

DEFINING THE MEANING OF THE TERMS CONSULTANT PHYSICIAN IN PALLIATIVE MEDICINE AND PALLIATIVE MEDICINE SPECIALIST

INTRODUCTION

The Australia and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine (ANZSPM) recognises that there can be confusion over the use by medical practitioners of the terms Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine and Palliative Medicine Specialist. The confusion has arisen because:

1. palliative medicine is a new medical specialty, only achieving specialty status within the last few years in both New Zealand and Australia.
2. unlike most other medical specialties, the Royal Australasian College of Physicians provides medical practitioners with 2 pathways to achieve specialist status in palliative medicine.
3. many medical practitioners provide palliative care as part of their practice and hence develop expertise in the area.

DEFINITION

The right of medical practitioners to use the terms Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine and Palliative Medicine Specialist is based on the specialist training of the individual doctor.

Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine

A Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine in Australia or New Zealand has:

EITHER

- (i) Attained undergraduate or postgraduate and graduate medical degrees from an Australian or New Zealand medical school, or has had their primary medical qualification accepted by the Australian or New Zealand Medical Councils.
and
- (ii) Attained the fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (FRACP).
and
- (iii) Completed advanced training under the auspices of the Combined Palliative Medicine Education Committee (formerly known as the Specialist Advisory Committee in Palliative Medicine)

OR

has achieved an equivalent standard to the above as determined by relevant authorities, such as the Australian Medical Council, New Zealand Medical Council, Medicare Australia and Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

Palliative Medicine Specialist

A Palliative Medicine Specialist has:

- (i) Attained undergraduate or postgraduate and graduate medical degrees from an Australian or New Zealand medical school, or has had their primary medical qualification accepted by the Australian or New Zealand Medical Councils.
and
- (ii) Attained the fellowship of another College as listed in the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine Training Manual.

OR

has achieved an equivalent standard to the above as determined by relevant authorities, such as the Australian Medical Council, New Zealand Medical Council, Medicare Australia, the relevant Australasian College, and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

AND

- (i) Successfully completed the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine specialist training program in Palliative Medicine and hence been conferred with Fellowship of the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine (FACHPM) within the Adult Medicine Division of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.
or
- (ii) Been conferred with Fellowship of the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine (FACHPM) within the Adult Medicine Division of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians as a result of assessment of prior experience by the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine
or
- (iii) Is an international medical graduate assessed by relevant authorities, such as the Australian Medical Council, New Zealand Medical Council, Health Insurance Commission, Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine and Royal Australasian College of Physicians as equivalent to an Australian or New Zealand trained specialist in palliative medicine, and holds an equivalent qualification.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS WHO PRACTISE PALLIATIVE CARE

Medical practitioners who practise palliative care, other than Consultant Physicians in Palliative Medicine and Palliative Medicine Specialists, can investigate their eligibility to apply for FACHPM under the by-laws of the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine, Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

Medical practitioners who practise palliative care and wish to indicate their interest in this field can use their job title to describe their role in palliative care on business cards etc but must not describe themselves as a Consultant Physician in Palliative Medicine or a Palliative Medicine Specialist.