



Associateship of Clinical Allergy (ACA) and Rural and Regional Clinical Allergy Network (R2CAN)

Information for prospective applicants

Associateship description

The Associateship consists of 2 components:

1. Completion of the Associateship of Clinical Allergy (ACA) course over 2 years, part-time.
2. Ongoing membership and participation in the Rural and Regional Clinical Allergy Network (R2CAN), which is a community of practice for ongoing mentoring, support, and CPD for alumni.

The course and network have been designed to offer practical case-based learning structured around the principles of adult learning that will best prepare participants for clinical practice.

Clinical supervision is a key feature of the Associateship. Each participant will be assigned 2 clinical supervisors/mentors, at least one being an ASCIA listed clinical immunology/allergy specialist and tailored to the participant's scope of practice and practice location. Supervision will include clinical case observation in both the participant's and mentor's practice.

Assessment will be mostly formative, in-practice and based on assessment for learning principles.

Course overview

The Associateship of Clinical Allergy (ACA) is a 2-year, part-time course for GPs and Paediatricians who:

- have obtained their Fellowship
- work in a regional, rural, or remote area, Distribution Priority Area (DPA) or Area of Need (AON)*, and
- aim to deliver some, or all, of their practice in allergy medicine.

*Regional, rural and remote areas are those with a [Modified Monash Model](#) category of MMM2 (Regional centres) to MMM7 (Very remote communities). AON/DPA is a geographical location where the medical needs of its population are going unmet due to workforce shortage.

Course content

The course consists of 4 Semester based modules completed over 2 years part-time.

The course will be delivered in a blended hybrid in-person and online format. Participants will be assigned two clinical supervisors.

Each module will involve:

- A 2-day in-person workshop held on a Friday and Saturday at the start of each Semester.
- 10 weeks of online interactive case-based webinars (1 evening per week of 90 minutes duration)
- Online learning (theory and reflective activities)
- Supervision including clinical attachments
- Assessment and evaluation
- Ongoing community of practice support through a discussion forum with peers and faculty

Module learning objectives

Module 1: Anaphylaxis and hypersensitivity reactions

- Diagnose and manage anaphylaxis (including differential diagnoses and mimics).
- Diagnose, manage, and prevent adverse reactions to stinging or biting insects.
- Diagnose, manage, and prevent adverse reactions to drugs, vaccines, occupational and environmental allergens.
- Psychosocial aspects of life-threatening allergy.
- Psychosocial and economic impact of diagnostic error.

Module 2: Food allergy and other adverse reactions to food

- Spectrum of food reactions from IgE-mediated allergy to non-IgE-mediated reactions.
- Investigation for food allergens (concepts around diagnostic versus screening tests).
- Nuances around specific food allergies.
- Risk assessment.
- Managing food allergen avoidance, liaising with dietitians.
- Action plans and practical management.
- Food intolerance clinical history and management.
- Weaning and food allergy prevention.
- Educating patients and non-specialist peers about common myths and misunderstandings.
- Social and psychological impact of food allergy on the patient and carers (including community-based advocacy).
- Patient education (food labels, eating outside the home, when to refer for education).

Module 3: Aeroallergy

- Spectrum of rhinitis and asthma (concepts including phenotype and endotype).
- Investigation for aeroallergens (including allergen distribution/prevalence).
- Understanding and optimising medical therapy.
- Selecting and managing specific immunotherapy.
- Educating patients and non-specialist peers about common myths and misunderstandings.
- Co-morbidities.

Module 4: Allergy and the skin

- Urticaria and angioedema (differential diagnoses in chronic versus acute and medical management).
- Eczema – diagnosis, complications, medical, and non-medical management.
- Allergic and irritant contact dermatitis.
- Cutaneous drug reactions, differential diagnoses and management.

Duration and schedule

Expressions of interest to participate in the course are open from Monday 11 November to Sunday 8 December 2024.

The ACA course will commence in Semester 1 2025.

- Module 1 will be delivered from Monday 24 February – Friday 20 June 2025.
- The 2 day in-person workshop for Module 1 will be held in Sydney on Friday 28 February and Saturday 1 March 2025.
- Module 2 will be delivered from Monday 21 July – Friday 21 November 2025
- Dates for the 2 day in-person workshop for Module 2 are TBC

Time requirements and expectations

Before commencing the course on Monday 24 February 2025, participants are expected to have sufficient basic allergy knowledge by completing all 7 [ASCIA e-training for health professionals courses](#) related to allergy (if they have not already been completed within the last 12 months). Time requirement to complete the 7 e-training courses is approximately 10 hours.

For each module, participants should expect to spend a minimum of:

- 2 days attending the in-person workshop at the start of each module, allowing for travel time to Sydney.
- 2 hours per week reviewing online resources on the learning platform (such as pre-reading, quizzes, key articles, videos, and podcasts) in preparation for the webinar series topic.
- 1.5 hours participating in the weekly online interactive and case-based learning webinars.
- 2 hours per week recording cases and clinic letters in a written logbook for assessment.
- Observing (in person or virtually) two allergy clinics conducted by your supervisors, and a supervisor observing one of your clinics.

Overall, participants are expected to dedicate a minimum of 6-8 hours per week to successfully complete the course.

Participants must also attend the ASCIA Allergy Update for Medical Practitioners Day of the Annual ASCIA Conference (providing a virtual option is available). The 2025 ASCIA Conference will be held 2-5 September in Brisbane.

On gaining entry into the course, participants must apply to be an ASCIA Medical Associate member (if not already) with sponsorship from a Full ASCIA member (ideally their clinical immunology/allergy supervisor).

Cost

Funding from the Australian Government Department of Health via the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) is supporting the piloting and evaluation of the first 10 participants to undertake the ACA course.

In the pilot, participants will be charged 50% of the full price of the course. Module 1 Semester 1 will cost participants \$2,500 and has a maximum capacity of 10 participants. Payment will be paid on enrolment.

In addition, participants of Module 1 will be responsible for the cost of their own travel and accommodation to attend the in-person workshop on Friday 28 February and Saturday 1 March 2025 being held in Sydney.

The pilot discount across the entire course is shown in the table below.

Modules	Dates	Anticipated Full Fee	Pilot fee discount (50%)
Module 1	Semester 1 2025	\$5,000 AUD	\$2,500 AUD
Module 2	Semester 2 2025	\$5,000 AUD	\$2,500 AUD
Module 3	Semester 1 2026	\$5,000 AUD	\$2,500 AUD
Module 4	Semester 2 2026	\$5,000 AUD	\$2,500 AUD
Total course	2 years part-time	\$20,000 AUD	\$10,000 AUD

The other cost to participants is the cost of being an [ASCIA Associate \(Medical Practitioner\) Member](#). The current ASCIA Associate (Medical Practitioner) membership fee is \$244 per year.

Course completion

Progression from one module to the next requires successful completion of the previous module. Satisfactory completion of all four modules within three years will enable participants to receive a formal award – an Associateship in Clinical Allergy (ACA) and ongoing membership of the Rural and Regional Clinical Allergy Network.

The Associateship of Clinical Allergy course covers 24 competencies/learning outcome statements that can be translated to 16 Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs). EPAs describe essential work undertaken by rural and regional GPs and paediatricians with advanced knowledge and skills in allergy medicine. They are categorised using the same domains used in the RACGP Curriculum and cover clinical experience, knowledge, population health, organisational aspects, and professionalism in the practice of allergy medicine in the primary care setting and adapted to the rural and regional environment.

Please note that this course provides practical training in allergy but is not a higher education award in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Application pre-requisites

To apply for enrolment into the Associateship of Clinical Allergy course, participants must:

- have obtained their Fellowship in an eligible recognised medical specialty college (RACP, RACGP or ACRRM) and working outside MMM1 or in an AON/DPA.
- Have an interest in practicing allergy medicine and have the capacity to deliver a clinical allergy service within their community.

If selected, before enrolment each participant must:

- have completed all 7 online ASCIA e-training courses related to allergy within the last 12 months and be able to provide a certificate of completion for each course. These are free of charge and available from <https://etraininghp.ascia.org.au>:
 - ASCIA Anaphylaxis e-training for health professionals
 - ASCIA Food allergy prevention e-training for health professionals
 - ASCIA Food allergy e-training for health professionals
 - ASCIA Allergic rhinitis e-training for health professionals
 - ASCIA Paediatric atopic dermatitis (eczema) e-training for health professionals
 - ASCIA Allergen immunotherapy e-training
 - ASCIA Penicillin allergy e-training
- be an ASCIA Associate (Medical Practitioner) Member or willing to apply for such membership.

Technical requirements

Participants must have access to sufficient internet speed and bandwidth to participate in the online components of the course. Participants will be required to have their cameras switched on during the weekly interactive webinars.

Assessment

Participants will be assessed through:

- Successful completion of the 2-day in person intensive teaching blocks which includes completion of multiple choice questions and satisfactory skills tasks.
- 90% attendance at 10 virtual case-based sessions per module (of 90 minute duration), with each participant required to present a minimum of one case to the group and lead the subsequent discussion.

- Post-clinic discussion on cases that have been observed by supervisors, including assessment of accompanying letters to the referring doctor and patient. Some of these cases may be assessed by mini CEX or Random Case Analysis or presented as a long case.
- Submission of a portfolio briefly documenting 100 allergy cases (25 cases per module), including those under supervision. This may be adjusted depending on the participant's clinical allergy patient load.
- Supervisor reports (1 per supervisor per semester).

Contact for course enquiries

Please direct any queries to Heather Roberts, Principal Project Officer, National Allergy Council via email heather@nationalallergy.org.au, who will be able to connect you with the course coordinators.