

For those commencing a General Practice Term, a learning plan should be developed in conjunction with your GP Supervisor and Medical Educator. Learning plans are central to the process of formative assessment in the Program and are required for hospital and more advanced, later terms.

There are many options available to you as to how you develop your learning plan. One of these might involve a Curriculum you are following in your training. This will, necessarily, link with your progress through training.

If you choose this option, you may care to list the areas of essential knowledge and skills identified in the particular Curriculum and then identify against each your needs assessment:

- the resources and methods you will choose to address these, and
- how you intend to measure your progress.

In addition, you will need to determine what evidence you have to indicate you have completed this learning objective.

Many examples of learning objectives are found in association with the curriculums.

ACRRM Curriculum

The identified Primary Curriculum training modules have been developed from extensive consultation with rural doctors throughout Australia. They are based on common patient presentations and form the foundation of a problem-based learning framework. These are progressively addressed by registrars during their generalist practice and hospital posts via both face to face and a variety of practical distance education processes.

RACGP Curriculum and its Curriculum Companion

The associated enclosure to the Companion “Making Sense of GP Learning” identifies a framework that some registrars may find useful to identify their particular learning needs.

Needs Assessment and Selection

Defining learning needs is often a more difficult task than at first it appears and some may find a block to this first step. To assist you, here are some ways you may choose to identify your learning needs and set learning objectives.

- Observation of your consultations/procedures by your GP Supervisor or other colleagues including ECT Visitor.
- Observations by you of your GP Supervisor’s consultations/procedures.
- Discussion of your case notes with your GP Supervisor.
- Direct feedback from patients; e.g. patient reports dissatisfaction; has unexpected outcome from management; appears unhappy or becomes angry; fails to adhere to management plan.
- Patient satisfaction surveys.
- Feedback from pharmacist or other member of the health care team.
- Indirect feedback from patients via receptionists, supervisor, specialist or other colleagues.
- You feel uncomfortable or anxious when particular problems or types of problems present.
- Your supervisor rings to ask your advice or vice versa.
- A reply from a referral that mentions drugs or investigations or procedures or diagnoses that is unfamiliar to you.
- A patient question or request which requires you to consult a textbook or colleagues.

Note:

1. A common trap is to avoid important gaps in knowledge and skills by pursuing areas that you have a special interest in or where your skills are already highly developed.
2. Some gaps in your knowledge and skills will not necessarily be accessible to you unless your work is directly observed. While you can become aware of not knowing something by 'observing' yourself and your feelings, it is only by being observed by a colleague that you can achieve early identification of knowledge gaps.

Additional comments

Being involved in clinical audits of your records, procedural training or other practice activities in association with your GP Supervisor, is a way of contributing to the practice and learning at the same time.

You are encouraged to attend additional educational activities such as Rural Health Education Satellite Broadcasts, Divisional meetings and other educational activities during the Term.

Resources and methods

In order to achieve your learning objectives you will have to select from a range of resources available to you and to allocate them accordingly to the task.

These resources might include:

- Other people; e.g. GP Supervisors, medical educators, librarians, practice manager, other registrars.
- Distance educational resources, CDs, identified Internet sites, video conferencing.
- Books, journals, videos, databases.
- Procedural trainers or procedural training courses.

Measures of progress

You will need to consider how, from whom and when you will receive feedback on your progress towards achieving the learning objective.

Evidence of completion

You will have to determine how you will know that you have achieved your learning objective and what documentary evidence and other evidence will demonstrate that achievement.

- If your goal was not achieved, how close did you come to completion and what needs to be done to complete it?
- What new goal(s) have you set as a result of your learning plan activities?

Still having difficulties?

If you are having difficulties completing our learning plan, consult your GP Supervisor in the first instance. Other sources of assistance include your identified medical educator, training adviser, Registrar representative of other registrars.