

Current Imperatives in General Practice training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health cultural competence

Introduction: As part of the commitment to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) health outcomes, the current General Practice (GP) training curricula requires an understanding of how Indigenous history and culture impact health and health care.

Objective: Undertake a literature review to a) identify the current imperatives in GP training in Indigenous health, focusing on the development of cultural competence for registrars; and b) ascertain whether training curricula requirements around cultural education in Indigenous health reflect the realities of GP care.

Methods: Publications from Informa, MEDLINE and CINAHL containing reference to cross-cultural consultation skills and general consultations with Indigenous patients. The search was limited to published articles in peer-reviewed journals, which focused on Indigenous peoples in Australia published in English between January 2011 and August 2016.

Results: A total of 28 articles were found, 17 of which did not meet inclusion criteria leaving 11 for review. Results were organised according to the four themes that emerged around imperatives in the development of cultural competence of GP registrars:

1. Importance of Education in Cross Cultural Skills in GP
2. Gaps in Evaluation of GP Registrar Preparedness and Patient Outcomes
3. GP Cultural Capacity Building Opportunities Supervisor Role and Training
4. Environment in Mainstream GP Registrar Cultural Education

Conclusion: The variability of clinical interactions with Indigenous patients and lack of cultural competence support for mainstream GP registrars suggests a need for additional training and guidance in cultural competence that falls between the current curricula requirements and those of registrars pursuing specialised training in Indigenous health. These gaps will be addressed in the Generalist Medical Training (GMT) Indigenous Health Strategic Plan.