

# Fixing the leaky general practice training pipeline: identifying placement barriers and enablers

Toukhsati S.<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Kippen R.<sup>2</sup>, Taylor C.<sup>1,2</sup>, Morgan S.<sup>1</sup>, McArthur L.<sup>4</sup>

## Background

- High quality GP placements attract medical students and prevocational junior doctors to general practice as a speciality of choice.
- Positive placement experiences inspire supervisors and practice teams to optimise learning opportunities.
- Research is needed to optimise this cycle (Figure 1.)

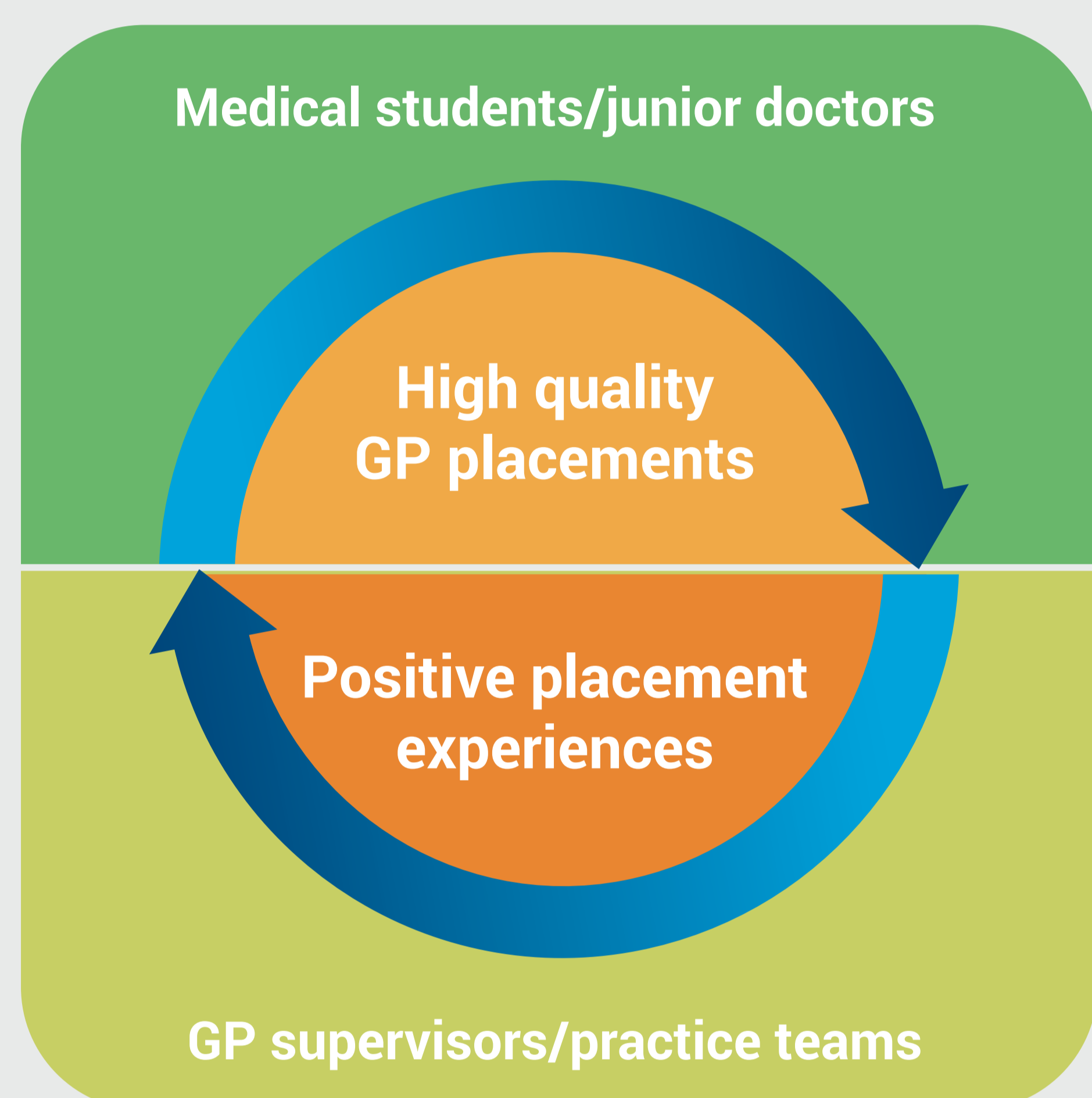


Figure 1. The placement quality-experience cycle

## Aim

To explore the attitudes of supervisors and practice teams towards supervising/hosting medical students and junior doctors in general practice and the perceived norms and barriers influencing their intentions to continue in the future.

## Method

- Ethics approval was granted on 3rd April 2024 (Monash University #42111)
- Online national survey May-June 2024
  - ENGAGE 2024 - Building a better future together
  - Attitudes/Norms assessed using 5 point Likert-type scales (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree)
- Participants (N = 505; 56% women)
  - 369 GP supervisors
  - 136 practice team members (non-supervising GPs, PNs, PMs)
- All Australian States/Territories were represented
- All MM1-7 locations were represented

## Results (Tables 1-3)

- There were no significant differences between GP supervisors and practice teams in their attitudes, perceived expectations, or intentions towards supervising/hosting learners.
- Attitudes (more worthwhile and less onerous), perceived expectations, and intentions to supervise/host were significantly more positive towards medical students than junior doctors.

Table 1. Attitudes towards medical students and junior doctors on placement

Attitudes	Worthwhile	Onerous	Satisfying	Under-paid
On the whole, I think that supervising/hosting learners in general practice is...	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD
Medical students	4.41 ± 0.80	3.39 ± 1.10	4.14 ± 0.81	4.16 ± 0.90
Prevocational junior doctors	4.28 ± 0.86	3.55 ± 1.11	4.07 ± 0.90	4.19 ± 0.94

Table 2. Norms/expectations about supervising/hosting learners on placement

Norms	Supervise	Host
Supervising medical learners is the norm/expected in general practice...	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD
Medical students	3.85 ± 1.03	3.95 ± 0.97
Prevocational junior doctors	3.37 ± 1.08	3.45 ± 1.13

Table 3. Intentions to supervise/host learners on placement in the future

Intentions	Supervise	Host
Will you supervise/host any learners on placement in the future?	Yes n (%)	Yes n (%)
Medical students	242 (65%)	327 (70%)
Prevocational junior doctors	104 (32%)	119 (30%)

## Intentions to supervise/host medical students on placement in the future

Supervisors/practice teams who held positive attitudes towards supervising/hosting medical students, felt that this was expected, and had supervised or hosted medical students in the past, were significantly more likely to intend to supervise/host medical students in the future (Figure 2).

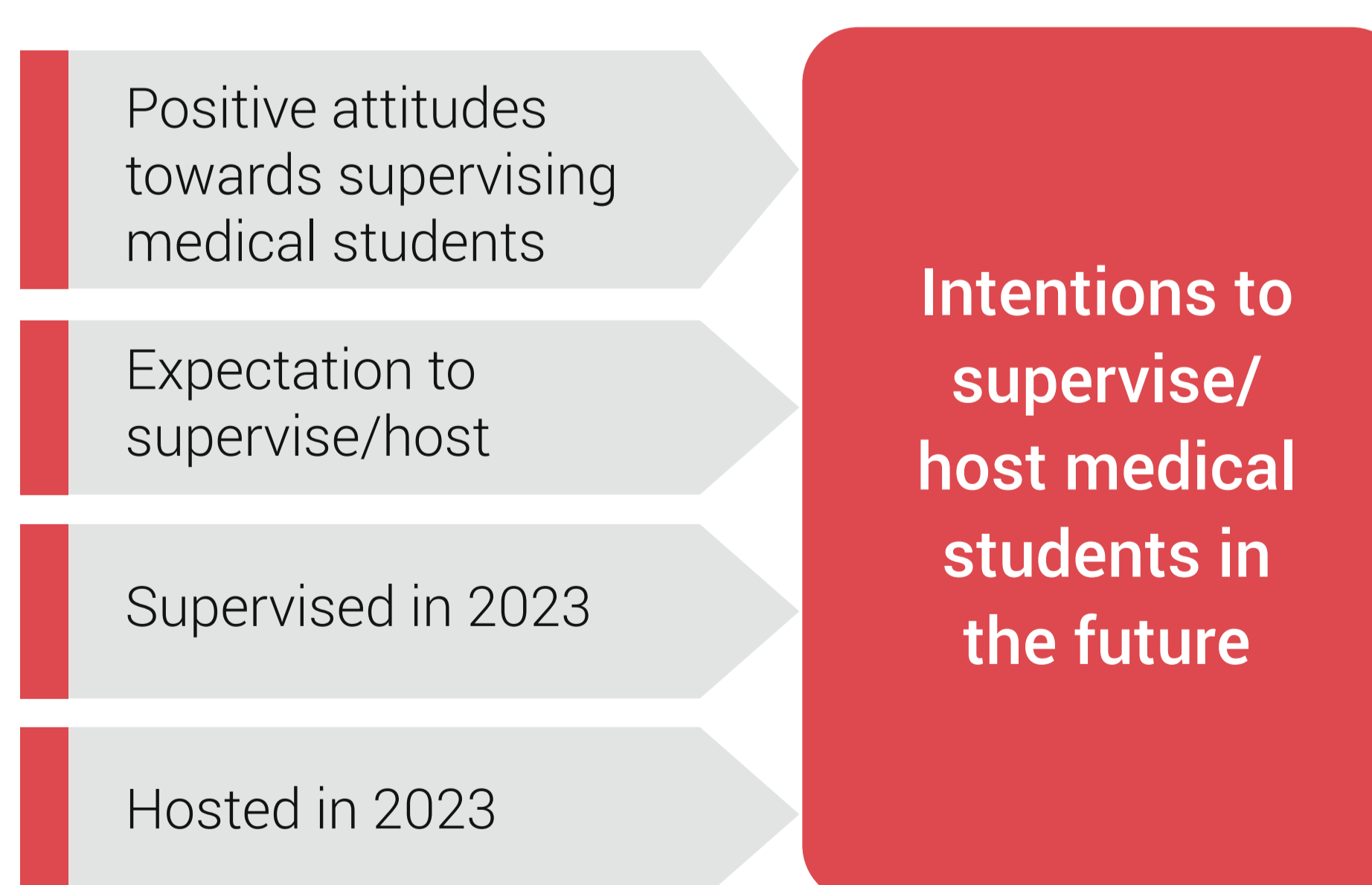


Figure 2. Intentions to supervise/host medical students

## Intentions to supervise/host junior doctors on placement in the future

Supervisors/practice teams who had supervised or hosted junior doctors in the past were significantly more likely to intend to supervise/host prevocational junior doctors in the future (Figure 3).

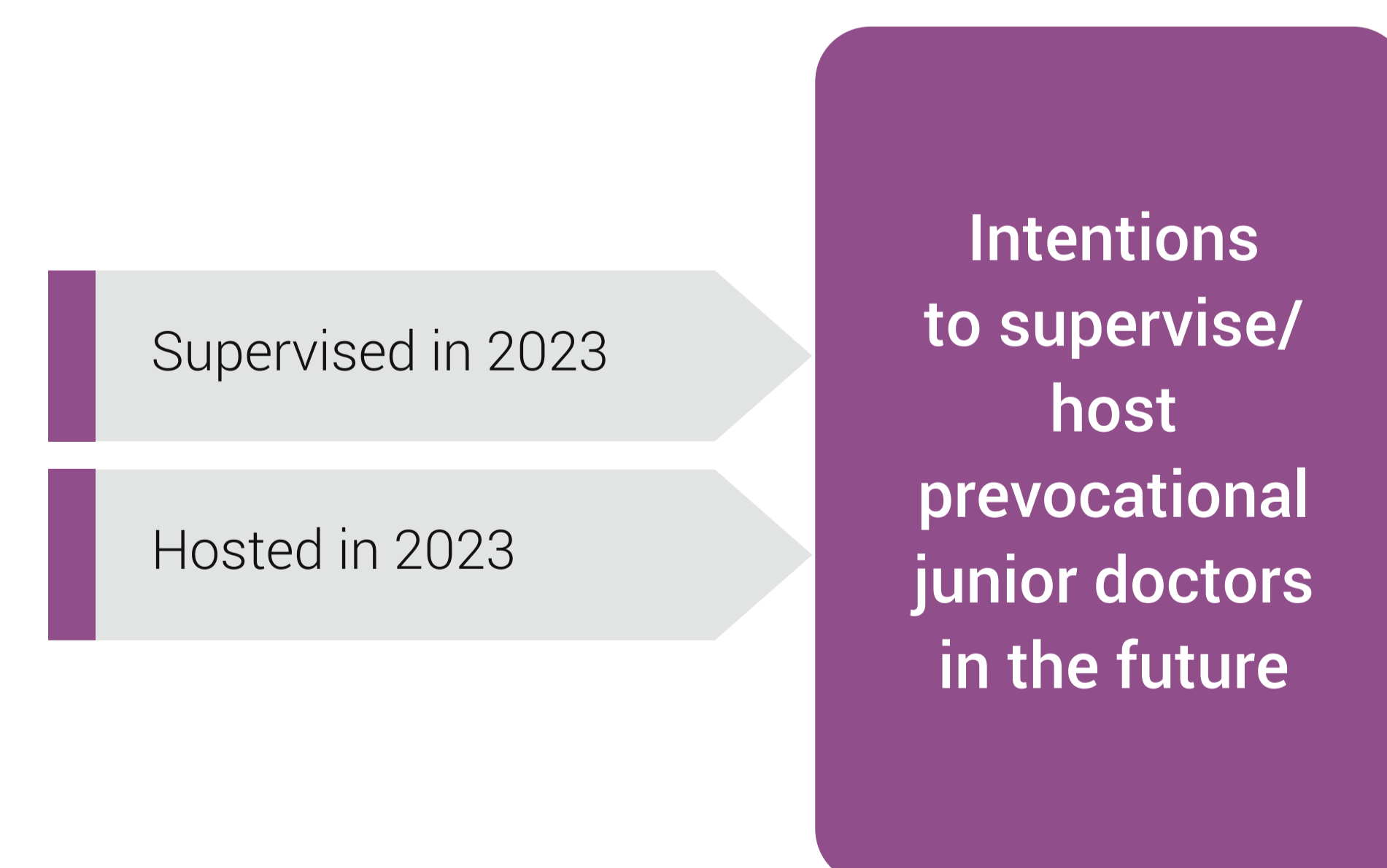


Figure 3. Intentions to supervise/host prevocational junior doctors

## Discussion

GP supervisors and practice teams generally held positive attitudes towards supervising/hosting learners, felt that it was expected, and intended to do so in the future, however these were significantly more positive towards medical students.

Past supervision/hosting experiences were among the strongest predictors of future intentions. Research that draws on the lived experience of supervisors/practice teams is needed to identify supports required to supervise/host learners, particularly prevocational junior doctors, in the future.