



The Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) is the fundholder for the Commonwealth Department of Health's Healthy Ears, Better Listening Better Hearing Program.

The program aims to improve access to the diagnosis, treatment, and management of ear and hearing health condition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people aged between 0 and 21 in a culturally safe environment. It also supports the upskilling of Aboriginal Health Workers and ear health promotion activities.

### Funding Eligibility

The program supports outreach services provided by medical specialists, allied health professionals, nursing services, combinations of eligible services (i.e., multidisciplinary team), general practitioners and Aboriginal health workers.

Funding is available to cover applicable out of pocket expenses relating to the following:

\*certain rates/fees apply may apply:

- Travel costs: airfares, car hire, mileage for hire car or use of personal car and taxi hire
- Accommodation: per night at ATO rates
- Meals Allowance: (per meal, at ATO rates): breakfast, lunch, dinner, and incidentals
- Facility Fee: up to \$200.00 per day
- Administration Support (daily rate): administrative costs associated with the delivery of outreach services, such as the organisation of appointments, processing of correspondence and follow up with patients at the outreach location
- Professional Support (hourly rate): informal support provided by the visiting health professional to the general practitioner and/or other local health professionals
- Absence from practice allowance (hourly rate): a payment made to a non-salaried private health professional for time spent travelling to and from a location where they are providing a service

People receiving VPTAS assistance pay the first \$100 each treatment year for their travel and accommodation, except for primary card holders of a Pensioner Concession Card or Health Care Card. After the initial payment VPTAS covers all travel and accommodation costs for the remainder of the treatment year. A treatment year starts from the date of the first appointment with a specialist.

## Assistance

### Travel

People who are eligible for travel support will receive:

- 21 cents per kilometre for private car use
- full economy-class fare reimbursements for public transport
- air travel reimbursement - only if the journey exceeds 350 kilometers one way for a commercial flight
- taxi travel reimbursement - only to or from the nearest public transport when there are no other transport options

### Accommodation

Applicants may be able to receive accommodation assistance up to a maximum of \$45.00 per night (\$49.50 including GST). May be available to the applicant and their approved patient escort.

### Approved Escort

When a patient is eligible for VPTAS, an approved patient escort is responsible for the patient's transport and accommodation needs during treatment. Only one escort per patient is eligible for assistance unless the patient is under the age of 18 years.

## Fill in the Claim Form

Download claim form from

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/rural-health/vptas-how-to-apply>

It is also available from many doctors' clinics, rural and metropolitan hospitals and rural health regional offices.

## Further Information:

VPTAS guidelines provide full VPTAS details. It is available for download in 11 different community languages from the Health Translations website:

[http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/PresentDetail?Open&s=Victorian\\_Patient\\_Transport\\_Assistance\\_Scheme\\_Guidelines\\_\(2015\)](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/PresentDetail?Open&s=Victorian_Patient_Transport_Assistance_Scheme_Guidelines_(2015))