

## **A Life Less Ordinary: Experience Working in the Top End**

### ***Specialist Anaesthetist Royal Darwin Hospital***



Do you want an ordinary, uneventful job doing an easy, repetitive list every week? Do you enjoy freezing cold winters and endless days of drizzly rain? Do you look forward to your long commute to work in congested traffic?

If so, then Darwin is NOT the place for you!

Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) Department of Anaesthesia & Perioperative Medicine is expanding in 2025 and we are seeking enthusiastic Specialist Anaesthetists with FANZCA. We encourage Anaesthetists to apply whom thrive on challenging medicine, cultural diversity and feeling like they've really made a difference in patients' lives. Our dynamic, friendly department is comprised of a group of easy-going but highly motivated Anaesthetists. We are proud of our collegial, supportive culture and strive to provide a healthy work-life balance. The workload is often very busy, frequently unpredictable and sometimes a little chaotic; but always rewarding.

Watch & read the perspective from some of our Specialists and recent trainees:

**Samantha:** <https://youtu.be/27o1W2I6D9c>

[ANZCA Darwin Video – “Beyond City Limits”](#)

[ANZCA | Beyond City Limits: Darwin](#) (article)

Royal Darwin Hospital is one of the most geographically isolated tertiary hospitals in Australia. It is a 370 bed hospital servicing a population of over 200,000 people, covering a catchment area of over one million square kilometres. Around 14,000 operations are performed per annum with a case-mix of most adult and paediatric surgical specialties, including neurosurgery, upper gastrointestinal surgery, head and neck surgery and vascular surgery. Approximately 15% of the caseload is paediatric and there are ~ 2200 obstetric deliveries per year with a significant proportion of high risk cases.

There is a high trauma burden and emergency surgery workload. RDPH is the home of the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre (NCCTRC) and has been heavily involved in several mass casualty disasters including the Bali bombings, Ashmore Reef and East Timor crises, as well as international deployment after natural disasters in Philippines, Vanuatu, Fiji and Solomon Islands.

Patients in the NT face extraordinary challenges including a high burden of chronic disease, high levels of social disadvantage and extreme geographic isolation. Half of the NT population live in remote or very remote locations, mostly in small communities or outstations. The NT is one of the most linguistically diverse areas in the world with over 100 First Nation languages and dialects spoken. Around 27% of the NT population are First Nation individuals but make up > 50% of hospital inpatients.

The Royal Darwin and Palmerston Hospital Anaesthetic Department runs an Acute Pain Service and an evolving Perioperative Medicine service including early assessment and optimisation of high-risk patients. Regular support is provided with Anaesthesia Outreach visits to regional hospitals in Gove and Katherine. There is optional involvement in the Hyperbaric Medicine Unit. Out of theatre anaesthesia services are provided for radiology (diagnostic and interventional procedures), cardiac electrophysiological ablation procedures (including complex 3D mapping) and electroconvulsive therapy. Clinical support services include an 18 bed ICU, Level 6A NICU, radiotherapy centre on-campus, MRI, CT and PET scanning.

We are looking for people to provide clinical services as well as contribute to teaching and quality assurance programs. Teaching and training is provided to ANZCA trainees including Provisional Fellows, GP Anaesthetic trainees, ACEM and CICM trainees, residents and medical students.

Darwin has a very attractive lifestyle – most staff enjoy a 10 minute bike commute to work along the foreshore; but for those who still prefer cars, traffic congestion is almost non-existent. The relaxed tropical life is great for young families, couples and singles alike. The city has excellent public and private schools at both primary and secondary levels. Darwin is the tourism gateway to some of Australia's largest and most spectacular National Parks and is on the doorstep to Asia with short flights to Bali, Dili, and Singapore.

There are opportunities for full-time or fractional appointments. Remuneration is competitive, and includes private practice and "extended hours" allowances in addition to base salary (see [NT EBA](#)). Relocation assistance will be provided and short term subsidised hospital accommodation is available on-campus. Leave provisions are generous with 6 weeks recreation leave and 10 days Study Leave per annum, as well as the many additional Public Holidays during the beautiful Dry Season in the NT.

Enquiries can be made to: Sandy Smirk, Director, or Tej Mettho, Deputy Director of Anaesthesia & Perioperative Medicine.

[Sandy.smirk@nt.gov.au](mailto:Sandy.smirk@nt.gov.au)  
[tej.mettho@nt.gov.au](mailto:tej.mettho@nt.gov.au)

Applications are open via the website: <https://jobs.nt.gov.au/>