

Thursday, 2 October 2009



Victorian Healthcare Association

**For immediate release**

## **Rural Health Scholarships open for 2009**

Rural students can apply now for scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate study in allied health in 2009, a peak public health body says.

The Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA) wants to broaden recognition of its scholarship programmes that aim to improve the skills, expertise and retention of rural allied health workers.

Scholarships are available to students who are commencing the first year of an undergraduate or postgraduate allied health qualification in 2009.

Undergraduate scholarship recipients are entitled to \$5000 and postgraduate recipients to \$10,000 paid as a lump sum. For taxation purposes the scholarships are treated as income.

The VHA's chief executive officer, Mr Trevor Carr, says recruiting, training and retaining allied health professionals in rural Victoria's public health system remains a major challenge.

"The scholarship programmes funded by the Department of Human Services and run by the VHA offer valuable opportunities for rural students to subsidise their studies and improve their skills for the benefit of their local communities," Mr Carr said.

In 2008, the scholarship programmes gave substantial financial assistance to fifteen postgraduate students and fourteen undergraduates in fields ranging from social work, psychology, occupational therapy and speech pathology to biomedicine, podiatry and pharmacy.

Applicants can download an application form from the VHA website – [www.VHA.org.au](http://www.VHA.org.au) – and must provide a summary of how their training will benefit a rural area and a certified copy of their course enrolment and payment.

Preference is given to applicants from remote areas and those who face financial hardship that may otherwise prevent them from studying.

Although the programme is not bonded, preference is given to applicants currently working - or intending to seek employment - in rural Victoria. Postgraduate applicants must demonstrate a demand exists for their services.

All applicants must be Victorian residents and Australian permanent residents.

For more information on eligibility for the programme contact the VHA's scholarship administrator Ms Vivien Forrest on (03) 9094 7720.

Postgraduate scholarships are available for:

- Audiologists
- Orthodontists/Prosthetics
- Dieticians/Nutritionists
- Hospital Pharmacists
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Laboratory Science
- Psychologists

Thursday, 2 October 2009

- Occupational Therapists
- Orthoptists
- Radiation Therapists
- Nuclear Medicine Technologists
- Medical Imaging Technologists
- Speech Pathologists
- Social Workers



Undergraduate scholarships are available for:

- Audiology
- Dietics
- Medical Radiation
- Occupational Therapy
- Pharmacy
- Medical Laboratory Science
- Prosthetics/Orthotics
- Podiatry
- Psychology
- Orthoptics
- Physiotherapy
- Speech Pathology
- Social Work
- Biomedical Science

The VHA is the peak advocacy body representing public healthcare interests in Victoria. Its members include public hospitals, rural and regional health services, community health services and aged care facilities.

For further information and  
Interviews, contact  
Trevor Carr  
CEO  
Victorian Healthcare Association  
(03) 9094 7777 or (0409) 362 382