

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Rural Allied Health Practitioners Subsidy Program Guidelines 2009/2010

The CPD Subsidy Fund is available to assist **allied health practitioners** currently working in a publicly funded health service in rural Victoria to participate in conferences and skills development opportunities relevant to the development and provision of rural health services.

Aims of the Program

The CPD Rural Allied Health Practitioners subsidy program aims to:

- Improve access to professional training and education for rural allied health professionals.
- Increase participation in professional development activities by rural allied health professionals.
- Improve job satisfaction for rural allied health professionals.
- Decrease professional isolation felt by rural allied health professionals.
- Increase skill level of rural allied health professionals and adhere to evidence-based practice.

Who may apply

- Subsidies are available to allied health professionals currently working in a publicly funded health service in a rural and remote area of Victoria (RRMA 3-7).
 - Allied Health Assistant
 - Art Therapy
 - Audiology
 - Biomedical Science
 - Dietetics
 - Health Promotion
 - Hospital Pharmacy
 - Medical (Radiography
Radiation Diagnostic Imaging
Radiation Therapy
Nuclear Medicine)
 - Medical Laboratory Science
 - Medical Physics
 - Music Therapy
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Orthoptics
 - Physiotherapy
 - Podiatry
 - Prosthetics/Orthotics
 - Psychology
 - Speech Pathology
 - Social Work
- Practitioners accessing the CPD subsidy must use it to directly improve the quality of health service delivery.
- The CPD for which the subsidy applies must align to the service delivery demands of the community
- The CPD for which the subsidy applies must address the individual learning needs of practitioners.
- Funding is not available to assist with formal tertiary or VET qualifications.

Applicants must provide a brief report (500-750 words) that outlines:

- The relevance of the training to the rural allied health professionals practice and the community's health needs.
- Active involvement in rural allied health for at least **12 months prior to their application** and an ongoing commitment to rural practice and/or service development.
- The need for funding to enable participation in the conference or skills education event, and supply evidence of funding from other sources eg. personal contribution, employer contribution, paid leave, grant/s from elsewhere etc.
- Agreement to participate in an evaluation of the program if requested.
- Other supporting information required.
- A letter from their Manager/CEO/Supervisor outlining their employer's support as measure of relevance of the activity to the applicant in their role.
- Course information.

What support is available?

- The CPD program is designed to support rural allied health professionals undertaking training and therefore, aims to subsidise rather than fully fund the cost of professional development.
- The total level of subsidy will be capped at \$1,000 per person per financial year.
- Subsidies are restricted to course fees, accommodation, travel and childcare expense
 - The full cost of registration and course fees will be considered for relevant training
 - The full cost of accommodation expenses will be considered up to \$100 per night irrespective of location (rural or metro). Accommodation at registered commercial premises attracts a subsidy. Private accommodation will not be subsidised.
 - The full cost of car travel expenses will be considered on a return trip from the applicant's usual place of residence via the most direct and practical route. The reimbursement rate is 49 cents per km.
 - Airfares will be subsidised up to 75% of the cost of the cheapest economy airfare via the most direct route.
 - Childcare subsidies up to \$60 per day for a maximum of 5 days per year are available. Childcare at registered organisations attracts a subsidy. Private childcare will not be subsidised.
- Interstate and overseas training will only be supported for health related training in instances where local training is unavailable.

Process

Applications must be submitted to VHA using the CPD Subsidy Program Application Form, which can be accessed on the VHA website www.vha.org.au and forwarded to;

CPD Subsidy Program
The Victorian Healthcare Association Limited
Level 6, 136 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

The application needs to be completed preferably 2 months prior to the event or conference (although this is not a strict guideline). Applicants must complete all sections, supply all requested documentation and ensure the application form is signed.

Procedure for Approval

Applications to the CPD Subsidy Program are considered throughout the year with VHA reviewing applications. VHA determines the level of funding available to an applicant, and takes into consideration factors such as the likelihood of alternative resources being made available by the applicant's employer, the willingness of the applicant or applicant's employer to contribute to the overall cost, and the degree of relevance or alignment between the applicant's employment and the conference or event.

Only those applications which meet these guidelines and which contain the necessary information will be considered. All applicants will be notified in writing of VHA's decision.

The total budget for the program is capped and therefore not all applicants that meet the criteria will necessarily be granted a subsidy.

To support the equitable distribution of funds, funding will be capped at \$1,200 per agency per event.

To claim the funding awarded, participants are required to provide original receipts for all claims, in accordance with public funding guidelines. The subsidy will be paid upon completion of CPD activity.

Terms and Conditions

- If funds are received from other sources to support components of CPS, practitioners will be ineligible to receive a subsidy for that component under this program.
- In accordance with public funding guidelines, original receipts will be required for all claims.
- Subsidies will not be granted retrospectively.
- Immediate notification must be provided and repayment of the subsidy will be required where a practitioner does not participate in the CPD activity for which the subsidy has been granted.
- Practitioners who are granted a subsidy must participate in tracking and evaluation exercises in relation to the program where requested.
- The total budget for the program is capped and therefore not all applicants that meet the criteria will necessarily be granted a subsidy.

Please be advised that these guidelines are subject to revision by DHS. Changes to these guidelines may only be made by, or with the approval of, DHS.

Further Information

If you require further information or have any queries in regards to the requirements, please contact VHA on 9094 7777 or email scholarships@vha.org.au

Send completed application and information to:

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The Victorian Healthcare Association Limited
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MELBOURNE VIC 3000