

# INFORMATION FOR ANZGITA TRAINERS

## SOLOMON ISLANDS TRAINING TEAMS FOR 2024

### NATIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL, HONIARA

A Team Photo from the March 2023 Program



1. **INTRODUCTION:** Thank you for agreeing to be a volunteer trainer in Honiara at the National Referral Hospital in 2024. We are sure you will all receive a very warm welcome.

There's a lot in this document, but hopefully it's fairly straight forward for you. Any queries on the medical front, try [Mark Norrie](#) or [Eileen Natuzzi](#) and [Di Jones](#) is across the nursing set-up. Mark and Eileen have excellent local knowledge as well. Contact [Frank Eastaughffe](#) for any of the other queries. We'll have a **zoom conference call about a month before going** to discuss the program.

2. **TRAINER PORTAL:** All up, there is a good amount of work to be done by trainers to collect information and complete and sign documents. For this reason, we have established on web portal where most of what is requested can be uploaded. The Portal will also serve as a checklist on all that has to be done prior to the program. The Programs Administrator will email you with Portal link information.
3. **ANZGITA DOCUMENTATION & INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS:** The ANZGITA Board knows our trainers are dedicated, experienced and highly respected professionals. It trusts you to conduct yourself appropriately when on a program. However, issues which include child safeguarding have, with good reason, become the subject of ANZ governments and NGO best practice standards for vetting, trainer commitment and behaviour. Whether we like it or not there is always the chance there is a rogue individual amongst us. As a result, there are commitments to be signed and information to be provided which reflect that situation rather than our belief in our trainers.

The documents to be signed will be sent to you through a service called Docusign where you can read, electronically sign and download the relevant documents. If you've been on an ANZGITA program in the last three years you will not be asked to sign them again. These and other documents relevant to the program are on [this page](#) of our website.

You will also be required to have a Working With Children (WWC) clearance if you are an Australian trainer. This is managed at the state level, and you may already have one from your work. If not, [this page](#) on our website has information on how to obtain one. In New Zealand this type of clearance is employer related and we'll handle it differently.

4. **REGISTRATION IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS:** It is necessary for all volunteer doctors and nurses to have temporary registration. For doctors it is with the Solomon Islands Medical and Dental Board and for nurses with the Nursing Council.

Unfortunately, the Medical Board does not discern between doctors going for a week to provide training from someone looking for permanent registration. Consequently, it requires a number of **certified documents** which can take you time to get organised. We have attempted to address this overly onerous requirement but without success so far.

**Please prepare your registration documentation in January for the March program and in July for the September program** as we will want to submit registration requests by the end of those months for the two programs.

For both doctors and nurses, the registration form is on the Portal. Once it is completed it can be uploaded along with supporting documents to the Portal. There is further guidance on the Portal.

5. **LEAVE:** Access to paid leave depends on whether you are self-employed, on staff, or a VMO. Some employers will provide leave, but most trainers do this work in their own time.
6. **VISAS:** A special visa is not required. A visitor's permit will be issued to you on arrival. The official Solomon Islands visitors' information can be found on [this web page](#).
7. **IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS:** It is recommended that all visitors have adequate immunity against Hep A, Hep B and typhoid. Malarial is endemic in Solomon Islands and prophylaxis is recommended. Malerone (Atovaquone and proguanil) yields the best prophylactic coverage. We suggest you obtain advice on this matter. Take care while in Honiara to minimise the risk of mosquito bites as Dengue fever and Zika virus can be a problem. Judicious use of mosquito repellent is recommended. Do not walk barefoot because of the risk of hookworm.
8. **TRAVEL:** All flights to Honiara from Australia depart from Brisbane and leave in the morning. Flights out are now available on Saturdays and Sundays through Solomon Airlines and Qantas. Return flights are either Friday afternoon or Sunday. There are no direct flights from New Zealand. The Program/Team Leader will consult early-on about flights to book as often the team all travels on the same flight and can, where necessary, share international luggage allowances to take equipment and accessories (see Item 12). Please book your flights and ANZGITA will reimburse you (see Item 14).
9. **TRAVEL INSURANCE:** ANZGITA has a standard business travel insurance policy from one of the large insurers for our trainers. Details are available on [this page](#). You should acquaint yourself with its coverage and be satisfied it meets your needs. If you want to take alternative or additional insurance, we will not reimburse that cost.
10. **ACCOMMODATION:** It is planned that all team members will stay at the King Solomon Hotel. Please make your accommodation reservation in good time at [their website](#). The Breakwater Café – a great breakfast and coffee spot – is nearby, as are other restaurants.  
  
Please pay for your accommodation at the time of checkout and then claim reimbursement from ANZGITA (as described in Item 14) on your return.
11. **INTERNET & MOBILE:** Wi-Fi is available at the hotel, but service is not certain in the rooms, and the internet connection is slow. Security and speed could be an issue there and anywhere you might find Wi-Fi. The best option these days is to obtain an eSIM from your mobile operator before leaving home about A\$10 a day. If you don't do this beforehand or your phone doesn't support eSIM, the local providers (Telekom (Breeze) and Bmobile) offer SIMs and data plans. Costs will be reimbursed if you claim it. Previous trainers report varying quality of connections with local mobile providers, so it's hard to predict how your phone will perform.

12. **TAKING EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES:** There is no requirement for you to take any equipment or drugs. However, if you are able to obtain supplies of drugs (particularly PPIs, H Pylori therapy and bowel prep kits) or equipment such as biopsy forceps, injectors, snares, gold probes, PEGs etc this would be much valued. We will organise a letter to show Customs which will allow you to bring them in at no charge.

13. **DAY-TO-DAY & SECURITY:** Money can be obtained with either a debit or credit card at ANZ ATMs. Transport around town is by taxis.

Since Solomon Islands is a poor, developing country petty theft can occur, so please be aware of the technology devices and valuables you bring with you. Keep them concealed and safe.

14. **REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES:** The accommodation costs of all trainers will be met by ANZGITA as will the economy airfares for nurse trainers. As was advised in the request for trainers, we are asking doctors to cover their airfare costs.

**To claim reimbursement of these expenses, please use the [ANZGITA online claim form](#) on your return from the training program. Please claim within a month of returning as that helps us keep tabs on funds' availability for other things we have in mind. It is usual for trainers to receive their reimbursement within 2 weeks.**

15. **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE:** All doctors should confirm with your Medical Defence Organisation that your medical indemnity insurance is valid in Solomon Islands – this has been the experience for all previous trainers. No extra premiums have been charged for practice in the Solomon Islands.

For nurses, please check with your union if you are a member as some provide insurance which extends to overseas volunteer work. In some cases, hospitals also offer cover for overseas volunteer work (more likely in New Zealand). If you are not covered, ANZGITA will purchase medical indemnity insurance for you for the period of the program.

16. **DRESS:** We recommend that you wear smart casual attire. The male trainers usually wear trousers with shirts, including polo shirts, without ties. Consider wearing scrubs while 'scoping. Basic PPE is available for use in the endoscopy theatre, but many trainers bring their own preferred PPE.

17. **HOW WILL YOU BE RECEIVED?** Extremely warmly! Solomon Islanders and other Pacific Island nations are most hospitable. All previous trainers have found this to be a wonderful and enriching experience.

18. **CLINICAL PROGRAM:** This is outlined in some detail in the separate document 'Information on Healthcare and Health Training in The Solomon Islands'. Please read the 'ANZGITA Clinical Governance Policy' and ensure that you and all your fellow trainers comply with the requirements at all times.

19. **LECTURES AND TUTORIALS:** There is a weekly hospital meeting on Friday morning which the training team attends and usually presents at. We will organise the program so that you will have time to prepare any presentation you are asked to make in good time.

20. **RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES:** You will find Honiara an interesting town with a bustling Central Market and an adequate number of good restaurants. There are pristine beaches with excellent snorkelling and diving opportunities with wrecks from the battle of Guadalcanal easily reachable at Bonegi beaches. There are commercial tours which can provide diving equipment and supervision if needed.