

Local Health Network Accreditation Report



Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network

Accreditation Report Details

Date of Visit:	2 August 2023
Team Leader:	Dr Ben Teague
Team Members:	Dr Josephine Thomas Dr Sean Jolly
SA MET Ex-Officio:	Mr David Neilson Ms Colleen Cryans

Date approved by SA MET Health Advisory Council:	22 November 2023
Expiry Date:	31 January 2025

Accreditation Decision

1 year with 13 provisos

Executive Summary

Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network (FUNLHN) Clinical Education Strategy 2023-2026 outlines FUNLHN's commitment to education and training identifying its key strategies. FUNLHN aims to attract talented trainees by becoming a "hub of excellence" through innovation, collaboration and by providing high quality training opportunities. FUNLHN's experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient care will be a strength when addressing the revised Australian Medical Council's National Standards.

A recent review of FUNLHN's Medical Education Unit's (MEU) resources has seen a substantial increase in both full time equivalent (FTE) staff and funding for educational resources. Over the past year FUNLHN has seen significant change to key personnel directly related to the Education and Training Program (ETP) as such, the organisational structure of the ETP and its committees was not evident and being reviewed by the Acting Executive Director of Medical Services (EDMS).

FUNLHN have a small cohort of Trainee Medical Officers (TMO) and currently find face-to-face discussions most effective for communicating feedback with TMO's. The MEU has an open-door policy and encourages dropping in to discuss issues. Feedback is well received by the MEU and is acted on promptly to implement improvements and resolve issues. Feedback forms have recently been introduced to collect feedback from Term Supervisors, however this process was not known broadly.

Weekly protected time for intern education sessions has recently been extended to two hours to allow for travel and provide interns with the opportunity to provide feedback to the MEU. The education sessions were reported to lack structure early in the year, however improved after the commencement of the new Medical Education Officer (MEO) following feedback from interns. Additional education is provided including monthly full-day simulation training, Grand Rounds, journal club and joint education sessions with other regional health networks.

The 2023 intern program consists of four terms across core medicine, core surgical, rural general practice and a unique Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) / Emergency Department (ED) core emergency term. The RFDS portion offers experience of emergency retrievals, remote rural clinics and Aboriginal Health. Feedback from TMO's indicated that all terms demonstrated appropriate education and learning opportunities which were considered broader than those experienced in a metro setting due to the nature of rural medicine.

Immediate clinical supervision across all terms was appropriate with supervision on the General Surgery and the Bunyarra Medical Clinic terms described as exceptional. Whilst immediate supervision in the Emergency Department at Port Augusta Hospital was appropriate, it was unclear how the Term Supervisor's regularly interacted with the interns.

TMO's are encouraged to seek performance feedback from their supervisors which includes instigating mid-term and end-of-term assessments. Historic assessment data was not available however, current year data showed 100% return rate for intern mid and end-of-term assessments. FUNLHN follows documented processes for managing underperforming TMO's which are handled confidentially and with the key driver being best outcome for the TMO.

TMO workload and supervision was consistent with high quality safe patient care and TMO welfare. Weekend ward rounds were expected of interns, however this cover was not formalised or clearly described within the Term Descriptions. FUNLHN was found to be very supportive of TMO welfare providing support, information, assistance and flexible work arrangements for TMO's when required.