



## AMDS Program – 2020 Guidelines (in effect 1 August 2020) - Questions and Answers

Question	Response
Can an AMDS use Search Engine Marketing?	Any kind of payment to an online service or search engine to promote your service, whether by advertising or improved search result ranking, is not permitted. This has been clarified in the Guidelines.
Is a Medical Director required to be physically located in each state and/or territory in which we operate a deed?	Yes. This requirement is in place to ensure that the Medical Director is available for on-call and in-person assistance as required.
If I am the medical director of an AMDS, does that mean I can no longer work in a general practice?	There is no restriction on Medical Directors working as general practitioners during business hours.
Can you further define the role of the Medical Director in relation to business requirements?	Medical Directors are responsible for clinical governance and supervision. It is the responsibility of the business owner to ensure all other standards are met.
Can we send emails to patients / consumers?	No. The role of an AMDS Service Provider is to provide deputised services in the after-hours period on behalf of a patient's regular general practice. Consumers should be contacting their general practice for advice on after-hours care arrangements, and AMDS Service Providers should be asking if this has occurred during their triaging process. Sending emails of any kind to consumers (other than consultation confirmation or outcomes) has the effect of marketing the brand of an AMDS Service Provider, regardless of the content or nature of the message, and is not permitted.
Can the initial participation period be extended from two years to four years?	No. The intent of the change is to direct doctors to a college-led Fellowship program within two years of commencing on the program and to ensure consistency with the other programs that prepare doctors for a college-led Fellowship pathway. A doctor can participate on the AMDS program while they participate in a college-led fellowship program up to a maximum of 10 years in total. Participants must request an extension every year after the initial two year period.
How does the two year maximum participation period apply to existing program participants?	Doctors who commenced on the program prior to 1 July 2020 will have the maximum two year participation period applied from the date of their next renewal.

Can the two year participation limit be increased for regional doctors?	<p>The Department recognises that regional areas face additional challenges in recruiting medical practitioners. Recent changes to workforce and training program location eligibility has reduced the program options available to non-VR doctors in metropolitan areas, directing additional doctors to areas of greater need.</p> <p>Extensions beyond the initial two years are available for doctors who are also participating on a college-led Fellowship program.</p>
What is the Department's position on online or smartphone application bookings?	Service Providers must operate a call centre for the duration of the Commonwealth-defined after-hours period to triage booking requests. Online and application bookings are permitted, provided that all requests are triaged by a staff member before the appointment time and redirected to more appropriate care options if necessary.
Are Medical Deputising Services still required to be operational for twelve months prior to applying to the AMDS Program?	Yes.
Can a three month grace period for accreditation be implemented for when a service provider moves location?	<p>The Department is willing to support a short grace period for a change of location for existing AMDS Service Providers, and the review of only those factors that have changed.</p> <p>Health will discuss this with the accreditation agencies. If agreed, the Guidelines will be revised to allow this consideration.</p>
Can an AMDS be established at a site that provides allied health services during regular business hours?	No. The restriction on co-location applies to both general practice, and other medical or allied health services. This has been clarified in the Guidelines.
Can the Advanced Life Support (ALS) course requirement be waived for regional doctors?	No. While the Department appreciates that regional doctors may need to travel to access these courses, the ALS requirement is unable to be waived. The ability of participants to perform these procedures is arguably more important in regional areas, where transfer to an emergency department may take longer than in a metropolitan area.
Can work health and safety guidance be added to the Guidelines?	Due to the complexity of work health and safety legislation, it is not proposed to include this information in the Guidelines. Service Providers are expected to protect their workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety, and welfare in accordance with the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> , and other applicable Commonwealth and jurisdictional legislation. Detailed guidance is available from the Safe Work Australia website.
Can the AMDS Program enter into a partnership with the RACGP or ACRRM to give participants an advantage in accessing general practice training?	AMDS participants who have not otherwise worked in standard general practice may benefit from participating on the More Doctors for Rural Australia Program, the RACGP Practice Experience Program or ACRRM Independent Pathway to prepare them for placement on a college-led Fellowship pathway.
Can AMDS service providers be prevented from entering into exclusivity arrangements with general practices?	AMDS Service Providers must enter into an agreement with a general practice to provide a deputising role in the after-hours period. It is an individual business decision for general practices to determine whether they wish to limit their patients to a single after-hours provider.



Do the 2020 Guidelines require our contact centre to be located and operational at our accredited AMDS Site?	The 2020 Guidelines allow for establishment of a national call centre from 1 August 2020.
Is our call centre required to operate 24/7?	No. Your call centre may only operate during the Commonwealth-defined after-hours period.  Office operating hours may be determined by individual service providers, to allow for follow-up with general practices, pharmacists, and other stakeholders as required.
Can corporate entities combine their call centres?	If a corporate entity owns more than one AMDS Service Provider, their call centres may be combined.
Are limited and provisional registrants eligible to participate on the program?	Yes, provided that they are providing in-clinic services only, have the required supervision arrangements, and are in compliance with the conditions of their medical registration.