

Finding an Aged Care Onsite Pharmacist (ACOP)

 A guide for residential aged care homes

Residential aged care on-site pharmacist

The ACOP program provides ongoing government funding for your RACH to have a pharmacist embedded in your care team.

We encourage you to explore the following options – most RACHs are able to find a pathway through one of these.

Want to know more about ACOP? Visit the [EMPHN ACOP page](#) for a full overview of the program.

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Option 1 – Tier 1:

Engage through a community pharmacy

Under Tier 1, a community pharmacy employs the ACOP pharmacist and you enter into a service arrangement with them. There's no proximity requirement – any Section 90 community pharmacy can participate. Try any or all of the following:

Your dispensing pharmacy: Talk to the community pharmacy that already supplies medications to your residents. They already know your home and are often the easiest first conversation.

Other local community pharmacies: Contact other pharmacies in your area to ask if they have, or could employ, a credentialed ACOP pharmacist.

Consultant pharmacists already visiting your RACH: If your RACH currently receives RMMRs, speak with those consultant pharmacists – they already know your residents and may be interested in transitioning to the ACOP role

- Share the [ACOP flyer](#) for Pharmacy to help explain the program from their perspective.
- Keep a record of pharmacies you've approached. If you later move to Tier 2, you may need to show you've genuinely attempted Tier 1 first.
- [Tier 1 information – Pharmacy Programs Administrator \(PPA\)](#)

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Option 2 – Tier 2:

Directly employ or contract a pharmacist

If you've genuinely been unable to find a community pharmacy willing to participate, your RACH can directly employ or contract an ACOP pharmacist. Under this arrangement, your RACH claims and receives payments directly.

- The pharmacist must hold – or be working toward – an APC-accredited ACOP credential. You can point them to the [APC accredited training programs](#).
- [Tier 2 information – Pharmacy Programs Administrator \(PPA\)](#)

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Need help?

- If you've explored these options and are still unable to find a pharmacist, EMPHN may be able to provide advice or connect you with providers delivering ACOP services in the eastern Melbourne region.
- **Email:** RACHsupport@emphn.org.au
- **Visit:** emphn.org.au/aged-care-on-site-pharmacist-acop-program

Funding entitlement

A ratio of one full-time equivalent (FTE) onsite pharmacist per 250 beds in a RACH is funded under the program (see table 1).

Table 1: FTE entitlement per RACH bed band

RACH Bed Band	FTE rate per eligible RACH	Maximum on-site days per week
1-50	0.2	1
51-100	0.4	2
101-150	0.6	3
151-200	0.8	4
201-250	1.0	5

How does this effect the RMMR and QUM Programs?

The ACOP program is a best practice alternative to the Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) and Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) programs.

Where an ACOP is engaged to work in a RACH, that RACH cannot also receive RMMR or QUM services.

Role of EMPHN

As part of the implementation of the program, EMPHN is here to assist RACHs to identify and connect with appropriately credentialed pharmacists who can work in this role.



Further information:

For further information about the program including resources and links:

[Aged Care On-site Pharmacist \(ACOP\) Program - EMPHN](#)

The ACOP

The ACOP will bring their expertise in medication management and pharmacotherapy to provide collaborative and integrated care for all residents as part of the multidisciplinary healthcare team.

This resource has been adapted from resources developed by Murray PHN.

Get in touch

Contact the EMPHN Aged Care Team at RACHsupport@emphn.org.au

Explore other resources →

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