

HEALTH WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - LOCUMS GRANT

GRANT OVERVIEW

Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) is a not-for-profit government-funded organisation improving healthcare for rural, regional and Aboriginal communities in Victoria.

The Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP) is a part of the Australian Government Department of Health's Health Workforce Program Guidelines.

The objective of the HWSP is to improve access to the services needed in rural and remote areas (locations categorised as Modified Monash Model (MMM 3-7) by supporting an increase in skills, capacity and/or scope of practice of privately employed health professionals in the fields of medicine, nursing and allied health.

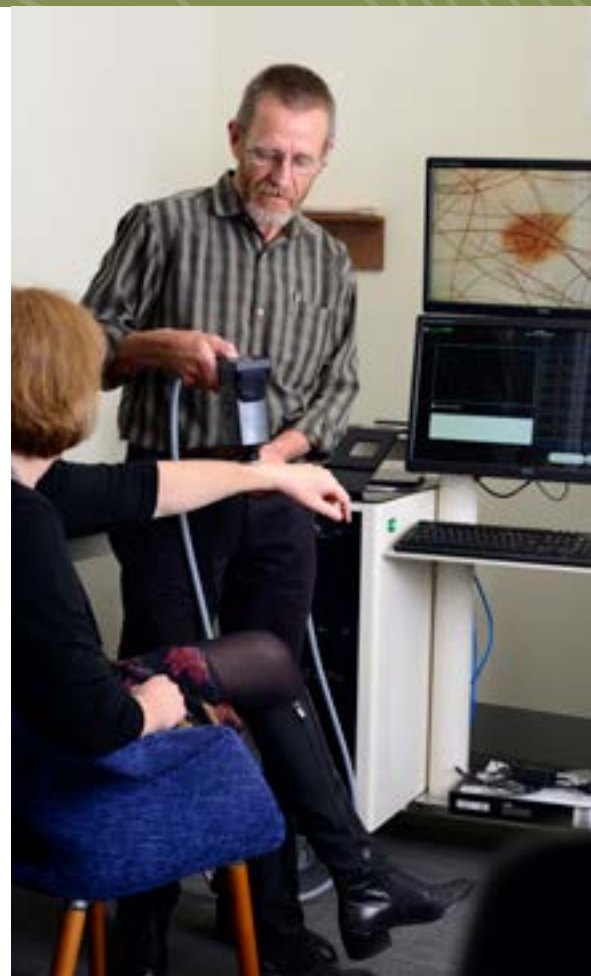
Under the HWSP, health professionals working as a locum in private health in rural and remote locations (MMM 3-7) are eligible to apply for bursaries to pursue further education or attend training courses. Bursary payments are also available for health professionals working in Aboriginal Medical Services or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in (MMM 1-7) locations.

HWSP funding is directly related to training and upskilling health professionals who will provide services to rural and remote areas (including health professionals working in Aboriginal Medical Services or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in MMM1), and assessed on the relevance, value for money and the likelihood to meet identified primary healthcare needs of the community.

GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE

The Health Workforce Scholarship Program will provide bursary payments of up to \$4,900 for participants towards the cost of upskilling, training or course fees and related expenses such as accommodation and travel where appropriate.

The HWSP is managed nationally by the Rural Workforce Agency Network and locally in Victoria by the Rural Workforce Agency, Victoria Limited (RWAV).



APPLICATION PROCESS

All applications must be made through the RWAV [website](#) via the myRWAV portal.

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BURSARY FUNDING AMOUNT

HWSP bursaries are payments up to \$4,900 that cover the cost of training or course fees and/or cover, or partially cover, training related expenses where appropriate.

Applicants can make more than one bursary application up to the total value of \$4,900 per financial year.

Bursaries must be directly related to training and upskilling health professionals who are providing locum services, to rural and remote areas (MMM 3-7) in Victoria, or within an Aboriginal Medical Service or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (in MMM 1-7 locations).

Bursaries are prospective only, and must be applied for and approved by RWAV prior to the course commencement.

Courses must be completed within six months of bursary approval.

Courses and activities do not need to be accredited, but will be assessed by the relevance, value for money and the likelihood to meet identified primary healthcare needs of the community. Bursaries can be used for courses such as:

- Short courses, workshops, conferences and seminars;
- Vocational education and training courses (e.g. Australian Skills Quality Authorisation (ASQA) recognised training packages);
- Training that meets the professional development requirements of the applicant's professional registration and/or association (including fellowship preparation courses);
- Recognised industry skills training and upskilling for individual health professionals;

Applicants will need to provide a tax invoice and receipt in order to be reimbursed for approved expenses.

Travel reimbursements for accommodation, airfares and kilometres will be payable according to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) rates considered reasonable for claims for domestic travel allowance expenses.

APPLICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed based on:

- The location of your employment (MMM 3-7 or MMM 1-7 if working in an Aboriginal Medical Service or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation)
- Applicant's criteria
- Professional development activity
 - a. Planned increase in skill capacity and/ or scope of clinical practice; and
 - b. Meeting one or more identified primary health workforce needs; and
 - c. Demonstration of primary health service provision to rural and remote community.

You may be asked to provide more information to support your application. Submitting your application does not guarantee a bursary.

EXPENSES NOT COVERED BY THE HWSP

Bursaries will not be available for:

- Activities and related costs occurring before your application is submitted;
- Overseas expenses;
- Purchasing of equipment (e.g. IT items, medical instruments);
- Study funded by other sources;
- Activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility. This includes training for health professionals working solely in a public hospital;
- Any other expenses that are deemed unreasonable by RWAV.

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ELIGIBLE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

To be eligible for the HWSP, you will need to meet all of the following criteria:

- Working as a health professional in the fields of medicine, nursing or allied health (including Aboriginal Health Workers) as per the included list of eligible professions (see list to the right); and
- Provide services full or part-time in the private or non-state government primary health sector (e.g. general practice, private allied health practitioner or a non-government agency) in rural Victoria (MMM 3-7 locations) or an Aboriginal Medical Services or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation in (MMM 1-7) locations; and
- Propose to undertake study or upskilling activities that will meet identified health needs in your community; and
- You must be able to provide written evidence of working for at least 152 hours of locum placements in eligible locations (as outlined in the second bullet point) in the previous twelve months; and
- You must be able to provide written evidence that you will work for an additional 76 hours in eligible locations (as outlined in the second bullet point) in the six months following the bursary approval.

INFORMATION REQUIRED IN APPLICATION

Proof of Employment for each practice location in the previous 12 months, in a letter that:

- Is on the employer's letterhead and from the immediate manager. If you are self-employed please provide your ABN and detail services provided, location/s;
- States your name as the applicant, including evidence of a name change if the receipt is not in your professional registration name;
- States your position title;
- States the total number of hours worked;
- States the location of primary health services provided; and
- Is dated and signed within the last three months.

ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONS FOR THIS GRANT

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner
- Aboriginal Health Worker
- Audiologist
- Chinese Medicine Practitioner
- Chiropractor
- Dietetics and Nutrition
- Exercise Physiologist
- General Practitioner
- Medical Radiation Practitioner
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapist
- Optometrist
- Oral Health Practitioner
- Orthotics & Prosthetics
- Osteopath
- Pharmacist
- Physiotherapist
- Podiatrist
- Psychologist
- Radiographer
- Social Worker
- Sonographer
- Speech Pathologist

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INFORMATION REQUIRED IN APPLICATION (CONTD...)

Proof of prospective employment for each practice location in the following six months, in a letter that:

- Is on the employer's letterhead and from the immediate manager. If you are self-employed please provide your ABN and detail services provided, location/s;
- States your name as the applicant, including evidence of a name change if the receipt is not in your professional registration name;
- States your position title;
- States the total number of hours expected to be worked;
- States the location of primary health services to be provided; and
- Is dated and signed within the last three months.

Provide evidence of payment of course fees, plus details of travel and accommodation if required. Reimbursement will be assessed against ATO reasonable travel allowance standards for accommodation and travel only. Invoice and receipt must include:

- Details of course/conference including dates and location;
- Name of attendee;
- GST;
- ABN of course/conference provider. On-line cart receipts are not acceptable.

A brief statement addressing the following questions:

- What is the health need that has been identified in your community?
- How will the local community benefit from your upskilling or training?

Any other supporting documentation relevant to the application. Additional information may be requested by RWAV.

CHANGES TO HWSP ACTIVITIES

Written approval from RWAV is required to change the course/activity outlined in your Grant Agreement. RWAV will review any new activity against the identified health/workforce need, the original application and the reason for the change.

Changes to a proposed course/activity is at the discretion of RWAV and is usually only permitted where the training provider cancels the training or under exceptional circumstances. RWAV reserves the right to cancel the Grant Agreement if the original activity cannot be completed.

APPROVED APPLICATIONS

If your application is successful, we will email you a letter of offer for a bursary. The offer will outline:

- The amount offered (not necessarily full amount of course costs);
- Documentation required for evidence as outlined in the Information Required in Application Section; and
- Full terms and conditions of the bursary.

We require all supporting documentation prior to payment. Payment will be made to approved applicants after the applicant has provided RWAV with proof of completion of the subsequent 76 hours of work in an eligible location.

Please note applications may take up to six (6) weeks to be assessed, approved and processed.

GRANT AGREEMENT

You will receive a Grant Agreement via email documenting the amount to be paid towards your studies.

You will need to accept the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement and return a signed copy.

If we do not receive your accepted contract by the nominated date, we will withdraw the offer of funding.

PAYMENT PROCESS

Funding through the HWSP is via reimbursement. Grantees are required to pay for the course and travel costs as outlined in the Grant Agreement and then apply to RWAV for reimbursement.

In situations where the Grantee is experiencing financial hardship, alternative funding arrangement can be discussed with the RWAV Senior Manager, Health Workforce Development.

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TERMINATION OF GRANT AGREEMENT

- RWAV may terminate a Grant Agreement if it reasonably believes the Grantee:
- Transferred to a different activity without consent from RWAV; or
- Has breached the Grant Agreement; or
- Provided false or misleading information in their application; or
- Fails to complete the activity.

DEBT RECOVERY

Where a Grantee does not fulfil their Grant Agreement, RWAV will seek to recover the relevant monies.

Each Grantee will be asked to sign a Grant Agreement, confirming that they have understood the terms and conditions of the agreement including the process for debt recovery should the grantee be unable to meet their obligations.

Each Grant Agreement will clearly state the grantee's requirements, including:

- The funded course/activity;
- The amount of funding available;
- The return of service obligation (if applicable); and
- The process for debt recovery if the above is not met.

Where the Grantee is unable to meet their obligations, RWAV will contact the Grantee to inform them that the debt recovery process will begin.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Unsuccessful applicants who wish to appeal the outcome of their application should initially discuss their situation with the RWAV Senior Manager, Health Workforce Development to determine if they may be eligible to access funding and/ or support from other sources to meet their upskilling or professional development needs.

Please email HWSP@rwav.com.au

If the matter is not resolved, applicants can appeal to the RWAV Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to consider their case. The RWAV CEO is the final arbiter for any appeal on the HWSP.

MORE INFORMATION

Any questions relating to the HWSP in Victoria should be directed to:

Grants Administrator, RWAV

T: 03 9349 7800

E: hwsp@rwav.com.au