical school and training."

Sandhli, who is undertaking her GP training with NTGPE, has already had placements in Darwin and Nhulunbuy, and is currently working at Danila Dilba Health Service, an Aboriginal health clinic in Darwin.

She speaks fondly of her time in Nhulunbuy, working at Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation and Gove District Hospital.

"I absolutely cherished working in Nhulunbuy," she said. "Being able to work at the hospital and at Miwatj, I could provide continuity of care to my patients and experience diversity of people, language, culture, nature and medicine it has to offer.

"I gained so much experience with a wide variety of skill sets, even finding myself running the hospital one day and then doing home visits to palliative patients another day.

"It's such a unique experience and you learn the importance of respecting patient's wishes and cultural ceremonies especially towards the end of life."

Sandhli fell in love with the NT after moving to the region five years ago, and is passionate about improving health outcomes for all Territorians.

"Through my experiences, I admire the NT's culture, beaches, gorges and natural beauty," she said.

"Like many others, I love grabbing laksa and fresh vegetables from weekend markets and supporting our local fresh produce.

"I also feel blessed to be in this position where I can provide support and medical care to patients where patients lack access to health resources and are in need of health workers.

"Darwin is now home to me. I feel because I now understand our region and available health services, I can better provide patients with the care they need and deserve.

"I can assess patients more holistically, and it is also about returning back to the community and the people who supported me throughout my journey.

"Northern Territory is the place to be. People here are so welcoming and allow you to enter their world, and put so much trust and faith into our health system despite the challenges it faces. ►

"It's a unique feeling to be working in the NT."

Sandhli believes there are many challenges to improving health in the NT, including the high levels of chronic diseases.

"Moreover, because of the outback stoic nature of the NT residents, people may not readily seek medical help," she said.

"A key component of being a GP is developing a good doctor-patient relationship and maintaining continuity of care to help improve patient outcomes."

Sandhli is thankful to NTGPE for the support the organisation has provided her throughout her training.

"NTGPE has been a main pillar in providing constant support, motivation and encouragement to myself as a registrar," she said.

"Medical educators and training advisors have been great role models, and have always provided us with support, education and feedback in a timely manner.

"I don't think this journey would have been this smooth without NTGPE's constant support, especially during this COVID era."

Sandhli, who practices yoga and mindfulness in her spare time to allow herself work-life balance, finds being a doctor an incredibly rewarding profession.

"The most rewarding part is knowing when patients are unwell or in pain, and I have gained the knowledge and trust to be able to relieve their sufferings," she said.

"Patients put so much trust about their health in our hands which makes me want to be a responsible doctor to ensure I am providing the quality care to my patients that they deserve.

"Positive patients' stories and their smiles bring happiness to my face, and makes me realise

how blessed I am to be in this position and how I need to work on myself to maintain that trust and rapport."

Sandhli sees her future career path as a GP working in various roles, including in Aboriginal health services, mainstream practice, and taking on a role as a Medical Educator to fulfil her love of learning and teaching.

"I would also like to do some casual shifts in emergency departments to maintain my skill set," she added.

"It's something I genuinely enjoy, and being a GP, it's important to know how to handle any kind of emergencies that walk into clinic before you can transport them safely to hospital."

And Sandhli may not be the last member of her family to pursue a medical career.

"It's a constantly nurturing career and I am so grateful to the decisions I made and my family's support," she said.

"My family, especially my grandparents, are so proud of the journey I took, especially being the first doctor in my family, and how I could now encourage my brother to choose this career path as well with me."

It seems fitting that Sandhli is now providing the same encouragement for her brother that her father gave her when she was a young, wide-eyed child simply wanting to help those in need. • • •



# Who Our Work Supports

**N**TGPE has been the sole Regional Training Organisation (RTO) in the NT since 2002. We have worked hard to create meaningful relationships with GP supervisors and all training post staff that promote trust and understanding in the training program, and enduring relationships necessary to support and train future GPs.

With a strong focus on the health of communities, we are a key player in actively addressing the maldistribution of GPs in regional and rural areas. Our commitment to quality education provides structure, certainty and opportunities to young doctors building their career. Through our training program, they become the highly-qualified, experienced, broadly-skilled GPs of the future.

We highly value training posts and GP supervisors who play an integral part in training

our future GPs, and we believe it takes years to nurture these quality relationships.

## Our education program

Through a unique breadth of training opportunities, we train well-rounded, highly-skilled GPs who are passionate about primary health care in Australia. We believe our training program is unique, challenging, and rewarding because we train our GP registrars to be able to work confidently in all general practice settings.

Anyone who trains with NTGPE spends time outside of large towns and cities in small, predominantly Aboriginal communities.

NTGPE is a persistent advocate for prioritising cultural competency and confidence amongst our GP registrars. In our training program, we set an expectation that our GP registrars will apply their cultural expertise throughout their career and contribute to closing the gap in Aboriginal disadvantage nationally. ►

We are training the future GPs who will find a solution to Australia's biggest health issues.

Our GP registrars engage in a broad range of training initiatives. Experiential learning is facilitated through hands-on, structured learning within the clinic setting with GP supervisors.

Medical educator-led workshops bring GP registrars together for more targeted teaching, and regular small group learning sessions provide access to important peer-to-peer learning. NTGPE's exam preparation program provides formal mock exams offered to all GP registrars enrolled to sit exams, as well as ongoing exam preparation from medical educators.

Extensive practical and theoretical cultural training is given by respected cultural leaders throughout the training program. Regular meetings with training advisors and program staff ensure the path to fellowship is as smooth as possible.

Offering a personalised support through our pastoral care team is the key to managing the balancing act of providing valuable learning experiences while protecting the emotional and mental wellbeing of our GP registrars.

## GP supervisor support

Being a workplace-based training program GP supervisors are essential to the success of the AGPT program. GP supervisors teach, inspire and support the next generation of GPs through their training by providing one-on-one teaching, supervision, support, feedback and advice in the clinic setting.

Regular face-to-face educational activities and in-practice education from the GP supervisor to the GP registrar occurs throughout training. GP registrar training cannot exist without dedicated and skilled GP supervisors. ►



NTGPE manages the accreditation, professional development and support of GP supervisors in the NT. As part of this support, we provide access to GP supervisor orientation and training.

#### In 2022, NTGPE delivered:

- + Mobile office visits to Alice Springs, Darwin, Gove, Katherine and Tennant Creek
- + Ongoing professional development workshops, with support to travel and payment to attend
- + Access for, and support from, the NTGPE Supervisor and Practice Accreditation team
- + Dedicated Supervisor and Practice Accreditation Medical Educator, offering pastoral care and the opportunity to discuss GP registrar training issues.

#### GP registrar and supervisor associations

NTGPE continued to work closely with the GP registrar associations, including GP Registrars of Australia (GPSA), General Practice Students Network (GPSN), and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors associations, including Indigenous GP Registrars Network (IGPRN) and Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA), as well as GP Supervisors of Australia (GPSA).

#### Regional Training Organisation Network (RTON)

The RTON was very active in 2022 to assist the government and colleges in preparation for the transition to college-led training.

#### Advanced skills in Aboriginal Health

NTGPE continued to work in a collaboration with Flinders University, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (CAAC), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT), the NT Rural Training Hub, NT PHN and NT Health on the development of an advanced skills/advanced rural skills training program in remote Aboriginal health.

#### NT Medical Training and Workforce Collaboration

The NT Medical Training and Workforce Collaboration members include NTGPE, Flinders University, NT Rural Training Hub, AMSANT, NT PHN, CAAC, Miwatj Health, and NT Rural Generalist Coordination Unit.

#### There are two key activities and outcomes from this group:

1. Marketing for medical students, junior doctors and GP registrars to come to the NT under the banner of 'Doctors for the NT' which NTGPE also supports with sponsorship at conferences and advertising space in trade journals.
2. Advanced Training in Remote Indigenous Health – this is now recognised by both colleges as an advanced skill term developed by CAAC specifically for remote communities, and is a one-year supported program including cultural education and local language skills. This training is now integrated with our AGPT program. ●●●



# Our Commitment to Rural Health

**T**here is no greater example in Australia demonstrating the importance of skilled practitioners in rural and remote health care than in the NT.

We are the third largest area in Australia and host only one per cent of the national population. Just over half of the 240,000 Territorians live in Darwin, and the rest live in remote or very remote areas. Thirty per cent of our population are Aboriginal, who have some of the worst determinants of health in the country. Rural and remote health sits front and centre for NTGPE.

## Our rural and remote GP registrars

Our GP registrars make up vital workforce numbers, and our commitment to rural and remote health placements means we are making significant contributions to improving health in these regions. A well-managed challenge for us at NTGPE is to be learner-focused for our GP registrars while contributing to the workforce. NTGPE and the GP registrars who train with us are the leaders in rural and remote health care, both in the NT and nationally.

## NT leading the way across Australia in support for rural generalist training

In 2022, the Northern Territory had eight GP registrars training towards either the Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) or the new RACGP Rural Generalist Fellowship, while the NT had 49 GP registrars in ACRRM rural generalist training.

The GP registrars specialise in different disciplines of medicine through the FARGP, including emergency medicine, palliative care, obstetrics, and more than half specialising in Aboriginal health.

FARGP is a qualification awarded by the RACGP beyond the vocational fellowship, and caters for both GP registrars and practising GPs.

## John Flynn Placement Program (1997-2022)

The John Flynn Placement Program (JFPP) was established in 1997 and aimed to attract more doctors to rural and remote areas where there was a workforce shortage, with NTGPE delivering the program in the NT since 2002.

Between 2012-2022, NTGPE helped more than 250 medical students complete a placement in the NT via the JFPP. ●●●

*"I would like to say thank you to NTGPE for coming to us (our community) to put us where we are today."*

Edward "Teddy" Portaminni, Tiwi Elder

# Our Commitment to Closing the Gap

NTGPE continued to play an important role in closing the gap through providing GP registrars with important cultural education. In 2022, NTGPE's cultural education team completed all its cultural education obligations.

## Cultural education and support

Being culturally aware, competent and respectful is a priority at NTGPE. All GP registrars and staff are given mandatory cultural education as part of their training and orientation with NTGPE. This training comes in different forms, and has the same aim of delivering high-quality, relevant primary health care to all Territorians.

To guide our GP registrars to cultural competency, our NTGPE cultural educators monitor and advise on how to work with Aboriginal patients and overcome cross-cultural challenges. Culture influences how health care is received and understood, and if used correctly, culture can help patients to follow best practice. If used incorrectly, culture can be a significant barrier to effective health care.

## Cultural orientation

GP registrar orientation into the NTGPE training program includes an introduction to Aboriginal culture in the NT. This one-day orientation delivered by the cultural education team is a valuable starting point for GP registrars in their training journey.

In 2022, this included delivering orientation programs and cultural workshops in both the Top End and Central Australian regions. The purpose of covering both regions was to ensure that GP registrars were educated about Aboriginal cultural diversity and complexity with regional issues.

## Mandatory Training Term

Every GP registrar that trains with NTGPE completes an Aboriginal Health Training term which usually means six months in a remote Aboriginal community setting. This requirement reflects the seriousness of NTGPE's commitment to closing the gap of health inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

## Cultural workshops

All NTGPE workshops have a cultural education component. Each workshop has a dedicated full day of cultural education training where participants add to the training they received in orientation and cultural teaching visits. ►





## CLOSING THE GAP

### Cultural Teaching Visits and Small Group Learning

A Cultural Teaching Visit (CTV) is an opportunity for a NTGPE cultural educator to observe a GP registrar during clinical consultation and provide feedback and guidance on their cross-cultural communication skills and the patient-doctor relationship. CTVs are a great opportunity for doctors and cultural educators to disseminate information and have a conversation around the consult room and its challenges.

Another program delivered by the cultural team in 2022 was Small Group Learning sessions, which provided GP registrars with important advice about Aboriginal people and culture which developed their confidence and ability to work with Aboriginal people.

### Cultural experience

A significant cultural education activity is the annual NTGPE Cultural

Experience in Alice Springs. This again was an opportunity to provide all GP registrars and all NTGPE staff with an important personal development opportunity which developed their understanding of Aboriginal culture in the Central Australian region.

These workshops teach the diversity of cultures between the saltwater people in the Top End, through to the Central Australia region.

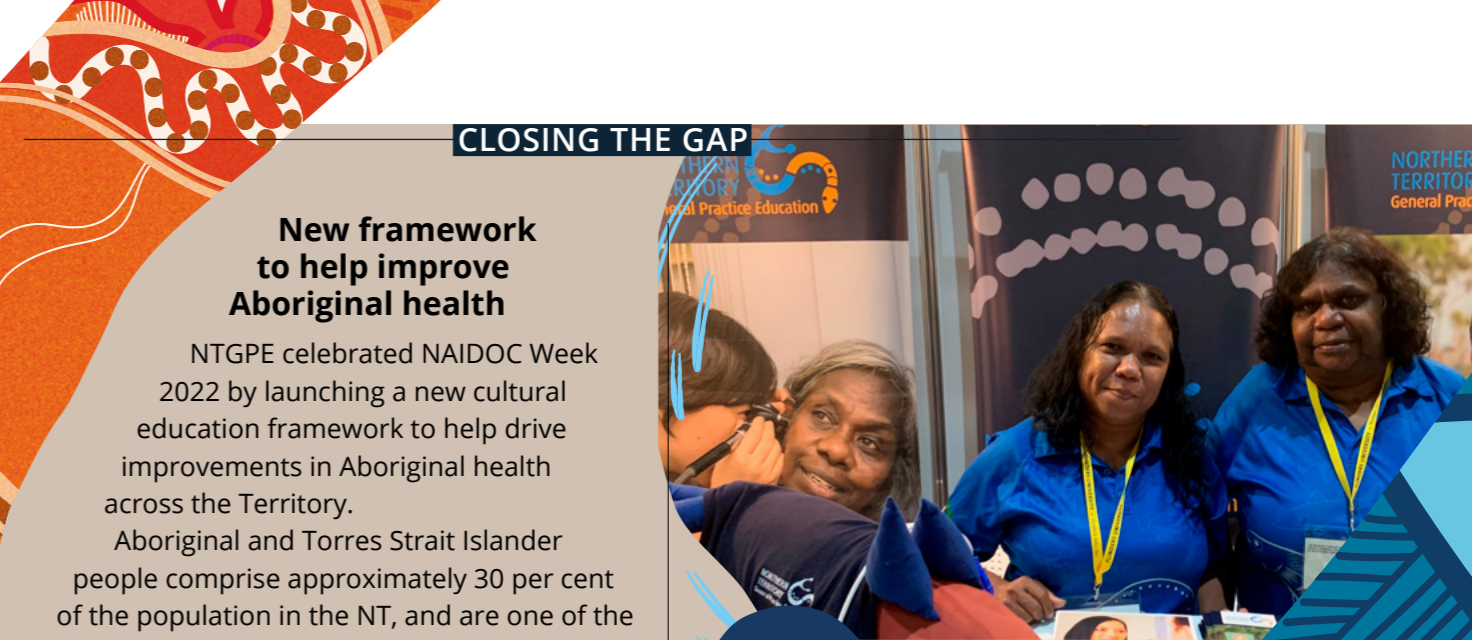
#### Activities included during the Alice Springs cultural experience:

- + Personal introduction from a Traditional Owner
- + Smoking ceremony
- + Bush tucker presentations and dining
- + Guided tour and painting workshop

#### Other cultural education initiatives

The cultural team delivered important high-quality cultural education to external organisations such as Northern Territory Australian Football League, Eunoia Lane, St John Ambulance, and Family Planning NT.

The cultural education team also engaged Aboriginal people and businesses to contribute to all cultural education activities. This included engaging local organisations and Traditional Owners to present at our Alice Springs cultural workshop, engaging local Aboriginal catering businesses to provide catering, and engaging local Traditional Owners to lead the cultural experience activity. ►



## CLOSING THE GAP

### New framework to help improve Aboriginal health

NTGPE celebrated NAIDOC Week 2022 by launching a new cultural education framework to help drive improvements in Aboriginal health across the Territory.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise approximately 30 per cent of the population in the NT, and are one of the most disadvantaged populations in Australia.

All health professionals in the NT, whether working clinically or in health research or policy, will have direct contact with Aboriginal people, and this framework is designed to ensure that GPs are prepared and confident to work in this cross-cultural context.

#### The NTGPE Cultural Education Framework 2022 aimed to improve Aboriginal health by:

- + Bridging cultural barriers to effective healthcare education and training in the NT
- + Attracting, retaining, and equipping GPs in the NT to deliver health care to Aboriginal people
- + Assisting health services and practitioners to be culturally safe

"Good cultural education empowers health professionals to be flexible and resourceful rather than embarking on a search for 'the' cultural response to every cross-cultural situation," said AMSANT/NTGPE Project Liaison Officer Dr Curtis Roman.

"This approach is much more productive and beneficial, and can be applied across diverse situations.

"When organisations commit to cultural education, they are making a genuine commitment to Aboriginal Territorians." ...





# Recognising Excellence

## GPs recognised throughout the Territory at our Annual Awards and Fellowship Evening

NTGPE recognised GP registrars and GP supervisors across the Territory after announcing this year's winners of its annual awards.

The awards celebrate the knowledge, capabilities, and commitment of GP training posts, GP supervisors, and GP registrars located across the NT, with the 2022 winners based in Darwin, Katherine and Tennant Creek.

### The 2022 winners:

- + Dr Debbie Stach GP Registrar of the Year – **Dr Lisa Waters** (East Arnhem)
- + GP Supervisor of the Year – **Dr Jasmine Banner** (Katherine)

- + Training Post of the Year – **Tennant Creek Hospital**
- + Ada Wilmadda Parry Aboriginal Health Scholarship recipients – **Dr Amanda Robinson** and **Dr Elise O'Connor**
- + Professor Alan Walker Paediatric Scholarship recipients – **Dr Deanne Ashford, Dr Stefanie Pender** and **Dr Valerie Quah**.

The awards night also celebrated the 29 GP registrars who received their fellowship through NTGPE over the past 12 months.

NTGPE Chief Executive Officer Dr Richard Zanner said "it was fantastic occasion to come together to celebrate GP training excellence in the Territory". ►



"We think it's important to recognise our outstanding GP registrars, GP supervisors, and training facilities across the Territory for their demonstrated excellence in practice, education, and community impact," Dr Zanner said.

"I congratulate all the winners on receiving their awards. It is great recognition for their excellent achievements in 2022."

Dr Zanner characterised the training period of NTGPE's most recent fellowship cohort by describing a "world that is in a perpetual state of commotion".

"This year's fellows are not only successful, but also adaptable and exude the balance and harmony symbolised by the emerald theme of this year's awards," he said.

"There has been an immense wealth of knowledge that has been acquired in the sector over many years, and to transition this knowledge to a college-led model of training requires preservation of the close-knit community of practice that embodies general practice training in the Northern Territory."

Tennant Creek Hospital's Dr Sarah Goddard said she was very honoured to accept NTGPE Training Post of the Year on behalf of the hospital.

"As a team we are grateful, and congratulations to all the nominees," said Dr Goddard.

"Tennant Creek Hospital and Tennant Creek General Practice will continue to train and support future rural doctors." ●●●

# Introducing



## BEYOND

*"When an organisation lives for 20 years in such a unique setting, there is a wealth of knowledge, acquired through many lessons. The things that worked and those that did not. As part of the transition, we worked hard in 2022 to preserve much of that knowledge, through staff retention and supported handover of stakeholder relationship"*



*"The energy NTGPE has invested will endure ... through the community we've built"*

**W**ith the transition to college-led training for GPs moving ever closer, NTGPE undertook a change management approach for supporting our transition, which we named BEYOND.

BEYOND embraced the importance of engaging with our staff and stakeholders during this change, which determined the transition narrative for the NT.

NTGPE People and Transformation Director Renee Alexander focused on the optimism for what sits BEYOND the horizon.

"In the same way our fellows have invested several years of energy to their incredible achievements through the AGPT program, NTGPE has invested 20 years of energy into delivering the program and cultivating the relationships that underpin it," she said.

"And, in the same that way that our fellows are stepping over a career threshold, and focusing their energy differently, the energy NTGPE has invested will endure beyond our departure through the community we've built and the interconnectedness we've facilitated.

"This realisation gave rise to the concept of BEYOND, which is our change management program taking us through the journey of transition not only for our key external stakeholders, but also our staff."

"The BEYOND program is about channelling energy as we pass the baton and custodianship of the AGPT program to RACGP and ACRRM. It's also about making sure our legacy is continued through communities of practice – especially as we transition BEYOND the AGPT program."

**Each letter of BEYOND stands for something equally as important as the next: ►**

### B

**'B'** represents **belonging** and asks us to consider where we belong now, and where we will belong as part of change. Consider where you fit as the landscape evolves.

### E

**'E'** challenges us to **evaluate** our options and take stock of where GP training is, and how we align within it. Evaluate where could our energy be best spent in future.

### Y

**'Y'** asks us about **yourself**. What are your aspirations as you step over the next threshold? What is your role in the transition of knowledge?

### O

**'O'** signifies **opportunity**. How do we prepare ourselves to recognise opportunities, be bold enough to grab them, or create your own opportunities in times of change?

### N

**'N'** asks us to consider how we will embrace **new ways of working** as things shift around us. What new approaches do we need to take?

### D

**'D'** considers **departure**. One of the hallmarks of change is that something ends as something else begins; the trick really is to celebrate our growth and ensure a successful departure.

BEYOND takes a holistic view in supporting our staff, GP registrars, GP supervisors, communities and training posts as we move through the transition and the challenges we need to overcome to ensure a successful transition.

"For NTGPE, and GPs more broadly, there is unprecedented change, in the GP training landscape ahead," said Renee.

"And we all need to look BEYOND.

"BEYOND for our staff, our GP registrars, our GP supervisors, our training posts and our communities.

"BEYOND our regular GP training deliverables and how we can work towards a successful transition.

"And BEYOND to ensure GP training in the NT is as strong as ever into the future and for the ultimate benefit of all Territorians." ●●●

# Transition to College-Led GP Training

Since the announcement of the decision to move GP training to college-led training in 2017, NTGPE has been planning, preparing, and implementing arrangements to achieve a smooth and successful transition.

2022 marked a significant acceleration of this program of works, beginning with the formation of a dedicated Program Management Office focused exclusively on overseeing the transition program. This team, which brought together knowledge of the program with project management expertise, was established to limit the impact of the transition activities on the delivery of the AGPT program in the final year of operation for NTGPE and to maximise the transfer of learning and knowledge developed over 20 years of delivery in the NT.

The transition program of works was broad, covering internal critical risk factors such as staff engagement and transfer of data through to external facing engagement with stakeholders and program participants. To ensure a smooth transition, NTGPE broke the work down into interconnected workstreams.

A core focus was on ensuring our data holdings, particularly those that held information pertaining to GP registrars and GP supervisors, and intellectual property were handled in accordance with the relevant legislation and privacy principles. NTGPE took the responsibility to handle data in line with the expectations of our stakeholders extremely seriously, balancing the necessity to share information and resources with the colleges to enable continuity of delivery of the program alongside minimising disruption to participants.

Our unique asset portfolio, which included a number of houses, was managed by working closely with stakeholders to ensure access to this portfolio remained for future GP registrars. NTGPE tirelessly worked to ensure there was an understanding that these assets are critical enablers of delivery of the AGPT program in remote communities across the Territory.

Critically, NTGPE acknowledged the importance of ongoing staff engagement throughout this large-scale change. We recognised that the success of the transition would be built on the staff engagement, efforts, and minimisation of turnover to maximise the transfer of tacit knowledge. This realisation gave rise to the development of the BEYOND change management framework. The framework was broad reaching and encompassed our external stakeholders.

Stakeholder engagement was a crucial element of the successful transition, and a dedicated team delivered communications regarding the transition with program participants, including GP supervisors and training posts. We also engaged with the Department of Health and Aged Care, RACGP and ACRRM, and administered the recognition of and warm introduction between the colleges to elders and community members in the communities which host placements.

After 20 years of NTGPE, the baton has been successfully passed on to the colleges and their stewardship of the AGPT program commences, and we enter our wind-up phase. By sharing our learnings of the unique NT practices which have been developed through trial and error, we have ensured the NTGPE legacy is embedded in the fabric of the AGPT program as we finalise the business' closure. ►

## NTGPE engages with Communities

The leaders of Australia's largest professional general practice body toured the remote Northern Territory at the beginning of November along with local experts in a bid to strengthen long-term GP training in the region and address the ongoing issue of rural and remote GP shortages.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) President Dr Nicole Higgins and Vice-President Dr Bruce Willett joined NTGPE on a four-day Top End tour of the Territory.

The trip, which took place less than three months before GP training in Australia transitions to RACGP and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), included engagement at the following remote NT communities:

- + Wurrumiyanga (Tiwi Islands)
- + Jabiru
- + Gunbalanya (Oenpelli)
- + Galiwinku (Elcho Island)
- + Nhulunbuy (Gove)
- + Groote Eylandt
- + Maningrida.

The group visited remote primary health care centres across the Top End to meet with doctors and other health professionals, as well as Traditional Owners, Aboriginal Elders and key local figures, listened to community health needs, and discussed the transition to college-led GP training.

RACGP President Dr Higgins said: "I'd like to thank NTGPE for all their amazing work.

"We were privileged to be welcomed into communities where we had the opportunity to listen to their stories, and their need for more GPs and health workers.

"RACGP has heard, and we look forward to continuing our relationship and working with the staff, cultural educators, mentors and communities in the Northern Territory."

NTGPE Chief Executive Officer Dr Richard Zanner said it was a real coup to have RACGP's



RACGP joined NTGPE on four days of stakeholder engagement

leaders spend time in the NT exploring the region's most challenging communities in relation to primary health care.

"We need more permanent, longer-term solutions to address social determinants of health care which comprise a great proportion of the source of GP visits in the NT, and this visit was an important step in the right direction," said Dr Zanner.

"Ultimately strong communities make for strong people, and primary health care is an integral part of getting us there.

"The purpose of the visits was to work with remote communities in the NT in handing over the custodianship of a very important training program for GPs to the colleges, including providing a cultural understanding of each community's needs.

"The transition to college-led GP training on 1 February 2023 is a significant moment in the history of GP training in Australia, and we are committed to working with the colleges to ensure a smooth transition.

"I'd like to thank Dr Higgins and Dr Willett for visiting NT's remote Top End communities with us, and we are confident it will give them a key insight into local primary health needs."

NTGPE Chair, Associate Professor Emma Kennedy said it was important to connect the colleges to local communities.

"It's the communities which are going to strengthen GP training, and we need to involve the communities, GP supervisors and training posts into the decisions affecting GP training into the future and link in with the expertise on the ground," Associate Professor Kennedy said.



# Recognising Stakeholders

In December 2022, people from all corners of the NT arrived in Darwin to celebrate the 20th and final year of NTGPE.

NTGPE's celebration brought together NT Chief Minister Natasha Fyles, the Leader of the Opposition, Lia Finocchiaro MLA, Traditional Owners, Elders, clinic staff from communities across the NT, as well as former and current GP registrars and GP supervisors, in an opportunity to recognise and highlight the key achievements of NTGPE over the past 20 years.

NTGPE Chief Executive Officer Dr Richard Zanner said: "This was a once in 20-year event as NTGPE celebrated its 20th year anniversary; it was a once in a century event as we reunited following a pandemic and the associated disconnection from each other and community; and it was also a once in a lifetime event as NTGPE transitioned its work to the colleges.

"On the night we looked back, we reflected on where we've come from and what we've achieved.

"We have worked with colleges, healthcare providers, medical and cultural educators, and GP supervisors to offer a highly-successful training program that has been culturally competent and varied in its training opportunities."

In 2002, NTGPE started with just 18 training posts, 13 GP supervisors and 15 GP registrars in training. In 2022, NTGPE had 145 accredited training posts, 236 accredited GP supervisors and 101 GP registrars in training across the NT.

"Over the past 20 years, NTGPE has supported hundreds of GP registrars choosing to train on the AGPT program on their pathway to fellowship," said Dr Zanner.

"When an organisation lives for 20 years in such a unique setting, there is a wealth of knowledge that is created through the lessons that are learnt.

"We've listened to our GP registrars and learnt from our GP supervisors, as well as Aboriginal Elders and Health Care Workers in community – what works and what doesn't work. It's taken 20 years of learning for us to really understand ►



how to do this work in NT communities ... and do it well."

NTGPE Chair Associate Professor Emma Kennedy said: "The NTGPE 20-year anniversary was a celebration of all the big and small things we've done for urban, rural and remote health in the NT over the past 20 years.

"We've been instrumental in making inroads into provision of medical training for communities that have not had regular services. We've improved the cultural and clinical effectiveness of hundreds of GPs, and most importantly, we've made this rugged and challenging territory appealing to a whole generation of doctors who may never have even considered it. ●●●





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An Australian Government Initiative

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