

Toowoomba Base Hospital

Dr Peter Gillies

I'm Dr Peter Gillies, I'm the Director of Medical Services at Toowoomba Hospital. Toowoomba is a 263 bed regional hospital that's large enough to provide good consultant support and supervision, yet small enough to be friendly and to provide plenty of hands on learning opportunities. I think Toowoomba is a great place for Interns, it's small enough that most Consultants are happy to be addressed on a first name basis, and the Hospital is extremely friendly. Most of our Interns will stay on with us for their PGY2 years and many stay on as PHOs and Registrars, and in fact a number of them have returned to us as Consultants in later years.

Intern - Emma

I think Toowoomba's a great choice of hospital for first year out. It's a great sized hospital, it's not too big and impersonal, but it offers all the great core rotations for a basic training. All the staff and Consultants and education staff are very helpful and friendly and approachable. And Toowoomba's an easy lifestyle – it's low maintenance, great outdoors – so, welcome!

Intern - Lucy

Hi, I'm Lucy, I'm one of the Interns at Toowoomba Base Hospital this year. I just wanted to tell you a little about Toowoomba and why I chose to come out here, what you can expect.

I came to Toowoomba because I was attracted by all the good things I'd heard from previous Interns, about the teaching and the experiences that they have here. There's a good teaching program, there's one or two sessions every week - dedicated teaching for Interns and RMOs, and that's certainly helpful. There's also a lot of exposure to teaching as you go within your rotations, plenty of Consultant and Registrar time for that, so it's been very good from an academic perspective. As well as that it's a great place to live. I've actually bought a three bedroom duplex down here, which is something that you may not be able to do, I guess, in other towns or in Brisbane.

Toowoomba's a nice place to be living, there's not the big traffic woes that you have elsewhere as well, so it's enjoyable. There's plenty of social time, there's a social club called the Flood Club that's for the RMOs and Interns and they put on something about once a month. It's good to go along to, and there's plenty of time to catch up with your other Interns and RMOs as well.

RMO – Brandan

So my name's Brandon Cadd, I'm the president of the RMO Club which is called the Flood Club. The Flood Club is the social club for the residents up here and is also open to all of the other allied health and other staff throughout the Hospital. Most years we have a membership of about 50-60, depending on the year, and we're involved, like I said in social organisational type-things as well as we do a small amount of advocacy as well.

Intern – Emma

There's also a few financial incentives coming out to a rural area. You get some HECS reimbursement after a year in Toowoomba, and I also have had my relocation expenses reimbursed which is very helpful. And another good thing about coming to Toowoomba was that I got to go to Warwick at the start of the year as a rural term. Not everywhere gives rural terms in internship, so it's been good. I've had a really positive experience out there and I'd recommend it to anyone.

RMO - Brandon

As far as my reasons for staying in Toowoomba, I'm a second year resident this year and my reasons for staying in Toowoomba for this year were because of the hospital structure and because of a number of the advantages that were available here in a smaller hospital.

One of the things I think is important to consider when you're thinking about where to go as an Intern is where you might like to be in second year as a JHO. Certainly, most people end up staying where they are as an Intern for their JHO year and I found in my JHO year this year that staying in a smaller hospital like Toowoomba and a hospital that I had friendly relations with the medical administration meant that I got exactly the rotations that I wanted this year. Whereas in a number of other hospitals, I have been aware that that has been a little more difficult at times. The smaller cohort that I'm going through with has made it a lot more friendly at times and I've quite enjoyed my time with the other doctors I've been going through with.

In summary, I guess the reasons to choose Toowoomba would be; it's a smaller hospital where you get to have good interactions with Consultants and training, plenty of education, smaller cohorts like I said, so you don't feel lost in the crowd of many, and it's a lovely city and a lovely location as well.