



## The RRIPM Collaborative:

### Information for Services

*working together to strengthen the palliative medicine  
rural workforce*



RRIPM is a program of ANZSPM

**anzspm**

Australia New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine

## Invitation

Werte, from beautiful Arrernte country in Central Australia!

This invitation is for rural palliative care services across the country to join the RRIPM collaborative.

In May 2024, the Beyond the Burbs scoping review was published by the Rural and Remote Institute of Palliative Medicine [RRIPM] describing the concerning state of palliative medicine workforce and training in rural Australia. It identified many barriers to progressing rural training, and some huge challenges, but it also made clear that none of these were insurmountable.

RRIPM proposes a practical response to the challenges facing our services. It has grown in part out of a real and urgent need for a sustainable rural workforce pipeline. **We need to be able to train more rural specialists to work in the amazing services we have helped build.** And we need to train them right here, in the places where they will work, not in the city.

RRIPM is a group of rural palliative care services from all Australian jurisdictions, working together to develop a rural palliative medicine training pathway. We are seeking your support and collaboration to help nurture the development of the future rural palliative medicine workforce. We are committed to raising the profile of rural palliative medicine both as a setting for training and for rewarding long-term careers in rural palliative care.

This document outlines the aims, the value add, and the processes being developed by the RRIPM collaborative. The RRIPM collaborative invites your service to work with us because by working together we can truly make a difference.



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### Acknowledgement of Country

ANZSPM acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia on which our members live and work, and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

# The RRIPM Collaborative

The Rural and Remote Institute of Palliative Medicine (RRIPM) is a virtual collaboration of rural palliative care services, supported by the Australia New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine (ANZSPM) with the specific purpose of strengthening access to, and support for, palliative medicine training in rural and remote communities within Australia. [www.rripm.org.au](http://www.rripm.org.au)

## Why is it needed?

The cycle of rural disadvantage in healthcare, particularly in palliative medicine, is a critical issue that needs urgent attention. Around 7 million Australians (28% of the population) live in rural or remote areas. (AIHW, 2023) However, only 16% of specialists work in rural areas so there are significant disparities in the kind of palliative care that is available to people in different geographic locations across Australia as they near the end of life. This significant inequity in workforce distribution and access to care requires action.

## How will it work?

The RRIPM collaborative builds system capability by helping rural health services grow their own workforce. We assist services to achieve Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) site accreditation for training. We link supervisors and trainees across the network to share education, experience and provide peer support in sometimes isolated settings. Clinicians united with a shared purpose strengthen the rural training pipeline, resulting in more rural trainees, and over time reducing dependency on locums, vacancies and workforce service disruptions. RRIPM has the potential to **double** the number of palliative medicine fellows working in rural areas by 2035.

By working with your service, and other participating rural services across Australia, RRIPM will attract trainees to undertake an integrated Rural and Remote Training experience:

- designed by rural doctors for rural doctors
- based on RACP competency-based training curriculum
- offering high-quality fully supported rural training experiences.

Positions for trainees, and the specialists supporting them, continue to be funded through your health service. As health service employees, they remain accountable to the terms of employment within your system. The relationship with the RRIPM collaborative is supportive, operating within the existing policies and procedures of your service.

The relationship between the RRIPM and your health service is based on these high-level principles:

- We co-operate and collaborate to enable RRIPM training sites to develop their training capacity, and to provide a range of high-quality training opportunities for rural trainees
- We recognise and value the local situations, needs and realities of the individual services and that these necessarily take precedence in any shared decision making
- We work together to advocate for rural palliative medicine, and to address the issues of rural palliative care workforce development
- Our relationship is characterised by effective communication, constructive engagement, and respect

## The RRIPM Value Proposition

### Value for patients and their community

- Care closer to home
- Care is provided by doctors who understand the rural context
- Care locally reduces costs and burdens to families and patients
- People can die in the place of their choosing with the people who love them

### Value for the health workforce

- Cooperation between regional supervisors supports trainee rotations and forward planning
- Access to experienced colleagues able to provide support
- Guidance and training support from RRIPM Development Lead
- Improved workforce wellbeing
- Access to shared education resources

### Value for the health service

- Signposting of training vacancies and opportunities through RRIPM web-based resources
- Access to RRIPM branding as a trusted collaborative training network
- Support to achieve RACP training site accreditation
- Economic benefit through diminishing reliance on locum and Fly In Fly Out support
- Sustainable specialist workforce
- Enhanced rural quality of care

### Services may participate in the RRIPM Collaborative when they are...

- based in rural or regional centres
- serve a rural catchment population
- have an interest in supporting rural medical workforce development through advanced training
- have one or more funded trainee positions
- have one or more palliative medicine specialists on staff, to supervise trainees on rotation

*Based on the above characteristics, is your service 'RRIPM Ready?'*

### Next Steps

The Rural and Remote Institute of Palliative Medicine team would welcome the opportunity to further discuss your service participation. The RRIPM team can be contacted at [rripm@anzspm.org.au](mailto:rripm@anzspm.org.au)

Visit the RRIPM website for more information: [www.rripm.org.au](http://www.rripm.org.au)