Attracting and retaining young doctors in the Territory has reached a new milestone, with Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) now accredited at the same high standard as the country’s largest teaching hospitals.

Health Minister Kon Vatskalis congratulated the hospital’s Division of Adult Medicine on achieving the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) Level Three Accreditation status, the highest attainable by a teaching hospital.

“Territory children area already able to go from pre-school to being a fully qualified GP without leaving the NT – a monumental milestone,” Mr Vatskalis said.

“And now Royal Darwin Hospital can provide all foundation training for specialist physicians, as well as subsequent training in other medical specialties,” he said.

“We can now start to ‘grow our own’ specialists right here in Darwin, including oncologists, anaesthetists, general surgeons and endocrinologists.”

Mr Vatskalis added that the accreditation forms part of strong training pathways being developed in the field of medicine in the Northern Territory.

“We will have our first graduates of the four-year medicine degree run by Flinders Medical School and Charles Darwin University in 2015. They will now have the opportunity to stay in Darwin and continue their training at our top-rated teaching hospital,” he said.

The news comes as RDH celebrates its second year achieving a 100 per cent pass rate for trainee doctors sitting their specialist clinical exams.

Mr Vatskalis congratulated this year’s trainees, Dr Michael Charakidis and Dr Nicole Gaffney, on their results.

“These doctors are a credit to themselves and to Royal Darwin Hospital's training program and their skills are greatly appreciated here in the Territory,” he said.

Dr Gaffney has begun flying out to remote communities to hone her skills as a General Medicine specialist in the hospital’s Outreach program.

“It is great to see young doctors enthusiastic about improving the health of Territorians, and thanks to the continued development of RDH as a training facility we can look forward to attracting more clinicians like Dr Charakidis and Dr Gaffney,” Mr Vatskalis said.

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