



ANZCA
FPM

President
Australian and New Zealand
College of Anaesthetists

Dear colleagues

Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA)/Medical Board of Australia (MBA) expedited Specialist International Medical Graduate (SIMG) program

We are writing to you, in your capacity as Supervisor of EMAC, to share important information about the AHPRA/MBA expedited SIMG program and to outline how it will affect EMAC course administration.

Background

The Expedited SIMG program has been very challenging. It is intended to be a federal government response to lack of regional and rural medical workforce. However, ANZCA's primary concerns are that the AHPRA/MBA minimalist approach risks both quality of patient care and workforce wellbeing. After considerable negotiation, AHPRA/MBA have agreed that the expedited SIMGs must complete the EMAC course.

The principal stated reason to move to an AHPRA/MBA pathway, away from the Colleges, is that the Colleges were said to be too slow processing substantially comparable SIMGs. We have AHPRA data showing this is untrue. However, given an otherwise adversarial MBA conceded on the EMAC issue, it is important that EMAC availability is not seen as a barrier to the expedited SIMGs completing their conditional period of practice. The expedited SIMGs have only 6 months to complete EMAC. Given the pathway was implemented in December 2024, it is possible some SIMGs will need to complete EMAC *before end of June 2025*, i.e. there may be some time pressure. At this point, we are uncertain about the potential increase in SIMG numbers, although we have not yet not seen evidence of a major influx. AHPRA/MBA have not committed to transparency with these numbers. Your support is therefore crucial to ensuring high-quality care and maintaining standards.

How will this impact EMAC course administration?

The College is taking the following steps to support the SIMGs in securing EMAC places.

1) Centralised registration

SIMGs on this pathway will first be required to register centrally with ANZCA rather than making contact with individual EMAC centres first. This is essential to ensure we get an accurate picture of demand; we have no other way of knowing how many SIMGs are on this pathway. ***Please communicate this process change to your centre's administration. Any inquiries from expedited SIMGs should be referred to emac@anzca.edu.au.***

2) Differentiate Expedited SIMGs from ANZCA SIMGs

We need to differentiate between SIMGs on the expedited pathway versus SIMGs on the traditional, ANZCA pathway when collating EMAC data. ***Please add an additional category, 'expedited SIMG', to your registration processes so we can track these participants appropriately.***

3) Course Availability Updates

The EMAC administrator will make regular contact, e.g. every 2-4 weeks, with centres to obtain a snapshot of course availability across the sites. This information will be shared with the expedited SIMGs so they have reasonably accurate information about course vacancies. In addition, it will help the College manage supply/demand, in case **adding** more EMAC courses becomes necessary. Although this may be unlikely, we will monitor the situation. ***Please advise your centre administrator/s that the EMAC CSO will be in regular contact seeking information about course vacancies noting there is some time sensitivity.***

4) Other potential administrative changes

Other minor changes may be required as we work our way through the process, e.g., how certificates are issued and by whom, and we will keep you informed.

Thank you for your assistance in implementing these changes. Please do not hesitate to call Cate McIntosh on 0419 351 867 or catemac1@mac.com if you have any questions or need clarification.

Yours sincerely



Professor Dave Story
ANZCA President



Dr Cate McIntosh
ANZCA EMAC Chair