Aboriginal Graduate Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health) 2017-18

Expression of interest guidelines

Purpose

In 2017-18, the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (the department) is again funding the Aboriginal Graduate Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health), via an Expression of Interest.

Overview

A strengthened Aboriginal health and human services workforce contributes to culturally safe care, improved utilisation of health and human services, and improved outcomes for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal nurses, midwives and allied health practitioners thus have a significant role to play in positively influencing the health of Aboriginal clients.

The Victorian Government is committed to developing the Aboriginal health and human services workforce, including the Aboriginal Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health workforces. Key government Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety plans - *Korin-Korin Balit-Djak* and its predecessor, *Koolin Balit* - have informed the development of a suite of complementary programs. This support includes the Aboriginal Graduate Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health), the Aboriginal Cadetship Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health), the Aboriginal Enrolled Nurse Cadetship Pilot Program and the Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships Program.

Since 2013, the Victorian Government has dedicated funding to the Aboriginal Graduate Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health) [the program]. This important program supports Aboriginal graduates in the transition from student to professional. Between 2013-14 and 2016-17, 44 Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery graduate positions have been funded. The program has been implemented at both regional and metropolitan health services including, Alfred Health, Austin Health, Barwon Health, Bendigo Health, Latrobe Regional Hospital, Monash Health, the Royal Women’s Hospital and St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne. Further support for the program has included the establishment of a network of program coordinators.

Graduate programs provide valuable opportunities which can support the transition to professional practice for the graduate nurse, midwife or allied health practitioner. A graduate program is a formalised program offered by many health services for graduates in their first year of professional practice. Graduate programs are designed to consolidate knowledge, skills and competence and support transition of graduates to practice as safe, confident and accountable professionals. A graduate program may offer formal study days, supernumerary opportunities and clinical support through preceptorship and supervision. The Aboriginal Graduate Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health) offers additional support to Aboriginal graduates and contributes to a culturally safe and respectful working environment.
Aboriginal Graduate Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health) Objectives

The program objectives include:

- increasing the number of Aboriginal nursing, midwifery and allied health graduates undertaking a graduate program
- encouraging successful transition to practice for Aboriginal nursing, midwifery and allied health graduates
- providing a culturally safe workplace for Aboriginal nursing, midwifery and allied health graduates
- increasing the number of registered Aboriginal nursing, midwifery and allied health graduates retained in the workforce
- supporting best practice client care

General information

The department is offering funding to Victorian public health services, via an Expression of Interest process, for:

- up to 12 Aboriginal nursing and midwifery graduates
- up to three Aboriginal allied health graduates

More positions may be provided in consultation with approved providers.

Funding of $23,000 per Aboriginal graduate may be provided to support Aboriginal nursing, midwifery and allied health graduates employed in the program.

Health services must submit activity in the usual Training and Development Grant (Nursing and Midwifery) reconciliation.

The funding is not intended to assist with salaries or the ongoing costs of delivering the program at the health service. The funding should be used for activities such as workplace readiness, workplace supervision, mentoring and peer support.

Participating health services will be responsible for the local design and delivery of the program including governance, management of funding, human resources processes and role descriptions.

The program constitutes a special measure under section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. Due to these Aboriginal graduate positions being a special measure to increase employment for Aboriginal people, they may be offered outside of the Victorian Computer Match process for nursing and midwifery graduates. However, it is expected that participating health services participate in Computer Match for all other graduate activity.

Eligibility criteria

This grant is to assist eligible public health services to provide a graduate program for Aboriginal graduates of a Bachelor degree in nursing and/or midwifery, or an allied health entry to practice qualification which enables students to enter practice in a profession or occupation for the first time, or enables graduates to apply directly for initial registration (where applicable), in 2017-18.

Participating health services must be public hospitals, metropolitan health services and multipurpose services identified in Schedules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Health Services Act 1988.

Graduates from Victoria will be given preference.

Graduates who have participated in the Aboriginal Cadetship Program (Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health) will be given preference.
Health services must apply using the accompanying application form, completing all sections, including having the form signed.

Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

How to apply

Expressions of Interest are now invited using the accompanying application form and should be submitted by a nominated Director of Nursing and Midwifery no later than **3.00 pm, Friday 17 November, 2017.**

Please submit applications via email to nmw@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

Health services will be notified of the outcome of their application by email, no later than **1 December, 2017.**

Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Disbursement and conditions

Funds will be disbursed to the health service through the normal departmental budget payment system, in line with existing finance arrangements.

By accepting funds under the program, a recipient health service agrees to:

- provide the program for 2017-18, with the understanding that some graduates may have a mid-year intake or take varying times to complete the graduate ‘year’ and so the funding may also need to be used in 2018-19
- provide data about the health service’s graduate program, including from Aboriginal graduates where appropriate consent has been sought and permissions given
- provide financial acquittal and any other necessary departmental reporting for the program within any specified timeframes
- notify and discuss with the department any issues that may impact the establishment, implementation or evaluation of the program, including of any changes to the number and names of any graduate program participants
- maintain their own financial and program records and ensure the department has two organisational contacts, to ensure corporate knowledge of the program is maintained

Contact

Please direct any enquiries to:

- Rebecca Radford, Policy Advisor, Nursing and Midwifery Workforce, Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
- Email: nmw@dhhs.vic.gov.au
- Telephone: (03) 9096 0131.

We look forward to receiving your applications.

*Please note: Where the term ‘Aboriginal’ is used it refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous is retained when it is part of the title of a report, program or quotation.*