

VICOUTREACH PROGRAMS



RWAV (Rural Workforce Agency Victoria) is a non-profit government-funded organisation improving healthcare for rural, regional and Aboriginal communities in Victoria.

RWAV is the Victorian fundholder for six Australian Government Outreach programs including:

- Rural Health Outreach Fund
- Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program
- Visiting Optometry Scheme
- Eye and Ear Surgical Support Services
- Healthy Ears— Better Hearing, Better Listening
- Indigenous Eye Coordinator

Outreach programs significantly improve the range of health services available to rural, regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It enables access to health professionals in areas where they cannot attract, or it is not viable to sustain a local service provider.

Outreach programs provide a flexible funding pool to support health professionals deliver health care services in outreach locations by providing funding support to cover the basic costs of travel, accommodation, meals and other associated expenditure. In some cases, program funding may also extend to clients and carers.

Rural Health Outreach Fund

The Rural Health Outreach Fund (RHOF) focuses on improving health outcomes for people living in rural and regional Victoria. The scheme provides financial support for those healthcare professionals providing outreach services.

The priorities include maternity and paediatric, eye health, mental health and chronic disease management.

Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program

The aim of Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program (MOICDP) is to increase access to a range of health services, including expanded primary health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the treatment and management of all chronic diseases. Chronic disease is a condition that has been (or likely to be) present for six months or more.

The priorities are treatment and management of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, renal disease, and cancer.

Visiting Optometrists Scheme

The VicOutreach Visiting Optometrists Scheme (VOS) provides access to eye services for people living in rural and regional locations. The scheme aims to improve collaboration and communication between the eye health services and visiting optometrists, which increases the quality of ongoing patient care.

Funding is available for a range of expenses incurred by optometrists providing the services including travel, accommodation, meals, facility fees and administrative support at the outreach location.

Eye and Ear Surgical Support Service

The Victorian Eye and Ear Surgical Support Service (EESSS) has been established to reduce the impact of chronic eye and ear conditions by improving access to surgical interventions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, placed on a waiting list for an initial consultation and or surgery for their eye or ear condition. The EESSS program forms part of the 'Closing the Gap – Improving Eye and Ear Health Services for Indigenous Australians.'

The EESSS assists in removing financial barriers for clients and their carer by covering the costs associated with accessing specialist consultations and surgery. It includes transport to and from appointments as well as meals and accommodation if required.

Healthy Ears, Better Listening Better Hearing

The VicOutreach Healthy Ears, Better Listening Better Hearing Program supports access to health services for the diagnosis, treatment, and management of ear and hearing health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait children and youth aged 0 to 21 years).

This Program aims to improve prevention, detection, management and treatment of ear and hearing health, promote ear and hearing health and upskilling Aboriginal health workers on early detection and intervention of common ear problems.

Indigenous Eye Health Coordination

The Indigenous Eye Health Coordination project aims to improve access to eye health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients across the full spectrum of eye care. The project ensures integration of services from referral, initial consultations to treatment and back to the community. The program provides a continuum of care at each touch point along the client journey. It is a component of the Closing the Gap – improving eye and ear health services for Indigenous people.