



7 June 2023

Hon Dr Sally Talbot MLC
Chair Select Committee into Child Development Services
Legislative Council of Western Australia

Via Email: sccds@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Dr Talbot

WA Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Development Services in Western Australia; response to questions raised at submission

I wish to thank you for inviting me to present a verbal submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Development Services in Western Australia on 17 May 2023. The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) is cognisant of the thorough work being undertaken by the Inquiry, and we are pleased to have had the opportunity to support this work by offering our expert professional opinion as Australia's peak physician and paediatrician training body. Please see our previous letter dated 24 April for an outline of our services.

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry on 17 May 2023

I attended the Inquiry on 17 May via videoconference. After I presented, a number of questions were raised by members of the Inquiry; those that I could not answer on the day, I took on notice to respond when I had more information to hand. Please find answers to those questions below and attached (as referenced).

1. At which hospitals / community clinics are Western Australian paediatric trainees (Basic & advanced) placed at / work during their training?

Response: See **attachment A** (Basic Training program information) and **attachment B** (Advanced Training program information) for a list of hospital placements for RACP paediatric training in Western Australia. It is important to note that regarding Advanced Training, the attached information only captures core training sites; Advanced Trainees may be undertaking non-core training at other sites.

2. Are there dwindling numbers of applicants for Community and Child health training positions in WA? Were there positions left unfilled?

Response: Training positions in Community and Child Health (CCH) are included in attachments A and B as above. Please note that the College can only advise on trainee numbers, and not whether positions are open, filled or vacant – questions regarding these specific details should be referred to WA Health for response. I have spoken to Dr Brad Jongeling on the phone to get this information - he explained that he was not aware of any reduction in number of applicants, or any CCH position being left unfilled, besides the usual ones due to maternity leave and/or illness.

3. How many general paediatricians and community child health paediatricians would need to be employed by the Department of Health to meet the current demand in western Australia? How many paediatric registrar position would be needed in WA to meet the current demand?

RACP does not have the remit or the capacity to answer this question; this information would likely be available through the WA Department of Health.

4. What would be the cost of one new full-time general paediatrician and one from the 26 paediatric sub-specialities in WA?

Response: The Specialist Training Program (STP) contributes \$107,268.16 per annum for each STP funded position. The training facility is responsible for salary expenses beyond this, including costs such as leave and superannuation. This question therefore would be best directed to WA Health as the overall cost is beyond the RACP's information remit.

5. Please provide further information on STP funded positions in WA and what is RACP's position on extending those into non-regional settings.

Response: The RACP advises that colleges managing STP funds have Key Performance Indicators and targets set by the Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) to maintain STP funding. In order to meet the RACP's rural target our main focus is on rural/remote positions. The RACP's private target has been met. In Western Australia, there is one Community Child Health STP-funded position and eight General Paediatrics STP-funded positions (see list below)

Facility	Specialty 1	Specialty 2	Trainee Level
Perth Childrens Hospital	Community Child Health	General Paediatrics	Advanced
Hedland Health Campus	General Paediatrics		Advanced Basic &
Kalgoorlie Health Campus	General Paediatrics		Advanced
Kalgoorlie Health Campus	General Paediatrics		Advanced
Broome Hospital	General Paediatrics		Advanced
Perth Childrens Hospital	General Paediatrics		Advanced
Perth Childrens Hospital	General Paediatrics		Advanced
Bunbury Regional Hospital	General Paediatrics		Advanced
Geraldton Regional Hospital	General Paediatrics	Clinical Pharmacology	Advanced

6. Has the College looked at reducing the general paediatric (advanced) training period?

Response: Traditionally, RACP training programs have been time-based, to ensure that trainees receive sufficient exposure and experience in areas of professional practice relevant to their chosen specialty. The RACP is in the process of reviewing its training curricula, including the curriculum for Advanced Training in General Paediatrics, to shift to a training model that is a hybrid of time- and competency-based training. In this model, minimum time to complete training will remain a requirement, but there will be increased emphasis on assessing trainees' workplace performance, which will inform decisions about trainees' progress through training.

In the future it may be possible to move to a model of training that is time-independent; however this is not an objective of the current review process and would require a highly effective and trusted competency-based training model. It is well established that the volume of medical knowledge is growing exponentially, and it is therefore unlikely that the time needed to complete Advanced Training in General Paediatrics could be shortened in the near future. Paediatric Advanced Trainees, particularly in the specialties of Community Child Health and General Paediatrics, make a significant contribution to the care of children with specific developmental needs.

I hope the above information satisfies the Inquiry's questions; if not, please do not hesitate to contact me for clarification.

Once again, I thank you and the Inquiry for offering the RACP the opportunity to provide input to this crucial investigation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nitin Kapur". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underlining the name.

Prof Nitin Kapur
President, Paediatrics & Child Health Division, RACP

Attachments:

- A. Basic Training positions in Paediatrics and Child Health in WA
- B. Advanced Training positions in Paediatrics and Child Health in WA

Attachment B: Basic Training

Paediatrics & Child Health Principal Training Program – Level 3

Up to 36 months of Basic Training may be undertaken in a Paediatrics & Child Health Principal Training Program – Level 3 (although it need not be in the one hospital)
At least 6 of the 36 months of Basic Training must be spent Paediatrics & Child Health Principal Training Program – Level 3.

Hospital	State	Status	Accredited To	Year of Review
Perth Children's Hospital	WA	Accredited	February 2025	2024

Paediatrics & Child Health Principal Training Program – Level 2

Up to 30 months of the 36 months of Basic Training may be undertaken in a Paediatrics & Child Health Principal Training Program – Level 2.

Hospital	State	Status	Accredited To	Year of Review
Fiona Stanley Hospital	WA	Accredited	February 2026	2025

Paediatrics & Child Health Adjunct Training Program – Secondment

Training in a Paediatrics & Child Health Adjunct Training Program – Secondment will be on rotation from a Paediatrics & Child Health Principal Training Program – Level 2 or Level 3. A maximum of 12 months may be undertaken per Paediatrics & Child Health Adjunct Training Program – Secondment.

Hospital	State	Parent Hospital	Status	Accredited To	Year of Review
Armadale Health Service	WA	Perth Children's Hospital	Accredited	February 2026	2025
Joondalup Health Campus	WA	Perth Children's Hospital	Accredited	February 2026	2025
Kalgoorlie Health Campus	WA	Perth Children's Hospital	Accredited	February 2026	2025
King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women	WA	Perth Children's Hospital	Accredited	February 2026	2025
South West Health Campus Bunbury Hospital	WA	Perth Children's Hospital	Accredited Provisionally	February 2026	2024
St John of God Midland Public and Private Hospital	WA	Perth Children's Hospital	Accredited	February 2026	2025

Attachment C: Responses to Questions 1 and 2 from Advanced Training RACP (information applies to Advanced Training program only – for Basic Training information see separate attachment B):

Question 1: At which hospitals / community clinics are Western Australian paediatric trainees (Basic & advanced) placed at during their training?

Response: Following sites are accredited for core training by one of more Advanced Training program. This core training can be for Paediatric programs (i.e. General Paediatrics, Community Child Health etc.) or for Paediatric Trainees in programs that have Paediatric cohorts (i.e. Haematology, Infectious Diseases etc.) I have added a note for sites accredited by one of our Joint College. In the list below, the relevant joint College is ACEM and the core training related to Paediatric Emergency Medicine.

- Albany Regional Hospital
- Armadale Kelmscott Memorial Hospital
- Broome Health Campus
- Bunbury Hospital
- Child Development Services – Armadale
- Child Development Services – Bentley
- Child Development Services – Clarkson
- Child Development Services – Fremantle
- Child Development Services – Joondalup
- Child Development Services – Koondoola
- Child Development Services – Lockridge
- Child Development Services – Midland
- Child Development Services – Rockingham and Mandurah
- Child Development Services – West Perth
- Fiona Stanley Hospital
- Geraldton Health Campus (Geraldton Regional Hospital)
- Hedland Health Campus
- Joondalup Heath Campus
- Kalgoorlie Health Campus
- Karratha Health Campus
- King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women
- Newborn Emergency Transport Service (NETS) WA
- Patches Assessment Service
- Peel Health Campus (accredited by Joint College for RACP core requirements – Paediatric Emergency Medicine)
- Perth Children’s Hospital
- Rockingham General Hospital
- Royal Perth Hospital – Wellington St Campus (accredited by Joint College for RACP core requirements – Paediatric Emergency Medicine)
- St John of God Midland Public and Private Hospital

2. The below summary is of Advanced Training applications received from WA trainees. A few important notes:

- Not all applications were approved towards core CCH training
- Reflects total number of trainees each year – not new trainees (i.e. many trainees are captured in the count for several years)
- Not all WA trainees complete training in WA
- Some trainees from other states may have trained in WA in these years

Total CCH trainees in WA approved for Advanced Training in CCH:

- 2019 – 16
- 2020 – 23
- 2021 – 27
- 2022 – 35
- 2023 – 29