# Annual Conversation

This template provides guidance towards meeting the goals of an annual conversation with a colleague/supervisor/mentor etc. This template is designed for those who engage primarily in clinical practice. [Other templates](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/mod/page/view.php?id=40329) (including one customised for Public Health Physicians and one for other non-clinical roles) may better suit your needs.

The goals of an annual conversation are that doctors will:

* *‘reflect on their development needs, their goals for learning and professional activities and their intentions for the next year Doctors are encouraged to use the information they have obtained undertaking activities across the three types of CPD to inform this conversation.*’
* take *‘an opportunity to receive constructive feedback and share best practice. It may also give doctors the opportunity to explore their satisfaction in their current role, self-care and any health and wellbeing issues so they are able to adjust their practice accordingly, set performance targets for the future, and consider longer-term career aspirations.’[[1]](#footnote-1)*

[Please see the notes attached](#_Notes_for_the_1) for further information on options for completing an annual conversation. For example, if you have an annual appraisal that meets the goals outlined above, then that appraisal may meet the requirement for an annual conversation.

You can also see [more detailed and specific questions](#_Additional_Annual_Conversation) that can assist with preparation and/or that can be addressed during the conversation.

Ideally you will complete this template as part of preparation for your conversation and send it to your colleague/supervisor/mentor prior to the meeting. **This is a guide only - please vary the template to meet your needs.**

Keeping a record of the conversation from year to year and translating its outcomes into a [Professional Development Plan](#_PROFESSIONAL_DEVELOPMENT_PLAN) (PDP) will make the conversations more productive.

**This structure for the annual conversation is still in trial phase. Please send any feedback to** [**msf.rpr@racp.edu.au**](mailto:msf.rpr@racp.edu.au)

**Details to be retained for CPD purposes:**

Please retain/upload to MyCPD a signed (by both parties) copy of this page as evidence for CPD.

Boxes on this form expand as needed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of person this conversation is focussed on** |  |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Name of colleague / supervisor / mentor / peer.** |  |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Date of meeting** |  |

Please note that time you spend on this conversation (preparing for it, having the conversation, reflecting on the outcomes, and adjusting your PDP) is a reviewing performance activity (category 2 MyCPD).

**The following pages will only be kept by the person who is the focus of the conversation. Colleagues should not keep a copy of these pages.**

**SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR**

The purpose of this section is to:

* Reflect on your clinical and [professional practice](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/professional-practice-framework) (see also [Supporting Professionalism in Practice](https://www.racp.edu.au/docs/default-source/fellows/resources/supporting-professionalism-in-practice.pdf?sfvrsn=7b42d31a_4)) against the goals/aspirations you had in your previous conversation and that were documented in your professional development plan (PDP). If this is your first conversation or you did not have goals written down or if they changed substantially, reflect on the goals/targets you have been working to.
* Reflect on key areas of practice. This includes cultural safety and health equity, professional practice and ethics that the Medical Board of Australia, the Medical Council of New Zealand and the RACP have identified as a priorities.

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| 1. **Accomplishments – Reflect on those things that have gone well and why?** |
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| 1. **Reflect on anything that did not go well, that you could have done better or that you will do differently next time?** |
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| 1. **What has been your most valuable learning experience in the last year and what was the value or otherwise of your CPD? (**[**More specific review questions**](#_Additional_Annual_Conversation)**)** |
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| 1. **The College has approved a new** [**Cultural Safety professional standard**](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/professional-practice-framework#safety)**. What activities have you completed/can you complete to start or continue to build your understanding of what is required to practice in a way that is culturally safe?**   *Cultural Safety, and the reflective practice that it requires, may be a new concept for you. The College recognises that there are structural elements that influence delivery of care but that also each individual member can take action to build understanding and to address in themselves the factors that influence delivery of culturally safe care. This learning and these activities that are the beginning of embedding cultural safety in CPD.* [***See attached resource that will help you understand and explore this further.***](#_Cultural_Safety_and) |
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| 1. **What learning would support you in working individually and with others to address the differences in health outcomes between groups of people you work with, which are avoidable and result from uneven access to resources, wealth, power and privilege?** |
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| 1. **Regulators are now requiring that Fellows complete CPD activities that focus on professional practice, in particular ethical practice. What aspects of your professional practice have you received feedback on? Through your own reflection, what have you identified as a potential for improvement?**   *Please see the* [*Professional Practice Framework*](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/professional-practice-framework/resources) *(specifically Ethics and professional behaviour) and also* [*Supporting Professionalism in Practice (SPP).*](https://www.racp.edu.au/docs/default-source/fellows/resources/supporting-professionalism-in-practice.pdf?sfvrsn=7b42d31a_4) *Please also see resources in the* [*Ethics curated collection*](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/course/view.php?id=128) *and online resources:* [*Ethics*](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/course/view.php?id=182) *and* [*Ethics and Interaction with Industry*](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/course/view.php?id=287)*.* |
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**SECTION 2: JOB SATISFACTION**

**2.1** **Thinking about your current role how would you rate your overall job satisfaction?**

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| --- | --- |
| Very satisfied | ☐ |
| Satisfied | ☐ |
| Neither satisfied or unsatisfied | ☐ |
| Unsatisfied | ☐ |
| Very unsatisfied | ☐ |
| **2.2 How could your level of job satisfaction be improved? Include organisational changes if applicable.** | | |
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**2.3 Future Planning**

Under each of the three headings below, list things in your clinical/professional role that you would like to address in the future This can include within the next year but also longer term plans.

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| 1. **I would like to stop doing….** |
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| 1. **I would like to start doing….** |
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| 1. **I would like to continue doing….** |
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1. **What is your stage of career – have you planned appropriately to maximise opportunities now and in the future. For example; if relevant, have you considered plans for your sabbatical and/or have plans for your retirement?**

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**SECTION 3: DETAILED PLANNING**

For those wanting a more focused planning conversation please see the [attached questions](#_Additional_Annual_Conversation) as well as the resources on [developing/maintaining a professional development plan](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/mod/page/view.php?id=40328). There are several PDP templates at that link or you can use the one attached.

For those seeking a more comprehensive review please refer to the [Professional Development Review](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/mod/page/view.php?id=40329) template.

**SECTION 4: MAINTAINING YOUR HEALTH**

All Fellows should be aware of the [RACP Support Program](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/resources/physician-health-and-wellbeing/i-need-support/racp-support-program). There are also resources available in the[Physicians' Health and Wellbeing curated collection.](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/course/view.php?id=125) and further resources available via the RACP webpage - [‘Supporting a colleague or trainee’](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/wellbeing/i-want-to-offer-support).

Information on health and wellbeing can be found on the RACP website. See the RACP [‘Health of Doctors Position Statement 2017](https://www.racp.edu.au/news-and-events/all-news/news-details?id=101c60af-bbb2-61c2-b08b-ff00001c3177) and the [Healthier Physicians Brochure](https://www.racp.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/fellowship_wellbeing-flyer_f.pdf?sfvrsn=0). Please note [the health and wellbeing framework that will assist you in your reflection.](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/resources/physician-health-and-wellbeing) Participants are also encouraged to read the Medical Council of New Zealand’s [‘Supporting Doctor’s Health’](https://www.mcnz.org.nz/support-for-doctors/supporting-doctors-health/) webpage.

**MAINTAINING YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Maintaining your health means more than just the absence of ill-health and infirmity. It refers to your overall mental, physical and social wellbeing. Key factors impacting your health and wellbeing are the conditions in your workplace and the expectations of your role.

To achieve ongoing health and wellbeing it is important to have a GP with whom you have a trusted relationship and continuity of care, especially in the case of chronic and complex health needs.

It is also important to have evidence-based preventive care and important to address individual behavioural risk behaviours.

How doctors deal with this is a very individual issue and this is an opportunity to reflect on any health issues of concern to you.

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| **4.1 Describe your life-work balance** |
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| **4.2 Are there changes you could make to support your health to ensure you are working with patients at an optimal level?** |
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**SECTION 5: SUMMARY**

Note any key learning or reflections, and any specific steps or recommendations that have come from this conversation. Translate those into actionable steps in your Professional Development Plan (PDP). If you don’t have a PDP there is a template attached and further [information on the RACP site](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/mod/page/view.php?id=40328) with additional templates and information to assist you in creating one. Please retain this document as a reference for next year’s conversation.

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| **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (PDP) for coming period** Year: |  |

**(Please see** [**further background and assistance and alternative templates for completing a PDP**](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/mod/page/view.php?id=40328)**)**

This professional development plan is designed to:

1. Capture the development needs emerging from the reflection on practice from your annual conversation.
2. Document strategies including CPD activities to meet those development needs (include short term and long-term development needs).

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| **Goal** | **Strategy / Activities (including CPD activities) and resources required. Include a timeframe.** | **Reflections on the value of these activities prior to your next annual conversation** |
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| **Notes for the Annual Collegial Conversation** |

You can complete an annual conversation in several ways:

1. If you have an annual appraisal with your head of department (HoD) or manager this may meet the requirements for an annual conversation. That is, if it conforms with the aim above, then keep a record of your completion of the appraisal including a sign off from your HoD. If, however, your annual appraisal is focused on workload and administrative matters it may not meet the aim listed above and you may find it beneficial to have a different conversation around the issues covered in this template.
2. You can use this template. Keep a signed copy of the front page as evidence of completion.
3. If you prefer a more detailed and structured review then you can use the [**RACP Professional Development Review template**](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/mod/resource/view.php?id=25165)**.** Please note that this review tool focusses on those in clinical practice. If you are using the PDR to complete the annual conversation, then you only need one reviewer. Keep a signed copy of the front page as evidence of completion.
4. You can develop your own template however the College suggests it covers similar areas to those in this template. Ensure you get a signed acknowledgement of your participation in the conversation from your colleague/supervisor e.g. in the form of an email.

Keeping a record of the conversation from year to year and translating its outcomes into a Professional Development Plan (also mandatory from 2023) will make the conversations more productive. The template can simply be used as a prompt for the conversation as it happens and other templates or annual conversation guides/processes can be used if they also meet the goals above.

**This structure for the annual conversation is under continuous development. Please send any feedback to** [**msf.rpr@racp.edu.gov.au**](mailto:msf.rpr@racp.edu.gov.au)

# Cultural Safety

In 2022 the RACP approved a new **‘Professional Standard for Cultural Safety’**. This standard outlines the behaviours that characterise Physician behaviour in delivering culturally safe care:

***Physicians engage in iterative and critical self-reflection of their own cultural identity, power, biases, prejudices and practising behaviours.*** *Together with the requirement of understanding the cultural rights of the community they serve; this brings awareness and accountability for the impact of the physician’s own culture on decision-making and healthcare delivery. It also allows for an adaptive practice where power is shared between patients, family, whānau and/or community and the physician, to improve health outcomes.*

***Physicians recognise the patient and population’s rights for culturally safe care, including being an ally for patient, family, whānau and/or community autonomy and agency over their decision-making.*** *This shift in the physician's perspective fosters collaborative and engaged therapeutic relationships, allows for strength-based (or mana-enhanced) decisions, and sharing of power with the recipient of the care; optimising health care outcomes.*

***Physicians critically analyse their environment to understand how colonialism, systemic racism, social determinants of health and other sources of inequity have and continue to underpin the healthcare context.*** *Consequently, physicians then can recognise their interfacing with, and contribution to, the environment in which they work to advocate for safe, more equitable and decolonised services and create an inclusive and safe workplace for all colleagues and team members of all cultural background.[[2]](#footnote-2)*

Embedding cultural safety in practice is about taking action to expand your learning, develop skills and build critical self-reflection of your practice. The following provides suggestions of how to start:

* The short article [‘Reflective practice in health care and how to reflect effectively’](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5673148/) may assist you to build reflection into your practice. It will help as you identity how ‘cultural identity, power, biases, and prejudices impact your practice.
* Read the relevant sections of the [RACP statement on Indigenous Child Health in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand](https://www.racp.edu.au/docs/default-source/advocacy-library/indigenous-ch-statement-on-ich.pdf?sfvrsn=450ef91a_7) (the health systems section on pages 17 – 20). These factors also apply to adult health practice.
* As you begin to reflect on what cultural safety means to you and the way you practice medicine, you will begin to reflect on your own cultural identity and how this informs the attitudes and behaviours you bring to your work. Elana Curtis' blog titled [Why is cultural safety required over cultural competency in the pursuit of health equity?](http://blogs.biomedcentral.com/on-health/2020/03/02/why-is-cultural-safety-required-over-cultural-competency-in-the-pursuit-of-health-equityon-health-utm_sourcebmc_blogsutm_mediumreferralutm_contentnullutm_campaignblog_2020_on-health/) may assist you in this reflection. If you would like to explore this in more depth then consider completing the [Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety Online course](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/course/view.php?id=79).
* Review [‘Some practical advice and calls to action on embedding cultural safety in health services’](https://www.croakey.org/some-practical-advice-and-calls-to-action-on-embedding-cultural-safety-in-health-services/) as some potential first steps are outlined.

The resources mentioned here are drawn from the [RACP Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori cultural safety curated collection](https://elearning.racp.edu.au/course/view.php?id=314). You will find many more resources in the curated collection whether this is new for you or whether you have been developing your reflective practice around cultural safety for some time.

Further questions that will help you explore this area:

* How well do you know the cultural backgrounds of your patient list and of the population you serve.
* How does your own cultural background impact on the way you practice and interact with your patients.
* Are there elements of the environment that you work in that could be altered to ensure inclusivity.

For those familiar with the basics of culturally safe practice and who are looking for a comprehensive outline of the attributes that underpin cultural safety, you may find the Cultural Safety Training Plan for Aotearoa a useful resource.

# Additional Annual Conversation Questions

These questions are designed to help you customise your annual conversation according to your area of practice and/or professional development needs. These are suggestions and examples only to be used if you find them helpful. The intent of this activity is to provide time for reflection on development needs, goals for learning and professional activities and to set intentions for the next year. The annual conversation should provide an opportunity to receive constructive feedback and share best practice knowledge and skills.

**General Questions**

These are examples of general questions you can ask in preparation for or during your annual conversation.

What do you enjoy about your role?

What aspects of your role do you not enjoy?

Do you intend any change to your scope of practice/professional activities and what support, learning or changes do you need to make that happen?

1. What new skills or knowledge would you like to embrace going forward?

**Research / teaching / supervision**

If you are involved in medical research,

1. What research activities are you involved in or would like to be involved in?
2. What areas of your research do you find challenging and what resources/learning would assist you to meet those challenges (eg is there technology that could improve efficiencies in your research)?
3. What measures and/or strategies are you using to evaluate the impact of your research?

For those in teaching and supervision roles. There is also a supervisor [self-reflection and skills review tool.](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/supervision/supervisor-support-and-resources/supervisor-self-reflection-and-peer-review-tool-resources)

1. What are the strengths and areas for improvement of your current style of teaching or supervision?
2. How confident do you feel in being able to adapt to meet the differing needs of different trainees/students?

**Clinical Practice**

Below are some example questions if you are in clinical practice.

1. How have you applied any new knowledge, skills and/or competences to your clinical practice?
2. What has been the impact of these learnings and their application to your practice?
3. Do you intend any change to your scope of practice/professional activities and what support learning or changes do you need to make that happen.

**Professional Practice**

Below are questions to meet the leadership and ethics domains of professional practice.

1. What are the opportunities you have for quality improvement as a leader and are there learning opportunities to help you to maximise those opportunities?
2. What are the challenges you find in providing leadership? What resources, training and support would help you meet those challenges?
3. How effective are the strategies you have in place to support the wellbeing, goals and workload demands of your staff?
4. What actions have you taken to demonstrate professionalism and ethics in your practice?
5. How can you regularly ensure you are practicing ethically?
6. What opportunities do you have to improve on other aspects of [professional practice](https://www.racp.edu.au/fellows/professional-practice-framework/resources)?

**Health and Wellbeing**

Incorporating health & wellbeing questions into your annual conversation is at your discretion. The RACP is committed to encouraging Fellows to take into consideration their health and wellbeing at every opportunity.

1. How can you better support your health and wellbeing within your place of work and outside of it?
2. Reflect on what self-care strategies are working well? How can you maintain these strategies?

1. Adapted from the Medical Council of New Zealand. [Recertification requirements for vocationally-registered doctors in New Zealand](https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/Publications/Booklets/f7d4bc7fff/Strengthened-recertification-requirements-for-vocationally-registered-doctors-November-2019.pdf). 2019. Pg7. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Professional Standard on Cultural Safety. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)