

Grand Parenting of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate

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Background:

The Society of Obstetric Medicine of Australia and New Zealand (SOMANZ) aims to train a workforce with adequate expertise to enhance the role of obstetric medicine in Australia and New Zealand.

Since 2013 the General and Acute Care Medicine Advanced Training Committee (ATC) of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has been supervising SOMANZ recommended obstetric medicine training experience for advanced physician trainees. The training experience is supported by the SOMANZ developed curriculum "*Recommended training experiences for Advanced Trainees with an interest in obstetric medicine*"¹.

Successful trainees are issued with the **Obstetric Medicine Certificate**, in recognition of completion of the SOMANZ recommended training experience. Currently obstetric medicine is not recognised as a separate specialty by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) or the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ). Hence, the RACP does not recognise the SOMANZ Obstetric Medicine Certificate as an additional or separate qualification from specialty recognition in General Medicine, or another medical specialty.

Nevertheless Obstetric Physician supervisors are required for Advanced Trainees undertaking obstetric medicine experience, and there is an established physician workforce in obstetric medicine in Australia and New Zealand providing expertise to women with medical problems in pregnancy.

SOMANZ plans to issue the **Obstetric Medicine Certificate** to eligible Physicians in recognition of training undertaken prior to 2013 and contributions to work, education and research in Obstetric Medicine. This process will be referred to as "**Grand parenting of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate**". Weighted criteria will need to be met to be eligible for recognition and receive the certificate.

As with the issuing of the Certificate to an Advanced Trainee, the issuing of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate to a Physician is recognition by SOMANZ of the Physician's contributions to obstetric medicine and is not a separate qualification recognised by RACP, AHPRA or MCNZ. This is still a significant accomplishment for SOMANZ in its aim to enhance the role of obstetric medicine in Australia and New Zealand. Establishing a core number of Obstetric Physicians issued the Obstetric Medicine Certificate by SOMANZ may assist in working towards obstetric medicine recognition as a specialty in the future.

Process for Grand parenting of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate

Timeframe:

There will be a three-year opportunity to apply to SOMANZ Executive Council, commencing in 2017, with a 3-month window of assessment each year. Applications will not be considered after 2019.

On an individualised basis SOMANZ Executive Council will consider allowing an extended time-period and recommend further experience if an applicant meets 75% of criteria.

Note: Advanced Trainees of the RACP who commence their Advanced Training from 2013 onwards are ineligible to apply for Grand Parenting. They will need to complete the Obstetric Medicine Certification at an accredited site, as part of their Advanced Training.

Eligibility Criteria:

Refer to separate document “**Weighted Criteria: Guidelines for determining the eligibility of applicants for the Obstetric Medicine Certificate**” consisting of compulsory and supplemental criteria that need to be met in order to be eligible. The weighted criteria are based on a scoring system with points allocated for each criterion (a similar process to eligibility criteria established for RACP Chapters of Palliative Medicine² and Addiction Medicine³).

A physician with work experience in obstetric medicine who believes they will be eligible can apply.

General principles for eligibility³

1. Broad clinical experience in the field of obstetric medicine
2. Evidence of clinical training in obstetric medicine
3. Academic qualifications in obstetric medicine
4. Participation in Continuing Medical Education and Quality Improvement in obstetric medicine
5. Contributions to obstetric medicine (development of professional or academic activities; contributions to undergraduate or postgraduate education; publications/contributions to scientific meetings in obstetric medicine)
6. Satisfactory practice history (no professional misconduct)

Application Process:

Applicants will need to:

1. Complete the application form and scoring sheet available on the SOMANZ website.
2. Provide a copy of their full Curriculum Vitae and any other supporting documents requested.
3. Be a financial member of SOMANZ at the time of application.
4. Pay the prescribed application fee when submitting the application [AUD 350 for New Zealand applicants; AUD 385 (includes GST) for Australian applicants].

Assessment of eligibility:

SOMANZ Executive Council will form a **sub-committee for Grand parenting of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate**, to assess applicants' eligibility. The sub-committee will consist of 4 physician members of SOMANZ, at least one of who is a member of the SOMANZ Executive Council. A 5th sub-committee member will be from the Australian or New Zealand General and Acute Care Medicine ATC. This 5th member will provide independent, external educational experience to the committee, and is not an indication of formal sign off of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate by the RACP. The sub-committee will review all applications after the closing date each year and once this process is complete recommend to SOMANZ Executive Council that successful applicants be awarded the Obstetric Medicine Certificate.

Appeals process:

Within one month of receiving notification of an unsuccessful application, an applicant may appeal by applying in writing to SOMANZ Executive Council for a review of their application, stating why they think their application should have been successful.

The sub-committee for Grand parenting of the Obstetric Medicine Certificate will initially undertake the review. If the sub-committee's decision is that the applicant is still unsuccessful, four other SOMANZ members nominated by SOMANZ Executive Council will conduct a second review and their decision will be final. If an application is not approved, 50% of the application fee will be returned to the applicant.

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Sandra Lowe (SOMANZ Secretary/Treasurer 2011-2014)

Lawrence McMahon (SOMANZ Secretary/Treasurer 2004-2010 and President 2011-2012)

Rob Pickles (Australian General and Acute Care Medicine ATC)

Lisa Penlington (Senior Executive Officer Fellowship Relations, Adult Medicine Division, RACP)

References:

1. RACP (2013). "Specialist Advisory Committee in General and Acute Care Medicine: Recommended training experiences for Advanced Trainees with an interest in obstetric medicine."
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