

Standing with our Hardworking Health Services Staff

Health Services Worker Training Fund

Funding Guidelines and Application Form 2019/20

Introduction

The Fund

The *Standing with our Hardworking Health Services Staff – Health Services Worker Training Fund* (the Fund) aims to support the provision of a high-quality health service workforce with contemporary and relevant skills.

Frontline health service workers are an important asset in achieving the best health, wellbeing and safety for all Victorians so that they can live a life they value.

In this context, the frontline health service workforce refers to workers including hospital cooks, orderlies, cleaners, security officers, administrative staff and other non-clinical support staff.

The cost of education and training can be a barrier for frontline health service workers wanting to improve their skills. The Fund is an opportunity to develop and strengthen staff and enable them to get the skills they need for the jobs they want.

To support health services staff to gain qualifications, and increase skills and knowledge, the Victorian government has committed to making available 100 scholarships valued up to \$10,000 each, over two years (50 per year), via the Fund. These scholarships, along with a capped fund, calculated at 25% of total scholarship amount, to supplement employee wages, will ensure health service workers can train while maintaining their income.

Commencing in 2019-20, the Fund will include scholarships to undertake accredited training in courses including, but not limited to Certificate II in Health Support Services, Certificate III in Health Services Assistance, Certificate III in Health Support Services, Certificate III in Non-Emergency Patient Transport, Certificate III in Commercial Cookery (Non-apprenticeship), Certificate III or IV in Health Administration, Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance, Certificate IV in Health Care and certificate studies in Hospital Security, Computer skills, Literacy or Numeracy to support health service frontline worker needs.

The scholarships will enable access to accredited training for eligible workforces currently employed at a health service, who may not otherwise have opportunity to improve their skills and qualifications.

The Fund aims to:

- target workers who want to improve their skills and job opportunities
- improve staff morale, job satisfaction, career pathways and opportunities for non-clinical health service workforce
- improve health service workforce retention and utilisation
- improve patient care and satisfaction

Scholarships

Funding of up to \$10,000 per scholarship is available for Victoria public health services to apply for through the Fund.

At the discretion of health services, two scholarships equivalent to \$5000 each may be allocated to support two trainees to attend training to improve skills and job opportunities.

Health services can apply for up to five scholarships in each funding round.

In addition, capped funding to supplement employee wages while on training, calculated at 25% of the total scholarship amount will be included.

Health Services should note that where the cost of backfill exceeds capped funding, they may choose to support the employee to complete their studies by maintaining the employee's salary for the duration of the program (beyond the capped funding) through internal budget allocation. Alternatively, employees in receipt of a scholarship may be supported by health services, **but not directed**, to utilise leave entitlements (inclusive of study leave, annual leave and leave no pay) when undertaking training.

Health services can nominate through the application form below the number and nature of scholarships requested.

Health services will be responsible for assessing and collating the final list of applications from their health service, prior to submitting the final list to the Department of Health and Human Services.

A total of 30% of scholarships will be allocated to rural and regional health services.

Funding conditions

Funds will be disbursed through the department's budget payment system, in line with current finance arrangements and policy.

Health services are expected to deliver all requested scholarships to scholarship recipients undertaking relevant training in 2019-20.

Funding may be adjusted or recalled if planned activity identified through the application submission process did not occur.

Health service funding allocation will be dependent upon demand and assessment of applications.

Health services will be responsible for supporting scholarship recipients as per their application form. This includes meeting any accreditation, governance, quality and safety standards, management of funding, human resources processes and any other necessary recruitment or education requirements.

By accepting this funding, a health service agrees to:

- adhere to reporting timelines and respond to departmental requests for reporting in a timely manner
- adhere to the latest Department of Health and Human Services Policy and Funding Guidelines
- immediately notify and discuss with the department any issues that may impact the implementation or achievement of planned refresher program activity.

Reporting

Health services will be required to report on the outcomes of their scholarships against the following criteria:

- Uptake of scholarships across courses, occupations and locations
- Feedback from scholarship recipients about the quality of the programs and impact on work
- Feedback from health services on the impact of scholarships on staff morale, retention and service delivery

Health services may be asked to submit case studies pertaining to the impact of scholarships for trainees at work and for the employing health service.

Scholarship conditions

Health services should apply the following conditions to their scholarship application process if successful through this funding process.

Applicants

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be employed at a Victorian public hospital, metropolitan health service or multipurpose service identified in schedules 1,2,3,4 and 5 of the Health Services Act 1998
- Be employed at a Victorian public health service
- Provide evidence of enrolment in a training program in 2019-20
- Provide evidence of the course enabling the employee to possess contemporary and relevant skills

Courses

Eligible staff are encouraged to consider studies such as (but not limited to):

- Certificate II in Health Support Services
- Certificate III in Health Services Assistance
- Certificate III in Health Support Services
- Certificate III in Non-Emergency Patient Transport
- Certificate III in Commercial Cookery (Non-apprenticeship),
- Certificate III or IV in Health Administration
- Certificate IV in Health Care
- Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance
- Certificate studies in Hospital Security
- Certificate studies in Literacy or Numeracy
- Certificate studies in Computer Literacy

Course dates and duration

Training funding will support up to one year full-time or equivalent part-time.

Applicants must start their course before June 2020.

Scholarship conditions

Deferral from course

- If the scholarship recipient is required to defer their studies, they must notify their employer within one week of the change in study arrangements.
- If the scholarship recipient plans to recommence study in 2019-20, they will not need to return the funds.
- If the scholarship recipient does not return to study in 2019-20, the scholarship funds will be recalled.
- The amount to be repaid will be based on the 'Withdrawal from course' rules (see below).
- Scholarship recipients may re-apply in subsequent scholarship rounds.

Withdrawal from course

- Scholarship recipients withdrawing from the course are required to notify their employer within one week of withdrawal.
- Following withdrawal, total funds may be required to be returned if completion of semester one is unsuccessful.

- If the scholarship recipient withdraws post successful completion of semester one, they will be required to return half of the scholarship funds.

Funding disbursement and conditions

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

The employing health service will disseminate scholarship and capped wage supplement funds directly to the scholarship recipients for the purpose outlined in these guidelines. Administrative fees must not be levied against the funds by health services. The department has an expectation that scholarship funding to the student will occur within four weeks of the health service receiving this funding.

Successful applicants are responsible for enrolling and paying course fees (or deferring fees) or HECS by the due date and are responsible for debts incurred in the course of study, including VET FEE-HELP loans. Students with a Commonwealth Supported Place may be eligible for a discount if the student's HECS contribution is paid ahead of the census date for each semester.

Taxable Income

The department is not required to withhold tax (PAYG) from scholarships paid. Recipients should be made aware that:

- they may be liable to pay tax on their scholarship. For more information refer recipients to the calculator on the Australian Taxation Office website <<https://www.ato.gov.au/calculators-and-tools/is-your-scholarship-taxable/>>.
- they may be entitled to claim a tax deduction for self-education expenses – for more information please refer recipients to the Australian Taxation Office site at the following link <<https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/income-and-deductions/deductions-you-can-claim/self-education-expenses>>.

The department strongly recommends that recipients seek independent tax advice in respect to their scholarship payments.

Application process

Victorian public health services are invited to submit the attached funding application form with their expected scholarship requirement for 2019-20.

Completed application forms must be submitted via email to nmw@dhhs.vic.gov.au by **11:59pm, Friday 20 December 2019**.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Key Dates

Date	Activity
Friday 22 November 2019	Applications open
11:59pm Friday 20 December 2019	Applications close
Monday 20 January 2019	Health services notified of application outcome

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, health services must:

- be a Victorian public health service as defined in the Health Services Act 1988
- have submitted a completed a funding application form by 11:59pm, Friday 20 December 2019
- commit to supporting health workers in receipt of scholarships to commence training in 2019-20
- provide executive endorsement of the application

Only applications that meet this eligibility criteria will be assessed for funding against the evaluation criteria below.

Evaluation criteria

Scholarships

Applications for scholarships will be assessed against the following evaluation criteria:

- Criterion 1: The service demonstrates how the requested scholarships will support the growth and development of their frontline workforce to possess contemporary and relevant skills
- Criterion 2: The service demonstrates an understanding of their frontline workforce need for training and development support
- Criterion 3: The service demonstrates efficient and appropriate organisational infrastructure, resources and capacity to deliver the requested scholarships
- Criterion 4: The service demonstrates how these scholarships may assist with recruitment and retention
- Criterion 5: The service demonstrates focus on priority workforces including workers living with disability, workers from non-English speaking backgrounds, older workers and indigenous workers

Assessment process

An initial evaluation will be used to short-list submissions. Following short-listing service providers may be approached to meet with the evaluation panel to provide clarification or further information.

All service providers will be advised in writing of the outcome of the submission process.

Scoring

Submissions will be initially scored against the following scale

Evaluation	Score
Exceeds all aspects of the selection/evaluation criterion	10
Exceeds some aspects of selection/evaluation criterion (and meets all other aspects of the selection/evaluation criterion)	6–9
Meets the selection/evaluation criterion	5
Fails some aspects of the selection criterion	1–4
Fails all aspects of the selection criterion	0

Contact

For further information please contact:

- Kathy Phythian, Senior Policy Advisor, Nursing and Midwifery Workforce
 - Email nmw@dhhs.vic.gov.au
 - Telephone (03) 9096 9067

Standing with our Hardworking Health Services Staff – Health Services Worker Training Fund

Application Form - Scholarships

Contact details

Health service name	
Key contact name	
Position	
Email	
Phone	

Eligibility criteria

Are you a Victorian public health service as defined in the Health Services Act 1988?	Yes/No
Have you submitted a completed a funding application form by 11:59pm, Friday 20 December 2019?	Yes/No
Do you commit to delivering scholarships to frontline health workers within 2019-20?	Yes/No
Have you obtained executive endorsement of the application?	

Application details

Total number of \$10,000 scholarships your health service is applying for (up to a maximum of 5)	Name of recipient (if possible)	Workforce	Course

Assessment criteria

Criterion 1

- The service demonstrates how the requested scholarships will support the growth and development of their frontline workforce to possess contemporary and relevant skills

Word limit: 400 words

Criterion 2

- The service demonstrates an understanding of their frontline workforce need for training and development support

Word limit: 400 words

Criterion 3

- The service demonstrates an efficient and appropriate organisational infrastructure, resources and capacity to deliver the requested scholarships

Word limit: 400 words

Criterion 4

- The service demonstrates how these scholarships will assist with recruitment and retention

Word limit: 400 words

Criterion 5

- The service demonstrates focus on priority workforces including workers living with disability, workers from non-English speaking backgrounds, older workers and indigenous workers

Word limit: 400 words

Executive endorsement of application

Chief Executive Officer or delegate Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	