



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
Australian Antarctic Division

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 for up to 12 to 15 months at the station, providing total health care service for approximately 15 to 18 wintering expeditioners, up to 80 during summer (October to March) and up to 130 passengers and crew on expedition voyages.

Over winter there are no para-medical or ancillary medical staff on AAP. 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.
- you are required to maintain a personal and practical commitment to the AAD's OHS and Environmental Policies. The safety and environmental roles and responsibilities relevant to your position will be communicated to you by your supervisor.
- prepare monthly and annual reports.

As well as these specific job roles you will also be required to, in common with all other expeditioners, perform duties rostered by the Station Leader to support the community life of the expedition, such as general kitchen duties, garbage clearance, water duties, 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 upskilling (eg 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*)
- 7 Occupational, Industrial and Environmental Medicine and Public Health***
Diving Medicine*
Aviation and Retrieval Medicine*
Altitude Medicine*
- 8 Dentistry*** (*extractions, conservative treatment*)
- 9 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*)
- 10 Physiotherapy* Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine**
- 11 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.

Applicants must provide the following:

- 1. Evidence of unrestricted general or relevant specialist registration as a medical practitioner with the Medical Board of Australia**
<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 or other actions from relevant registering bodies in Australia or in any other country**
- 5. Evidence of Current Automobile Driver's Licence**

Personal Qualities Requirements

As the member of a small community there are also personal attribute requirements which the Australian Antarctic Division assesses very closely. You will need to meet the personal qualities criteria listed below.

To be successful you will:

- demonstrate a strong work ethic.

- demonstrate that you can make a positive contribution to community and team.
- demonstrate that you respond to authority and are compliant with the law, legislative requirements and AAD policies and procedures.
- demonstrate a commitment to Australian Antarctic program specific requirements.

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 these requirements is mandatory.

- The AAD's Polar Medicine Unit will determine your medical fitness for duty in Antarctica following tests conducted on our behalf by a nominated medical practitioner.
- Psychological assessments are conducted on our behalf by the Directorate of Psychology, Department of Defence.
- Security checks vary depending on the role required. This role requires security clearance to the level of **Protected**

Special considerations for position working conditions

The physical environment requires the employee to 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 (eg 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 3500metres
 - 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 predeparture elective appendicectomy)
 - Mental Health Stressors of Community 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