

Thinking of Infectious Diseases

Infectious Diseases is the investigation, pathogenesis, diagnosis, prevention control and treatment of disorders caused by organisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi or parasites.

Overview of Infectious Diseases

Infectious diseases physicians provide a predominantly hospital-based service, specialising in the various clinical, laboratory and public health aspects of infectious disease medicine and microbiology. They have extensive expertise in the differential diagnosis and management of diseases caused by microbial agents and the management of patients presenting with infections in a number of settings, including perioperative, intensive care, and the immunocompromised host. An infectious diseases physician also has expertise in the assessment of non-infective causes of febrile illnesses and other apparent infections.

Infectious diseases physicians have a key role in the management of acute problems and in long-term chronic care of patients, e.g. those suffering from HIV and chronic hepatitis. In this respect they focus both on the individual patient and the broader community affected by the various infectious agents. Specialists working within this field tend to have a generalist, rather than an organ system specific, focus.

Specialty training

Physician training is undertaken through the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) and consists of:

- a minimum of 36 months of Adult Medicine or Paediatric and Child Health Basic Training followed by
- a minimum of 36 months of Advanced Training in Infectious Diseases
- work-based learning and assessment requirements.

Trainees may apply to enter the Advanced Training program if they:

- have completed Adult Medicine or Paediatric and Child Health Basic Training programme
- have successfully completed the RACP Clinical and Written Examinations
- hold current medical registration and
- secured an accredited training position.

Six months of advanced training in Microbiology is required to complete the Advanced Training Programme. These training posts are accredited by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA).

All advanced training occurs in supervised clinical placements within RACP accredited sites.

Over the course of the training program, all trainees must carry out a variety of teaching and learning activities, including work-based learning and assessment requirements, and other program requirements in consultation with their supervisors.

Once the training is completed, Fellowship of the RACP (FRACP) is awarded.

It is likely that you need to complete placements in multiple DHBs whilst completing vocational training.

Personal qualities required to be an Infectious Diseases Physician

- fostering of a patient-centred approach to health care
- maintenance of a balanced and broad perspective on health care delivery
- preparedness to learn and adopt new and validated approaches to diagnosis and management, despite logistical difficulties, and to change work practices when appropriate
- willingness to reflect on, and learn from, mistakes
- preparedness to change management plans
- tolerance of uncertainty
- ability to cope with unexpected disappointments, equanimity, resiliency and calmness in the face of challenging clinical demands
- desire to contribute to improvements in the health system
- desire to foster clinical practice, research and teaching in general internal medicine
- preparedness to acknowledge doubt and uncertainty in clinical practice.

Specialty Training Programme Information

Medical College

[Royal Australasian College of Physicians \(RACP\)](#)

Fellowship/Qualification

Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (FRACP)

Application and Selection process

Application/selection [Basic training](#)

Application/selection [Advanced Training in Infectious Diseases](#)

Contact details New Zealand: InfectiousDiseases@racp.org.nz

To find out more about physicians/paediatricians and other specialty areas, [click here](#). This also provides a useful Q&A section

Further information can be obtained on [Royal Australasian College of Physicians \(RACP\)](#)

Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Information

Demand for vocational training posts is currently not available

RMO training registrar positions contracted

Northern	Midland	Central	South Island	Total
4	0	0	0	4

(September 2016 RMO census)

Regions

Northern:

Northland, Waitemata, Auckland, Counties Manukau DHBs

Midland:

Lakes, Tairāwhiti, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Taranaki DHBs

Central:

Hawke's Bay, Wanganui, MidCentral, Wairarapa, Capital and Coast, Hutt Valley DHBs

South Island:

Nelson Marlborough, Canterbury, South Canterbury, Southern, West Coast DHBs

Senior Medical Officer (SMO) Information

Year	Number of NZ New Fellows
2015	*
2014	*

Average Age of SMOs*	Number registered with the Medical Council *	% of international medical graduates in the workforce*
51	1024	42

Number by Region (September 2016 SMO census)

Northern		Midland		Central		South Island		Total	
FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount
3.9	4	3	3	2.7	3	1.5	4	11.1	14

*The number is not separately available but included in the total registered in Internal Medicine.