

## **COVID-19 and the AGES Advanced Training Program**

### **Impact of COVID-19 on Training**

The AGES Advanced Training Program (AATP) is hugely rewarding, but also demanding of its trainees. It is this demand that drives the clinical and academic excellence of AGES fellows, who will become the future leaders of our profession.

The COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. The AGES society wishes to acknowledge that this will have placed additional stress on trainees due to increased pressures relating to training, employment and family commitments.

The AATP is a core responsibility of AGES. Acknowledging the impact of COVID-19, AGES has taken steps to ensure that the effects of COVID-19 on training and training requirements, are recognised and taken into consideration. This will be done on a **case-by-case basis** for each AATP trainee.

Concurrent to reviewing training and training requirements for each trainee, the society is committed to optimizing the health, safety and wellbeing of trainees during this difficult time.

### **Time Frames**

The AGES Education Committee and Board have reviewed AATP training requirements and, as a general principal, AGES training requirement deadlines will be extended by 6 months to **May 1 2021** for second-year trainees. It is, however, the AGES Education Committee and Board recommendation that trainees still aim for completion of training requirements and submission of assessments as per the prescribed training schedule wherever possible. Details for specific training requirements follow:

#### **a) Formative assessments**

AGES trainees are encouraged to submit the Training Assessment Record, Supervisor Reports, and Director's Summary to the AGES Education Committee as per the prescribed dates.

For second-year trainees the dates for submission this year are: Semester 3 – August 31, 2020 and Semester 4 – December 1, 2020. Final submissions may now be submitted no later than **May 1 2021**.

The dates for submission for first-year trainees are as per usual: Semester 1 – August 31, 2020 and Semester 2 – February 28, 2021.

#### **b) Summative Assessments**

The Assessment in Procedural skills (APS) must be submitted by December 1 2020.

The MCQ Examination will be held at the last AGES meeting of the year (likely October 2020, date to be confirmed) for those that have not already sat and passed the examination.

#### **c) Research**

Research requirements (project completion and/or publication) must be achieved prior to May 1 2021.

#### **d) Presentation at a Scientific Meeting**

The presentation at an AGES-certified scientific meeting must be given prior to MAY 1 2021.

#### **e) Meeting Attendance**

Attendance at the AGES Annual Scientific Meeting remains mandatory.

#### **f) Workshop Attendance**

Workshop attendances must be prior to May 1 2021.

The next AGES Lap D Workshop will be held in Brisbane on November 27-28 2020 (preference will be given to second year AGES trainees).

The next Anatomy of Complications Workshop will be held in Perth in November 2020 (a request has been made from AGES to the conference conveners to consider preference being given to second-year AGES trainees).

Attendance at the Trainee Workshop at the AGES Annual Scientific Meeting remains mandatory.

An eligible Biostatistics course (as per the AGES website) must be completed before May 1 2021.

#### **g) Trainee Recognition**

Recognition of completion of the AATP usually takes place at the AGES ASM immediately after the completion of training.

Second-year AGES trainees will be able to receive their AATP certificates at a graduation ceremony at the next AGES meeting in 2021 after all training requirements have been fulfilled.

#### **Summary**

It is a priority of AGES that all trainees have the opportunity to complete their AGES fellowship despite delays due to the COVID -19 crisis.

The AGES Education Committee and Board have aimed to consider all opportunities to minimise any further disadvantage to trainees.

The deadline for the completion of training and submission of training requirements for second-year trainees has been extended to May 1, 2021.

Please note that the extension date for submissions does not equate to an increased training duration.

Trainees may have concerns regarding attainment of the desired level practical surgical skills. If this is the case, this may be individually negotiated within your current position or consideration for other options may be required. Please speak with your AGES AATP supervisor about this.

Difficulties in submitting training requirements by May 1 2021 will be given consideration on a case-by-case basis.

AGES encourages trainees with specific concerns to address these directly with the Education Committee ([education@ages.com.au](mailto:education@ages.com.au)).

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, please make every effort to enjoy your time as an AGES trainee and stay safe.