ANTARCTIC MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE

Antarctic Medical Practitioners (AMP) are required to provide complete generalist medical, surgical and emergency dental care, for a remote community, at an Australian Antarctic Program (AAP) station, during a voyage and in Antarctic and subantarctic field environments.

Successful applicants will be the sole medical practitioner at the station, providing total health care service for approximately 15 to 18 wintering expeditioners, up to 120 during summer (October to March) and up to 130 passengers and crew on expedition voyages. Most positions available are for ‘winter’ (total employment 15-18 months, time in Antarctica 10-15 months). Occasional shorter term appointments may be available as ships' and summer station and field doctors.

Over winter there are no para-medical or ancillary medical staff on station. Some fellow expeditioners receive training in assisting the AMP in health care provision.

WHAT WILL YOU ACTUALLY DO ON THE JOB?

You will:

• provide complete medical, surgical, and dental care, including public health, occupational medicine, nutrition, preparation of first-aids kits, upkeep and stocktaking of equipment and pharmaceuticals. Medical support includes primary, secondary and occasionally tertiary level care with 24/7 telemedicine support.
• provide supplementary instruction and supervision to fellow expeditioners on matters of health, medical procedures and first-aid.
• conduct research on human interaction with the Antarctic environment.
• participate in community support training courses such as firefighting, boating, hydroponics, and attend field training.
• prepare monthly and annual reports.

You will also:

• maintain a personal and practical commitment to Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) work, health and safety (WHS) and environmental policies. Training and guidance in regard to safety and environmental responsibilities relevant to your position will be provided by your supervisor and others;

• in common with all other expeditioners, perform duties to support the community life of the expedition, such as general kitchen duties and garbage clearance and there will be opportunities to assist other expedition members with official programs that may include supporting scientific research, aviation operations, field camps or undertaking over-land traverses to outlying regions.
As this role may require you to be involved in a Safety Sensitive Aviation Activity, a condition of employment is that you may be required to participate in drug and alcohol screening of urine and/or saliva samples.

REPORTING AND SUPERVISION

Professional and technical reporting and supervision once deployed is direct to the Chief Medical Officer of the AAD or delegate.

Community expeditioner supervision and reporting is direct to Station or Voyage Leader.

Whilst at Kingston prior to and post deployment, all reporting is to the Chief Medical Officer of the AAD.

REQUIRED SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ATTRIBUTES

AMPs must have practical skills or be able to respond, where appropriate, in the following fields. Some examples of practical procedures which have been performed by AMPs, or may be required, are indicated (italicised within brackets). A generalist non-specialist level of experience is sought.

Typical successful applicants include rural and remote general practitioners or trainees, and some specialists with a background broad scope of practice or relevant up skilling (e.g. emergency physicians, anaesthetists, surgeons, physicians).

1. **General Medicine**
   - General Medicine (*lumbar puncture, pleural tap*)
   - Dermatology
   - Ophthalmology (*enucleation of eye*)
   - Ear, Nose and Throat
   - Psychiatry and Mental Health Counselling

2. **Emergency Management**
   - Urology & STI (*catheters, suprapubic cystotomy*)
   - Thoracic (*underwater seal drains*)
   - Burns (*split skin graft*)

3. **Anaesthetics* and Intensive Care**
   - General Anaesthesia
   - Local and Regional Anaesthesia (*spinal, Bier’s Block*)

4. **Surgery**
   - Surgery –Appendicectomy (*craniotomy, laparotomy with exploration of the abdomen, oversewing perforated peptic ulcer, splenectomy, management of other abdominal trauma, colostomy, tracheostomy, oesophagoscopy, bronchoscopy, sigmoidoscopy*)
   - Plastic Surgery (*hand injuries, amputations, management of tendon and nerve injuries*)

5. **Orthopaedics**
   - Orthopaedics (*conservative management of all types of fractures, including skeletal traction, management of cervical and thoraco-lumbar spinal injuries, treatment of dislocations of minor and major joints, and management of lower back problems*)

6. **Obstetrics and Gynaecology**
   - Obstetrics and Gynaecology (*Dilatation and Curettage, Ectopic Pregnancy*)
Occupational, Industrial and Environmental Medicine and Public Health*
Diving Medicine*
Aviation and Retrieval Medicine*
Altitude Medicine*

Dentistry* (extractions, conservative treatment)

Laboratory*, Radiology & Radiography* and Pathology
Laboratory Methods (urine, blood, microbiology, biochemistry, cross matching)
Radiology and radiography (digital and wet film processing, ultrasound)
Pathology (post mortem)

Physiotherapy* Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine

Medical Services*
Nursing
Sterilisation of equipment
Drug and Equipment Inventory
Nutrition, Dietetics
First Aid Instruction

* Some training may be provided in these areas before departure.

Qualifications and Licences - Required on Application
You must provide evidence of all relevant qualifications and licences in your application. Preferably attach a scanned copy. Otherwise, you must provide detail of the full title of the qualification/licence, date of issue and date of expiration (if relevant). Please note that if you do not provide evidence of required qualifications and licences, your application will not be considered further.

1. Evidence of unrestricted general or relevant specialist registration as a medical practitioner with the Medical Board of Australia [http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/)

2. Evidence of Basic Medical qualification, Postgraduate fellowships and/or qualifications and experience (Certified Copies)

3. Evidence of Certificate of Good Standing (where requested)

4. Provide details of any suspensions, restrictions or other actions from relevant registering and professional bodies in Australia or in any other country

You will also hold a current, unrestricted “C” class (manual) Australian driver’s licence.

Personal Qualities Requirements
The Australian Antarctic Division assesses individual personal qualities in terms of the attributes required to successfully live and work in an isolated Antarctic or subantarctic community. Successful candidates will meet the personal qualities criteria detailed in Attachment 1.

Medical, Psychological and Security Screening
If you are assessed as meeting the above job related and personal quality requirements, you will be required to undergo medical, psychological and security screening. Meeting and maintaining suitability in relation to these requirements is mandatory.
• The AAD’s Polar Medicine Unit will determine your medical fitness for duty in Antarctica or the subantarctic following tests conducted on our behalf by a nominated medical practitioner. If required, this may include comprehensive drug screening for compliance to undertake Safety Sensitive Aviation Activities (SSAA).

• Psychological assessments are conducted on our behalf by a nominated professional provider.

• Security checks vary depending on the role required. The minimum requirement is a Position of Trust.

• Candidates considered for a role at Macquarie Island may be required to complete a fitness assessment.

Special Considerations for Position Working Conditions

Hazards that exist at the work site are controlled by various methodologies and will be discussed during your training. The following working and living conditions, as well as physical and environmental demands apply to this position:

• Work both inside and outside in the following conditions:
  - Cold and dry conditions (as low as -45 deg Celsius)
  - Both High and Low Solar Ultraviolet Radiation exposure
  - Marine and Coastal Environment conditions

• Work with patients and human products and tissue in both clinical and laboratory environments potentially exposed to infective agents (e.g. respiratory and blood borne agents)

• Required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) including
  - Cold, ultraviolet and marine environment clothing
  - Medical and laboratory gloves, aprons, masks, safety eyewear glasses and shields

• Physical Activity may occur under the following conditions
  - Extreme cold and wet
  - Altitude that may exceed 3500 metres
  - Travel in unpressurised aircraft to 4000 metres
  - Rugged and unforgiving terrain
  - Embarkation and disembarkation on ships, boats and aircraft

• Remote and isolated community living
  - Limited sophistication of medical support. (Self-treatment supported by 24/7 telemedicine overwinter)
  - Medical Evacuation if at all possible is likely to be delayed and prolonged.
    (NB Overwintering positions require AMP to undergo pre-departure elective appendicectomy)
  - Stressors of close communal living

• Work in Deep Field Camps under austere environment and conditions
• Undertake Manual handling tasks
• Communicate via VHF, HF and Satellite Radio and telephone services
• There is asbestos on all stations, however it is controlled and contained.
• On continental stations the nature of the environment increases the risk of slip hazards.
• The nature of the environment on Macquarie Island potentially increases the likelihood of muscular skeletal type injuries.
PERSONAL QUALITIES CRITERIA

Successful applicants will:

- **DEMONSTRATE A STRONG WORK ETHIC**
  Evidenced by a proven history of efficient, effective, responsive and productive work performance. Applicants for supervisory positions will be expected to demonstrate supervisory capabilities, including a good knowledge of workplace diversity, workplace relations, work, health and safety and environmental management practices and principles.

- **DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY CAN MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY AND TEAM**
  Evidenced by:
  - demonstrating the capacity to cope with physical and emotional isolation and the resilience to overcome hardship;
  - demonstrating the capacity to work productively, contribute to the success of small isolated work groups and the overall community including recognising the effect their behaviour has on others;
  - demonstrating a capacity to address and resolve issues of conflict;
  - demonstrating the capacity to exercise sound judgement;
  - demonstrating flexibility, tolerance and acceptance of changing circumstances;
  - demonstrating qualities of robustness, motivation and confidence whilst displaying sensitivity, situational awareness and support and respect to fellow workers;
  - demonstrating good social skills and taking pride in their appearance and maintaining socially accepted standards of hygiene;
  - responsible use of alcohol; and
  - not exhibiting behaviour that could endanger others’ safety or be seen as being abusive, threatening or offensive to others.

- **DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY RESPOND TO AUTHORITY AND ARE COMPLIANT WITH THE LAW, LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS AND AAD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**
  Evidenced by:
  - a history of complying with authority and supporting lawful instructions;
  - demonstrating a commitment to and compliance with appropriate environmental management policies and practices;
  - demonstrating a knowledge and history of compliance with work health and safety practices and principles; and
  - recognition of harassment and discrimination issues and demonstrated compliance with associated legislative requirements.

- **DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO AAP SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**
  Evidenced by:
  - demonstrating commitment to supporting the Australian Antarctic Science Program;
  - demonstrating willingness to participate in “common duties” and activities in support of the community generally; and
  - demonstrating commitment to fully participate in all required training and associated activities.