

Mental health relocation grants program

Guidelines 2020-2021

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Introduction

The mental health relocation grants program (the program) aims to support mental health workers (and their dependents) to relocate to take up roles in public specialist mental health services operating in rural/remote areas of Victoria.

The program is being piloted in 2020-21 as part of Hello Open Minds Phase 2; an initiative which aims to address immediate supply issues in public mental health services in Victoria (among other objectives). The program will be managed and operated by the Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) who have significant expertise not only in the delivery of relocation grants but in the implementation of workforce solutions more broadly to grow the health workforce to improve access to health services. More information about RWAV is available at: <https://www.rwav.com.au/>.

The program will be evaluated to demonstrate the impacts and outcomes associated with this investment to inform future planning and funding decisions.

These guidelines will provide you with the information you need to:

- Determine the eligibility of your service to take part in the program.
- Understand how the program will operate and the steps your service needs to take to implement it.
- Understand the commitment required from services to implement and evaluate the program.

Program objectives

The objectives of the mental health relocation grants program are to:

1. Support Area Mental Health Services operating in rural/remote areas of Victoria to fill vacancies in public specialist mental health services.
2. Support individuals (and their dependents) that aspire to working in public specialist mental health services operating in rural/remote areas of Victoria; particularly those with skill sets that are required to support the priorities being identified by the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System such as trauma informed practice and acting on lived experience priorities.
3. Determine the effectiveness of relocation grants to address workforce supply shortages in rural/remote areas of Victoria.

What is the scope of the program?

Services in scope for the program

The services listed below are eligible to participate in the mental health relocation grants program as they deliver public specialist mental health services in rural/remote areas. If an asterisk (*) is displayed next to the name of a service, this denotes that this service operates in a major city (MM1 under the Modified Monash Model) as well as MM2 or above.¹ These services will be required to assign relocation grants to vacancies that are not designated to servicing MM1 areas (such instances will be negotiated on a case by case basis with RWAV).

- Albury Wodonga Health
- Ballarat Health Services
- Barwon Health*
- Bendigo Health
- Goulburn Valley Health
- La Trobe Regional Hospital
- Mildura Base Hospital
- South West Healthcare
- Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health*

Funding arrangements

RWAV administers the program funding and is responsible for working with eligible mental health services to:

- Identify services' needs and requirements regarding relocation support.
- Support services to assign and apply for relocation grants.
- Develop tailored relocation and post-relocation support plans.
- Administer relocation grants.
- Undertake monitoring and evaluation activities associated with the program.

What is each service eligible for?

Each service will initially be eligible for three relocation grants. Each grant will be capped at \$8,400 and support domestic relocations only. Half of the grant will be available on commencement of employment for reimbursement of eligible expenses and the remainder as retention payments (25% at 12 months and 25% at 24 months from the candidate's start date).

Services will be able to apply for relocation grants from 12 October 2020.

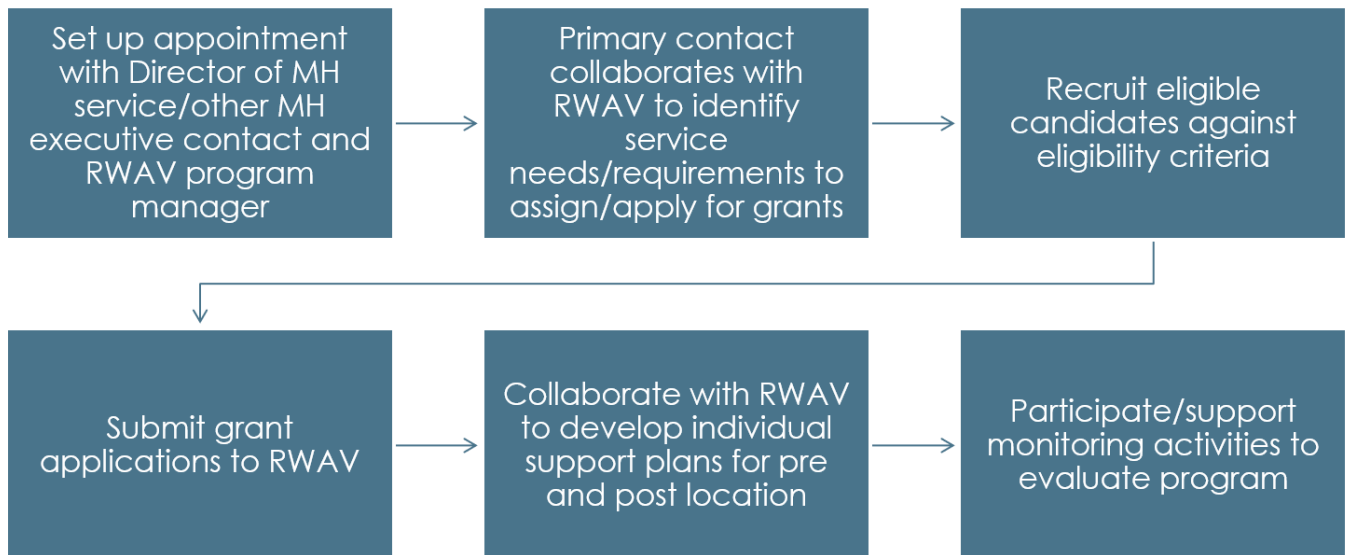
¹ A factsheet about the Modified Monash Model is available at:
<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019/12/modified-monash-model---fact-sheet.pdf>

How will the program work?

Overview

Figure 1 below shows the steps services will need to follow from setting up an initial appointment with the RWAV program manager to participating/supporting in monitoring activities to implement the program.

Figure 1: Program workflow for a participating mental health service



Eligibility criteria

Individuals that have been assigned a relocation grant must:

- Be an Australian Citizen/Permanent Resident OR
- Have/be in a position to obtain the necessary professional and migratory approvals to allow them to practice in Australia.
- Have a guaranteed employment contract with an eligible public specialist mental health service for a minimum of 24 months.
- Demonstrate that they have at least one skill set that has been identified by the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health system as crucial to supporting system reform and aligns with the priorities of mental health consumers and carer. This could include (but should not be limited to): trauma informed care, psycho-therapeutic skills and demonstrated experience of acting on lived experience priorities.
- Be employed in a discipline specific role.
- Be employed to work a minimum of 0.6 FTE if practicing as a psychiatrist and minimum of 0.8 FTE if practicing as different type of mental health professional.
- Relocate at least 90 minutes from where they currently reside, based on their normal mode of transport.
- Relocate from an MM1 region to MM2 or above. (As noted above, service boundaries span MM1 and MM2 or above in some cases. Please contact the RWAV program manager directly to discuss whether a specific vacancy you wish to recruit to falls within the scope of the program).

What conditions are associated with the grants?

A number of conditions apply to relocation grants:

- Grants cannot be applied to non-discipline specific roles.
- Each grant is capped at \$8,400.
- Candidates can only seek reimbursement for eligible items once a Relocation Grant Agreement has been signed and returned to RWAV. Essential expenses incurred before a candidate commences in practice will be considered at RWAV's discretion.
- The grant cannot cover expenses that are:
 - Paid by the employer.
 - Expenses that have already been funded by other Commonwealth, State, Territory or Local Government grants.
 - Capital expenditure and/or land purchase.
- Applicants are ineligible if their partner or spouse has applied for funding.
- In accordance with public funding guidelines, original receipts must accompany all funding claims except for the welcome bonus.
- Applicants who have received initial funding approval must notify RWAV immediately of any changes in contact or employment details.
- The candidate must agree to repay any relocation grant funds received should they leave the position within 24 months of commencement of employment (unless extenuating circumstances apply).
- The candidate and services involved must commit to participating in monitoring and evaluation activities.
- By submitting an application, applicants are committing to the terms and conditions of these guidelines.

What can the grants be used for?

Grant applications can be made to reimburse candidates for a range of expenses as described below. The value of each grant varies depending on the individual's personal circumstances (i.e. whether they are relocating with a partner and/or dependents).

RELOCATION GRANT - OVERVIEW		
Welcome bonus	\$	2,000.00
Candidate relocating without partner and/or dependents	\$	5,000.00
Candidate relocating with partner and/or dependents	\$	1,400.00
Each grant capped at	\$	8,400.00

* Note: 50% of the grant is available on commencement for reimbursement of eligible expenses and the remainder as retention payments (25% at 12 months and 25% at 24 months from the candidate's start date).

Single person relocation (no partner/dependents)

Applicants relocating from an MM1 location in Victoria or interstate are eligible for:

- Relocation costs (e.g. removalist fees)
- Rental costs (e.g. bond and rental fees)
- Costs associated with setting up their home in a new location (e.g. purchase of white goods, furniture, utilities connection fees)
- Travel allowance (associated with cost of relocation only. Flights must be economy)

Family relocation (includes partner and dependents)

Applicants relocating from an MM1 location in Victoria or interstate with their partner and/or dependents are eligible for:

- Travel allowance (associated with cost of relocation only. Flights must be economy)
- School fees

*Note: Other expenses may be considered at the discretion of the RWAV program manager.

What supporting evidence will be required when a grant application is submitted?

The following supporting evidence is required from applicants:

- Copy of professional registration.
- Current CV and the details of two professional referees from recent clinical practice work.
- A minimum 24 months employment contract.
- Complete evaluation activities when requested.

What is expected of the primary contact for the program?

The primary contact for the program will engage regularly with RWAV to:

- Inform on relocation needs and how decisions have been reached to assign a package to a particular vacancy.
- Inform on the recruitment process to ensure that consumer and family/carer needs are adequately addressed (e.g. the candidate is recruited with lived experience input and has clearly demonstrated their skills in trauma-informed practice).
- Ensure that eligibility criteria and funding conditions are met.
- Develop individual support plans for each candidate with RWAV to ensure pre and post relocation support is appropriately tailored. This will enable RWAV to augment the post-location support already offered by services.
- Participate and promote data collection activities associated with the evaluation of the program. This may include but not be limited to direct participation in surveys and interviews and ensuring that other stakeholders and grant recipients are engaged in similar activities.
- Promote and disseminate evaluation findings at their service.

How does my service get involved in the program?

The first step to getting involved is to set up an appointment between a member of your executive of your mental health service (e.g. Director of mental health service) and the RWAV program manager. Please email grants@rwav.com.au to set up an appointment.

This appointment will give RWAV the opportunity to provide you with information about the program, understand the needs that you would like to see met and to identify an appropriate primary contact for ongoing management and roll out of the grants and post relocation support.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or queries about the mental health relocation grants program please email grants@rwav.com.au.

If you have any questions or queries about Hello Open Minds Phase 2 and the workforce initiatives of the department more broadly, please contact emma.cadogan@dhhs.vic.gov.au.