Overview

In 2019 the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) will continue to seek applications from health organisations to implement Nurse Practitioner (NP) models of care that reflect the full diversity of nursing practice and the many service gaps this role can address. In Round 5.5, models based in rural and regional Victoria will be considered most favourably.

Consortia and collaborative models, utilising cross sectoral workforce models with health services experienced in model development, are to be encouraged as are regionally based models that can be emulated by other regions.

The Victorian Nurse Practitioner Program (VNPP) evaluation provided the department with valuable insights and a suite of recommendations that have been incorporated into our guidelines for this round. VNPP Phase 5 continues to focus on integration and sustainability, but introduces the inclusion of a business case as a key deliverable, as well as changes to the funding model that will enhance the capacity of health organisations to fully implement their proposed Nurse Practitioner (NP) models of care. A more flexible funding model, aligned with health organisation budget planning processes, will more effectively support the appointment of either Nurse Practitioner Candidates (NPCs) or endorsed NPs.

This document provides the funding framework for this initiative, selection criteria for funding of services, funding conditions and deliverables.

1. Amount and purpose

The funding package available in this round is up to $45,000, comprised of:

- $30,000 one-off payment for model development, role implementation, recruitment and appointment of at least one Nurse Practitioner Candidate (NPC) or NP.

- $15,000 one-off payment for ongoing support of a NPC (which will not be paid if an endorsed NP is recruited to the role).

Funding of a further $15,000 will be made available to support additional NPCs recruited in the same targeted area of practice, upon request at the time of submission or upon appointment.

NPC support funding of $15,000 will be provided once the department has been notified that a NPC has been recruited. In alignment with health organisation budget planning processes, these payments will be made July/August of the following year.

Note: Candidate Support Packages will not be increased retrospectively for Phase 4 models. Models developed under VNPP Phase 4 will be provided at the rates articulated in the relevant VNPP Phase 4 model development round guidelines.
2. Eligibility

2.1 Eligible services are:

- All public hospitals, metropolitan health services and multipurpose services identified in schedules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Health Services Act 1998.
- Victorian public sector residential aged care services as per list provided at: http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/services/residential.htm
- Community health services (both registered and integrated)
- Forensic mental health services operated by the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health
- State-funded drug and alcohol treatment services.

Collaborative or consortia models are encouraged, providing that the lead service and fund holder is an eligible service (as above). The $30,000 component will only be provided to one entity to lead the development of an integrated service model, however NPC support packages can be provided to any member of the consortia.

Note: Models supported in previous VNPP model development funding rounds are not eligible for additional funding.

2.2 Proposed Model of Care

Applicants must provide a brief description of the proposed model of care that a NP role will support (max 500 words). Recommended elements (in a competitive submission), are listed in the application template.

2.3 Selection criteria:

Successful sites will be able to provide evidence of how they meet the following selection criteria:

1. Commitment to develop and expand NP services within the service, including appointment of at least one NP candidate in a targeted area within a designated period (see reporting requirements).
2. Alignment of proposed NP service model with key organisational, state or national service/policy framework for the targeted clinical area.
3. Demonstrated capacity to successfully manage workforce initiatives of this size/type and experience in service development.
4. Evidence of support for this initiative by executive management and specific clinical sponsors (who are considered clinical leaders) in targeted area within the organisation or consortia.
5. Willingness to collaborate with other health services and participate in a NP collaborative/Community of Practice in the course of developing the NP model.
6. Commitment to support processes to engage stakeholders, consumers and community in model development.
7. Ongoing support of the model (for example a Steering Committee) that will be sustained beyond the endorsement of a candidate. Ability to recruit/appoint/deploy project support, such as Project Coordinator, and to commence model implementation within a designated period.
8. Evidence of clear project management roles and governance structures (including roles and responsibilities for all sites if a collaborative model has been proposed).
9. Evidence the organisation has completed a draft version of the business case that supports recruitment of an endorsed NP or a candidate who will make the transition to that role.

3. How to apply

VNPP Round 5.5 will open Monday 18 February 2019. Applications (using the VNPP Round 5.4 Application template) should be sent electronically to: nmw@dhhs.vic.gov.au no later than Thursday 7 March 2019.

Late, incomplete or unsigned applications will not be considered.

• Health services will likely be advised of the outcome of their submission via email by Thursday 21 March 2019.
• Successful sites will be required to attend an industry briefing planned for 1.00 – 3.00 pm, Wednesday 17 April 2019 at the Department of Health and Human Services, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne.

4. Disbursement and conditions

The initial funds ($30,000) will be dispersed to successful sites, April-May 2019, as a one-off payment. This establishment funding is to ensure timely appointment or deployment of project support roles to drive the necessary model development and implementation activities, NPC or NP recruitment and NPC support.

NPC Support Packages are paid to health services on confirmation to the department's Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine Workforce team, of the appointment of an individual(s) as a NPC(s). Packages will usually be disseminated early in the following financial year unless specifically requested earlier.

4.1 Deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NP Model Development Report and Final Business Case</td>
<td>Description of NP model including a final version of your business case for the recruitment of an endorsed NP or candidate making the transition to that role. <em>(A generic template is available)</em></td>
<td>Thursday 22 August 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Recruitment and appointment of NPC or NP</td>
<td>Confirmation of NPC/NP appointment (Signed letter of appointment)</td>
<td>Friday 11 October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Budget Acquittal (model development funds)</td>
<td>Excel worksheet with executive sign off (1 page)</td>
<td>Thursday 7 November 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 year plan for NP model/service (summary)</td>
<td>Key stages, deliverables &amp; dates (1 page)</td>
<td>Thursday 7 November 2019</td>
</tr>
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4.2 Initial Funding: ($30,000)

These funds are to be directed to the following activities:

• review of specific service planning and workforce analysis including NP roles
• NP model identification and service model development
• establishment of corporate, clinical and educational governance structures to support candidates and endorsed NPs
• sustainable internal budget/business case development (that identifies how the ongoing salary costs will be met by the service)
• stakeholder consultation, communication (internal and external) and role implementation (recruitment)
• candidate support.

Specifically, VNPP model development funding may be used for costs associated with:

• employment of a project worker to undertake specific model development activities (as per deliverables)
• data/demand analysis, service gap identification
• communication, marketing and consultation costs (including associated travel, telecommunications, sitting fees for steering committees that are necessary to undertake consultation)
- project management overheads (such as administrative assistance, stationary, printing, mobile telephone, computer and communication facilities, library fees, corporate costs) – up to 15% of total budget can be funded through VNPP funds
- recruitment costs related to appointment of NPC/NP(s)
- development of an individualised NP candidacy program.

VNPP model development funding is NOT to be used for the following:
- salary of NPC or NPs (or backfill)
- postgraduate tertiary education costs for nurse practitioner candidates (see NP scholarships section)
- patient/client-related costs (for example patient care consumables, tests/investigations) that are included as current activity payments to health services
- costs directly associated with a candidate’s NMBA application for endorsement as NP
- case consultation and other activities considered part of regular health care process
- medical/clinical equipment
- refurbishment, capital works and general infrastructure.

4.3 NP Candidate Support Package: ($15,000)
In Phase 5, all successful sites that recruit a NPC will receive further funding to support the clinical and professional supervision of candidates appointed to the targeted area of practice. Funding is tagged to a specific individual who has been appointed by their employee as a NP candidate. One-off funding of $15,000 for a NPC Support Package is provided, with a further $15,000 available for a second candidate appointed to the same model of care (in the following financial year).

NPC support programs are model and candidate specific. They bridge the clinical requirements of the academic program, as well as any specific skills and competencies that will be required in the service model in which the nurse will be employed as a NP.

The NP Candidate Support package will support:
- clinical supervision
- specific skills acquisition
- professional supervision/mentoring.

An NPC Supervision logbook is available to candidates if they wish to use a spreadsheet designed to map their hours of clinical and professional supervision to the NP Standards of practice. The department has been advised that the summary pages are a valuable addition to a candidate's portfolio when applying for endorsement as a NP with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency: https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/nursing-and-midwifery/furthering-your-nursing-and-midwifery-career/nurse-practitioner

5. NP Scholarships
The VNPP Scholarship supported registered nurses commencing a masters level of study leading to endorsement as an nurse practitioner. In 2018, this scholarship program was incorporated with other Postgraduate nursing and midwifery scholarships provided by the department. Eligible organisations are advised to consider prioritising support of any candidates recruited to NP models of care.

6. Contact/further information
For further information about the Victorian Nurse Practitioner Project (VNPP) and this round please contact: Dan Schiftan, Senior Policy Advisor via phone: (03) 9096 8227 or email dan.schiftan@dhhs.vic.gov.au