

Thinking of Psychiatry?

Psychiatry is a diverse and exciting career. It is unlikely that two patients would have the same story or psychiatric presentation. There are many different symptoms and causes of mental ill health consequently there is a wide variety of treatments available. Psychiatrists have a holistic understanding of the physical, mental, social and behavioural aspects of mental health allowing them to recognise and treat both the physical and emotional effects of mental disorders. Such disorders might be a patient's main illness or problem, or may be a consequence of other physical presentations.

There is 'no health without mental health' therefore psychiatrists play a pivotal role in improving people's wellbeing. Mental disorders are highly prevalent in New Zealand and constitute a significant burden of disease. Mental and substance-use disorders, when combined, are the leading cause of all non-fatal disease worldwide.

Psychiatrists practise in a range of clinical settings in New Zealand, from smaller regional hospitals and clinics to larger metropolitan hospitals. Psychiatrists work in public settings such as hospitals, academia, government ministries, non-government agencies but they also practise in private rooms, clinics or hospitals. Frequently psychiatrists work in more than one area, often combining work in a public setting with private practice.

Overview of Psychiatry

Psychiatry involves the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients with psychological, emotional, or cognitive problems resulting from psychiatric disorders, physical disorders or any other cause. A psychiatrist works with individuals who may be experiencing one or a number of mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, substance addiction, eating disorders, dementia, schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Central to the practice of psychiatry is listening to people's most personal thoughts, understanding their mental state and working with them to identify and implement appropriate treatments including psychotherapy, psychotropic medication, social strategies and other interventions.

Psychiatrists are part of a multi-disciplinary team, working with general practitioners, psychologists, other health professionals, case workers and peer workers to best meet the mental, emotional and physical needs of their patients.

There are six faculties within psychiatry (child & adolescent, old age, addiction, forensics, psychotherapy and consultant-liaison) allowing psychiatrists to develop specific skills in a specialist area. In addition there are a number of sections within psychiatry. To find out more about psychiatry subspecialties visit the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists [website](#). The RANZCP has developed a booklet summarising the various psychiatry subspecialties and more detailed information is provided [here](#).

The RANZCP has developed a Psychiatry Interest Forum (PIF) with the aim of informing medical students and doctors about careers in psychiatry. To find out more about being a member of PIF visit the RANZCP's [website](#). There are a number of benefits to joining PIF including having an opportunity to attend educational events and to receive career guidance and advice from College Fellows.

Modern psychiatry is based on and shaped by scientific evidence. Psychiatrists also evaluate evidence, examining the rapidly expanding literature and assessing the effectiveness of therapeutic measures – pharmacological, psychological or otherwise – making psychiatry an intellectually challenging speciality.

Psychiatry is a career that can be adapted to suit the needs of the medical practitioner throughout their personal and professional lives as it lends itself to private practice environments and requires minimal infrastructure. In addition there are flexible training arrangements that allow psychiatrists to manage their training and career while being able to factor in family needs. There are also opportunities to live and train overseas.

In general working hours are closer to normal business hours, with less frequent on-call shifts.

Psychiatry Training

The RANZCP Fellowship Programme takes a minimum of 60 months full-time equivalent (FTE) to complete. During the training period, trainees work as registrars in hospitals and clinics, where they are supervised by experienced psychiatrists.

The RANZCP revised the training programme from 2012 to a competency based model that includes a broad range of clinical experiences across subspecialties, work based assessments, written and clinical examinations and scholarly work.

Training is undertaken in three stages:

- Stage 1 involves 12 months in an approved adult psychiatry rotation, including a minimum of 6 months in an acute setting.
- Stage 2 is 24 months, with four rotations designed to expose the trainee to a variety of different specialties:
 - 6 months in a consultation–liaison psychiatry rotation
 - 6 months in a child and adolescent psychiatry rotation
 - Two 6-month rotations in any of the following areas of practice: addiction psychiatry, adult psychiatry, forensic psychiatry, Indigenous psychiatry or psychiatry of old age.
- Stage 3 is 24 months, with a further four rotations each of six months in duration, in one or more approved areas of practice.

You may be required to complete placements in multiple DHBs whilst completing vocational training

Personal qualities required to be a specialist in psychiatry

- Respect, understanding of the importance of diversity of beliefs, culture and backgrounds
- Empathy, able to understand the needs of people and their circumstances, particularly in relation to Māori
- Dedication, ability to commit to a lifetime of learning and development
- Confidence, capacity to honestly and confidently discuss complex information and highly personal information with patients and their health providers
- Thorough, highly developed observational and listening skills
- Personable, able to communicate effectively and build rapport with a wide range of patients and their whanau/ family
- Humility, being humble in both a professional and personal capacity

Specialty Training Programme Information

Information on the RANZCP and the psychiatry training programme can be found on the RANZCP [website](#).

Further information is available for [medical students and graduates](#) and also specific information on the [training programme](#).

Medical College

Vocational training in psychiatry is undertaken through the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)

Fellowship/Qualification

Once the RANZCP training is completed, the doctor is awarded the Fellowship of the RANZCP (FRANZCP)

Entry requirements

Prerequisites for applying to enter the Fellowship Programme are:

- Successful completion of a medical degree
- At least one year (FTE) of general medical training
- Current general registration as a medical practitioner in Australia or New Zealand
- Selection criteria

Application process

Contact your local [Branch Training Committee](#) for information on how to apply.

Once you have been accepted into your local training programme and have been appointed to an approved training rotation, you will be told how to complete your application.

There is no limit to the number of attempts an individual may make to enter the Fellowship Programme.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of their rights to request reviews of decisions affecting them and to then appeal the decisions. Any request for review and/or any potential appeal in relation to entry to training must occur via the formal RANZCP Appeals Process.

Details of the process, including selection criteria, are included in the [Administration chapter](#) of the [Regulations, policies and procedures](#)

Examination requirements

- Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) written exam: This exam will cover foundational knowledge in psychiatry and should be sat in Stage 2
- Essay-style written exam: The essay-style exam will have a clinical focus and will assess capacity for critical thinking about clinical practice.
- Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE): The OSCE is set at junior consultant level and must be completed in Stage 3
- Scholarly Project: Original research in the trainee's choice of area related to psychiatry or mental health
- Psychotherapy Written Case: A long intervention (approximately 1 year or 40 sessions) with a written assessment

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is the process by which learning, skills and experiences acquired outside the Fellowship Programme are evaluated for the purpose of accrediting them for RANZCP training components.

Two types of RPL may be granted to trainees:

- RPL after enrolment in the Fellowship Programme (applications must be submitted within 6 months of enrolment)
- RPL for overseas training during a break in training

RPL after enrolment

In order to be eligible for RPL, any training, assessment (other than Scholarly Project) and/or work experience must have been completed within the past 8 years. An RPL application for a Scholarly Project must be based on a project completed or accepted for publication within the past 10 years.

RPL applications must be submitted no more than 6 months after the trainee commences training in the 2012 Fellowship Programme.

Overseas training

Trainees seeking to gain RPL for overseas training whilst on a break in training must:

1. Apply for an approved break in training
2. Apply for in-principle approval of the overseas training before commencing (i.e. prospective approval)
3. Apply for RPL on returning to the Fellowship Programme

For more information, please refer to the [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure](#).

Transferability of registration to other countries/across training sites

Transfers within all RANZCP training zones throughout Australia and New Zealand are dependent on the availability of any particular rotation. In some instances acceptance into a training rotation may be subject to interview or an application process.

For training to be undertaken overseas as a component of the training programme an application advising how the competencies of the RANZCP training programme will be met is required by the Committee for Training (CFT) for prospective approval (as outlined in Overseas training).

The RANZCP has five regional training centres: Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. Some training centres may include smaller sites in rural towns such as Nelson and Whangarei. If you want to know more about the training centres or to contact a training manager in your area please contact the RANZCP's New Zealand National Office (04) 472 7247 or email nzoffice@ranzcp.org.

Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Information

Demand for vocational Training Posts

Year	Number of applications for training year	Number of applicants for training year selected
2016	Not available	Not available
2015	Not available	Not available

RMO training registrar positions contracted

Northern	Midland	Central	South Island	Total
57.1	27.3	23.3	42.3	150

(September 2016 RMO census)

Regions

Northern:

Northland, Waitemata, Auckland, Counties Manukau DHBs

Midland:

Lakes, Tairāwhiti, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Taranaki DHBs

Central:

Hawke's Bay, Wanganui, MidCentral, Wairarapa, Capital and Coast, Hutt Valley DHBs

South Island:

Nelson Marlborough, Canterbury, South Canterbury, Southern, West Coast DHBs

Senior Medical Officer (SMO) Information

Year	Number of NZ New Fellows
2016	Not available
2015	14
2014	11
2013	6
2012	10
2011	9
2010	14

Average Age of SMOs	Number registered with the Medical Council	% of international medical graduates in the workforce
53	577	59

Number by Region (September 2016 SMO census)

Northern		Midland		Central		South Island		Total	
FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount
178.0	200	70.7	76	80.9	106	96.1	138	425.7	520