COURSE RECOMMENDATION:

The integration of International Medical Graduates (IMGs) into the Australian healthcare system, particularly within general practice and rural/remote settings, is vital for a sustainable and diverse workforce [1]. However, effective supervision of IMGs requires a dedicated skillset beyond general clinical experience, encompassing cultural sensitivity, understanding of regulatory frameworks, and tailored pedagogical approaches. This necessitates a structured course designed to equip supervisors with the tools and knowledge to facilitate a smooth transition and foster professional growth for IMGs, ultimately enhancing patient care.

Breaking the complex topic of IMG supervision into distinct, focused modules allows for a deeper exploration of specific challenges and opportunities. This modular approach enhances learning effectiveness by targeting specific skills such as delivering constructive feedback, navigating cultural differences, and addressing potential underperformance, which would be difficult to cover adequately in a single, monolithic session. It also allows participants to revisit specific modules as needed, reinforcing key concepts and applying them to real-world scenarios.

The recommended module breakdown caters to the needs of both clinical supervisors and healthcare administrators. Clinical supervisors will gain practical skills in areas such as developing individualised learning plans, providing effective feedback, and managing challenging situations. Administrators will benefit from a deeper understanding of the regulatory landscape, the support systems required for IMG integration, and strategies for promoting a culturally safe workplace. This holistic approach fosters collaboration and a shared understanding of the IMG experience within the healthcare team.

The course modules are designed to build upon each other in a logical and progressive manner. Foundational modules, such as "Understanding the IMG Journey" and "Registration and Regulatory Requirements," provide the necessary context for subsequent modules focused on practical skills like coaching, feedback, and assessment. This structured progression ensures participants develop a comprehensive understanding of IMG supervision, moving from theoretical knowledge to practical application.

This course directly addresses the needs of clinical supervisors and administrators involved in the training and support of IMGs in general practice. The curriculum is designed to provide practical, workplace-applicable skills that can be immediately implemented to improve the IMG supervision experience. The blended approach, combining theoretical knowledge with practical exercises and case studies, caters to diverse learning styles and ensures knowledge transfer to the workplace.

Successful completion of this course and demonstration of competency across the modules provides participants with a valuable micro-credential. This credential demonstrates a commitment to best-practice supervision of IMGs, enhancing their professional credibility and potentially contributing to CPD requirements. It also provides healthcare organisations with a tangible measure of supervisor competence, promoting quality and consistency in IMG support.

RECOMMENDED MODULES:

1. **Understanding the IMG Journey to Australian General Practice:** - This module explores the unique challenges and opportunities faced by IMGs transitioning to the Australian healthcare system. It covers pre-arrival preparation, cultural adjustments, recognition of prior learning, and common stressors. Practical applications include developing empathy, tailoring support to individual IMG needs, and identifying potential barriers to integration.
2. **Registration and Regulatory Requirements for IMGs:** - This module outlines the AHPRA registration process for IMGs, RACGP and ACRRM requirements for training pathways, Medicare provider number regulations, and visa considerations. Practical applications include navigating the registration process, understanding supervision requirements at different stages, and ensuring compliance with all regulatory obligations.
3. **Cultural Safety and Indigenous Health in General Practice:** - This module explores the principles of cultural safety, with a specific focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, including historical context, social determinants of health, and cultural protocols. It covers cultural awareness, anti-racism, and strategies for providing culturally appropriate and respectful care [2]. Practical applications include developing culturally safe practice protocols, engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and addressing unconscious bias.
4. **Developing Effective Learning Plans for IMGs:** - This module focuses on creating individualised learning plans that align with the IMG's experience, learning style, and career goals, taking into account prior learning assessment. It covers setting SMART goals, identifying relevant learning resources (e.g., RACGP curriculum, ACRRM training program), and providing regular feedback. Practical applications include developing a sample learning plan, conducting a learning needs assessment, and utilising available educational resources.
5. **Providing Constructive Feedback and Coaching:** - This module explores effective feedback techniques, including providing timely, specific, and actionable feedback, using the Pendleton rules or similar frameworks. It also covers coaching strategies for helping IMGs overcome challenges, build confidence, and achieve their full potential [3]. Practical applications include role-playing feedback scenarios, developing a coaching plan, and addressing common challenges faced by IMGs.
6. **Assessment for Learning: Tools and Techniques:** - This module covers various assessment methods used in general practice training, including case-based discussions, mini-CEX, DOPS, and workplace-based assessments aligned with RACGP and ACRRM requirements. It focuses on using assessment to promote learning, identify areas for improvement, and provide formative feedback. Practical applications include conducting a mini-CEX, providing feedback on performance, and interpreting assessment results.
7. **Addressing Underperformance and Managing Difficult Situations:** - This module provides strategies for identifying and addressing underperformance in IMGs, including early intervention techniques and performance management processes. It covers communication techniques, documentation requirements, and referral pathways for support (e.g., mentoring, counselling). Practical applications include developing a performance improvement plan, conducting a difficult conversation, and escalating concerns appropriately.
8. **Promoting Wellbeing and Preventing Burnout in IMGs:** - This module focuses on the unique stressors faced by IMGs and strategies for promoting their wellbeing and preventing burnout. It covers self-care techniques, stress management strategies, and available support

services. Practical applications include developing a wellbeing plan, identifying signs of burnout, and connecting IMGs with relevant resources.

9. **Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Cross-Cultural Practice:** - This module explores common ethical dilemmas that arise in cross-cultural healthcare settings, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and differing cultural beliefs. It covers ethical frameworks and principles, and strategies for resolving ethical conflicts. Practical applications include analysing case studies, engaging in ethical discussions, and developing ethical decision-making skills.

10. **Effective Communication Strategies for Supervising IMGs:** - This module focuses on effective communication techniques for building rapport, establishing trust, and fostering open communication with IMGs. It covers active listening, non-verbal communication, and strategies for addressing language barriers. Practical applications include role-playing communication scenarios, practicing active listening skills, and adapting communication styles to different cultural backgrounds.

11. **Leveraging Technology for Effective IMG Supervision:** - This module explores the use of technology to enhance IMG supervision, including telehealth platforms, online learning resources, and electronic health records. It covers best practices for using technology to provide remote supervision, facilitate communication, and track progress. Practical applications include using telehealth for remote consultations, accessing online educational resources, and utilising electronic health records for performance monitoring.

12. **Building a Supportive Practice Environment for IMGs:** - This module focuses on creating a welcoming and supportive practice environment that promotes IMG integration and retention. It covers strategies for fostering teamwork, promoting inclusivity, and addressing discrimination. Practical applications include developing a practice-wide diversity and inclusion policy, implementing mentorship programs, and celebrating cultural diversity.

COURSE STRUCTURE RATIONALE:

Module 1: Understanding the IMG Journey to Australian General Practice

This module is foundational for all supervisors, providing essential context about the experiences of IMGs arriving in Australia [4]. It addresses the emotional, professional, and cultural adjustments they face, including potential isolation, financial strain, and difficulties navigating a new healthcare system. Understanding these challenges allows supervisors to approach their role with empathy and tailor their support accordingly. Integration points include connecting the IMG's past experiences to their current learning needs (Module 4) and being sensitive to cultural differences when providing feedback (Module 5). Practical application opportunities involve role-playing initial consultations with an IMG and brainstorming strategies to mitigate common stressors. Assessment and credentialing could involve a reflective piece on how the supervisor's understanding of the IMG journey has changed and how they will adapt their supervisory approach.

Module 2: Registration and Regulatory Requirements for IMGs

This module is crucial for ensuring compliance and avoiding potential legal or professional issues. It provides a detailed overview of the AHPRA registration process, RACGP/ACRRM training requirements, Medicare provider number regulations, and visa considerations relevant to IMGs. Understanding these requirements allows supervisors to guide IMGs

through the often-complex regulatory landscape and ensure they are practicing legally and ethically. Integration points include using this knowledge to develop appropriate learning plans (Module 4) and ensuring that assessments align with regulatory requirements (Module 6). Practical application opportunities involve navigating the AHPRA website and completing sample registration forms. Assessment and credentialing could involve a quiz on key regulatory requirements and a case study involving a hypothetical IMG registration scenario.

Module 3: Cultural Safety and Indigenous Health in General Practice

This module is essential for promoting culturally appropriate and respectful care, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. It covers the principles of cultural safety, the historical context of Indigenous health, and strategies for addressing unconscious bias and racism [2]. Supervisors need to understand cultural safety to ensure IMGs provide equitable and effective care to all patients. Integration points include incorporating cultural safety principles into learning plans (Module 4) and providing feedback that is sensitive to cultural differences (Module 5). Practical application opportunities involve engaging with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and developing culturally safe practice protocols. Assessment and credentialing could involve a reflective piece on how the supervisor has addressed cultural safety issues in their practice and a case study involving a culturally sensitive patient scenario.

Module 4: Developing Effective Learning Plans for IMGs

This module focuses on the practical skill of creating individualised learning plans that cater to the IMG's specific needs and goals. It covers setting SMART goals, identifying relevant learning resources, and providing regular feedback. Effective learning plans are crucial for guiding the IMG's professional development and ensuring they meet the required competencies for general practice. Integration points include using information from Modules 1 and 2 to inform the learning plan and tailoring feedback based on progress towards the goals (Module 5). Practical application opportunities involve developing a sample learning plan for a hypothetical IMG and conducting a learning needs assessment. Assessment and credentialing could involve a review of a learning plan developed by the supervisor and feedback on its effectiveness.

Module 5: Providing Constructive Feedback and Coaching

This module focuses on developing the supervisor's skills in providing effective feedback and coaching. It covers techniques for delivering timely, specific, and actionable feedback, as well as strategies for helping IMGs overcome challenges and build confidence. Effective feedback and coaching are essential for promoting learning and professional growth. Integration points include using assessment results (Module 6) to inform feedback and tailoring coaching strategies to the IMG's individual needs. Practical application opportunities involve role-playing feedback scenarios and developing a coaching plan. Assessment and credentialing could involve observation of the supervisor providing feedback and a review of their coaching plan.

Module 6: Assessment for Learning: Tools and Techniques

This module provides an overview of various assessment methods used in general practice training, including case-based discussions, mini-CEX, and DOPS. It focuses on using assessment to promote learning and identify areas for improvement. Effective assessment is crucial for monitoring the IMG's progress and providing targeted feedback. Integration points include using assessment results to inform feedback (Module 5) and identifying areas for further learning (Module 4). Practical application opportunities involve conducting a mini-CEX and providing feedback on performance. Assessment and credentialing could involve observation of the supervisor conducting an assessment and a review of their assessment feedback.

Module 7: Addressing Underperformance and Managing Difficult Situations

This module equips supervisors with the skills and knowledge to address underperformance in IMGs and manage difficult situations effectively. It covers communication techniques, performance management processes, and referral pathways for support. Addressing underperformance early and effectively is crucial for protecting patients and ensuring the IMG's professional development. Integration points include using assessment results (Module 6) to identify potential underperformance and developing a performance improvement plan (Module 4). Practical application opportunities involve role-playing difficult conversations and developing a performance improvement plan. Assessment and credentialing could involve a case study involving a hypothetical underperforming IMG and a review of the supervisor's proposed management plan.

Module 8: Promoting Wellbeing and Preventing Burnout in IMGs

This module focuses on the unique stressors faced by IMGs and strategies for promoting their wellbeing and preventing burnout. It covers self-care techniques, stress management strategies, and available support services. Promoting wellbeing is crucial for ensuring the IMG's long-term success and preventing attrition. Integration points include incorporating wellbeing goals into learning plans (Module 4) and providing support and encouragement. Practical application opportunities involve developing a wellbeing plan for a hypothetical IMG and identifying local support services. Assessment and credentialing could involve a reflective piece on how the supervisor promotes wellbeing in their practice and a review of their strategies for supporting IMGs.

Module 9: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Cross-Cultural Practice

This module provides supervisors with a framework for navigating ethical dilemmas that may arise in cross-cultural healthcare settings. It covers ethical principles, cultural considerations, and strategies for resolving ethical conflicts. Ethical decision-making is crucial for ensuring patient safety and maintaining professional integrity. Integration points include considering ethical implications when developing learning plans (Module 4) and providing feedback (Module 5). Practical application opportunities involve analysing case studies involving ethical dilemmas and engaging in ethical discussions. Assessment and credentialing could involve a case study involving a hypothetical ethical dilemma and a review of the supervisor's proposed resolution.

Module 10: Effective Communication Strategies for Supervising IMGs

This module focuses on developing the supervisor's communication skills, particularly in the context of cross-cultural communication. It covers active listening, non-verbal communication, and strategies for addressing language barriers. Effective communication is crucial for building rapport, establishing trust, and fostering a positive learning environment. Integration points include using effective communication techniques when providing feedback (Module 5) and managing difficult situations (Module 7). Practical application opportunities involve role-playing communication scenarios and practicing active listening skills. Assessment and credentialing could involve observation of the supervisor communicating with an IMG and a review of their communication strategies.

Module 11: Leveraging Technology for Effective IMG Supervision

This module explores the use of technology to enhance IMG supervision, including telehealth platforms, online learning resources, and electronic health records. It covers best practices for using technology to provide remote supervision, facilitate communication, and track progress. Leveraging technology can improve efficiency and accessibility in IMG supervision, particularly in rural and remote settings. Integration points include using technology to facilitate feedback (Module 5) and monitor progress towards learning goals (Module 4). Practical application opportunities involve using telehealth for remote consultations and accessing online educational resources. Assessment and credentialing could involve a review of the supervisor's use of technology in their supervisory practice and a demonstration of their ability to use telehealth effectively.

Module 12: Building a Supportive Practice Environment for IMGs

This module focuses on creating a welcoming and supportive practice environment that promotes IMG integration and retention. It covers strategies for fostering teamwork, promoting inclusivity, and addressing discrimination. A supportive practice environment is crucial for ensuring the IMG's long-term success and preventing attrition. Integration points include incorporating diversity and inclusion principles into practice policies and procedures. Practical application opportunities involve developing a practice-wide diversity and inclusion policy and implementing mentorship programs. Assessment and credentialing could involve a review of the practice's policies and procedures related to diversity and inclusion and a reflective piece on how the supervisor contributes to a supportive practice environment.

MICRO-CREDENTIALING VALUE:

This course structure provides valuable professional development for clinical supervisors and healthcare administrators involved in the training and support of IMGs. Each module is designed to equip participants with practical skills and knowledge that can be immediately applied in their workplace. The comprehensive curriculum covers a wide range of topics, from understanding the IMG journey to addressing underperformance and promoting wellbeing. Successful completion of the course and demonstration of competency across the modules provides participants with a valuable micro-credential, demonstrating a commitment to best-practice supervision of IMGs. This micro-credential can be used for CPD points and to demonstrate expertise in IMG supervision, enhancing professional credibility and career advancement opportunities. The modular structure allows participants to focus on specific

areas of interest or need, making it a flexible and accessible learning experience. Furthermore, the course promotes a shared understanding and collaborative approach to IMG supervision within the healthcare team, leading to improved IMG integration, enhanced patient care, and a more sustainable healthcare workforce.

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