

Most of this information is in the registrar handbook but in the MCCC we think this is important enough for a separate handout.

General practice training can be very stressful for many registrars – moving to a more independent working environment, moving away from regular support networks, studying for fellowship exams. All these stressors can mount up.

**How can I look after myself during GP training?**

We encourage you to look after yourselves, particularly during the initial transition and other times of stress. Some key strategies include;

- Use your practice resources – your supervisor, practice manager and other staff all want to help you settle in; make sure you ask questions when you need help and become involved with the running of the practice.
- Getting involved in your new town if you have moved to a rural location – consider joining sports, hobby or other community groups. Schools, childcare and your partners work are all good ways to meet new people too.
- Meet up with other registrars (in person or virtually) to share experiences and start a study group.
- Look after the basics – healthy diet, exercise, good sleep and down-time are important for patients, and for us as well! We all need to pay attention to our basic needs.
- Continue to use your normal support networks –if you've moved far away, make sure you invite family and friends to visit, have regular phone chats and keep these connections strong.
- Have regular check-ins with your own GP (NOT from the practice you're working in.)
- Develop strategies to leave work at work and to assist patients without taking on all of their problems – supervisors can help with this or get strategies from other registrars.
- Reflect on how things are going and ask for help early if you get into trouble.
- Keep an eye out for other registrars – if you notice someone is struggling, chat to them about it or raise it with us and we can check in with them.
- Your primary health network will usually have a newsletter you can join to know when talks etc are happening so you can meet other doctors in the area.

**What are my options if I need extra help?**

There are lots of resources and options available – it depends a little what the issues are. Some possibilities include:

- Your supervisor and practice manager – they can often be very experienced and may have lots of good ideas and suggestions for you, they also know local options.
- Your training advisor - a medical educator who can provide suggestions, give you advice or find out information for you.
- Your RLO (registrar liaison officer) is a registrar who works for MCCC but can provide a confidential sounding board. Keep in mind that to help you make changes they may need to get other MCCC staff involved but they get your permission for this.

**Self-care resources for Registrars**

- The MCCC staff, particularly the REAPS (Registrar Education and Practice Support officer) or workshop co-ordinator are always happy to answer questions or point you in the right direction.

**What is the Registrar Assistance Program?**

MCCC will fund up to five psychology sessions for registrars who require additional support during their time in the program. All we need to know is that you have a difficulty that could affect your GP training. If you decide you need to use this service, please contact the ME in charge of PALS (Pastoral and Learning Support) Dr Hilda Jessop [hilda.jessop@mccc.com.au](mailto:hilda.jessop@mccc.com.au). Hilda is based in Melbourne and will be able to maintain your confidentiality, by asking the psychologist to forward anonymised invoices. No one else in MCCC will be aware that you have used this service and it will not affect your training in any way.

In special circumstances, additional sessions may be funded – but to access these you will need to discuss with the PALS ME Hilda or the Regional Head of Education (RHE) your area.

**What other resources are available?**

There are a number of useful resources, including

1. Victorian Doctors Health Program <http://vdhp.org.au/>  
A confidential compassionate service for doctors and medical students (or anyone concerned about a doctor) with health/drug and alcohol/mental health concerns. It operates independently from any other organizations. Tel: (03) 9495 6011
2. Doctors' Health Advisory Service  
Independent service with calls handled by a panel of senior GPs experienced in helping colleagues. VIC - Tel: (03) 9349 3504  
NSW - Tel: (02) 94376552
3. Bush Crisis Line  
Confidential and anonymous phone debriefing and counselling support service for remote health practitioners and their families. Run by qualified psychologists with rural/remote and cross-cultural experience. Tel: 1800 805 391
4. AMA Victoria Peer Support Service  
<https://amavic.com.au/doctor-wellbeing/peer-support-service>  
Peer support for doctors – telephone counselling and referrals.  
PO Box 21, Parkville, VIC, 3052 Tel: 1300 853 338
5. RACGP Support Program for members  
<http://www.racgp.org.au/yourracgp/membership/offers/wellbeing/>  
Members can access professional advice to help cope with life's stresses which may include personal and work related issues that can impact on their wellbeing, work performance, safety, workplace morale and psychological health. The service will advise of town location of the office addresses when ringing the number. The service is provided by IPS Worldwide.
6. A couple of good handbooks include  
[https://www.ranzcp.org/Files/Branches/Victoria/Keeping\\_the\\_Doctor\\_Alive-pdf.aspx](https://www.ranzcp.org/Files/Branches/Victoria/Keeping_the_Doctor_Alive-pdf.aspx)  
<http://mentalhealth.amsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/KYGGWebVersion.pdf>  
<http://www.ithinkwell.com.au/the-ultimate-time-management-guide>