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1. Program Description

The Health Workforce Scholarship Program (HWSP) is part of the Australian Government Department of Health’s Health Workforce Program.

The objective of the HWSP is to improve access to the services needed in rural and remote areas (i.e. locations categorised as Modified Monash Model (MMM) 3-7) by supporting an increase in skills, capacity and/or scope of practice of privately employed health professionals in the fields of medicine, nursing and allied health in order to target services to rural and remote areas where they are most needed.

The HWSP is managed nationally by the Rural Workforce Agency Network and locally in Queensland by Health Workforce Queensland.

2. Program Scope

The HWSP will provide:
- Scholarships to postgraduate rural health professionals undertaking further study in the field of medicine, nursing or allied health; and
- Bursary or support payments to rural professionals in the field of medicine, nursing or allied health participating in development and upskilling courses.

Scholarships payments of up to $10,000 per year for up to two years will be available to support participants for studies.

One-off bursary payments will be available to cover the cost of training or course fees and/or to cover or contribute toward training related expenses such as accommodation and transport, where appropriate.

See Section 3c for further explanation of a scholarship and bursary.

3. Eligibility

a. Locations

Queensland rural and remote areas classified by the MMM 3-7 are eligible for the HWSP. The MMM locator is found at: [http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/publishing.nsf/Content/MMM_locator](http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/publishing.nsf/Content/MMM_locator)

Please note, MMM 3-7 locations DO NOT include Brisbane, the Gold Coast, and most of the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and main regional coastal centres north of Brisbane.

b. Applicants

Health professionals in the fields of medicine, nursing or allied health (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers) who provide services to MMM 3-7 rural and remote communities are eligible to apply.

Health professionals in the fields of medicine, nursing or allied health (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers) who intend providing services to MMM 3-7 rural or remote communities are also eligible to apply. Those health professionals that intend to provide to services to MMM 3-7 need to be able to
commit to practicing in a MMM 3-7 location and will need to provide a service agreement or employment agreement at the time the application is submitted.

Health professionals employed solely by the State Government, including the State Health Department are not eligible to apply.

c. Scholarship and Bursary Types

HWSP Scholarships will be available to post-graduate health professional applicants who are undertaking or planning to undertake further study in the field of medicine, nursing or allied health that meet the priority needs of the HWSP.

Scholarships of up to $10,000 per year can be provided for up to two years study. Scholarships must be directly related to training and upskilling health professionals who will provide services to rural and remote areas. The scholarships funds only cover the study fees and do not cover any travel or accommodation relevant to undertaking study. Scholarship values will be determined against the perceived workforce and community benefit of the training.

HWSP bursaries are one-off payments that cover the cost of training or course fees and/or cover or partially cover training related expenses such as accommodation and transport where appropriate.

Bursaries must directly relate to training and upskilling health professionals who are or will be providing services to rural and remote areas. Bursary values will be determined against the perceived workforce benefit of the training. Bursaries could include:

- Attendance at an industry relevant conferences
- Continuing professional development workshops
- Online webinars or training programs.

Courses and activities do not need to be accredited but will be assessed by Health Workforce Queensland for relevance, value for money and the likelihood to meet the identified learning need.

Scholarships and bursaries will not be available for:

- Retropective costs
- Overseas expenses
- Study funded by other sources
- Activities for which other Commonwealth, State, Territory or Local Government bodies have primary responsibility. This includes training for health professionals working solely in a public hospital.

4. Process

a. Application

Potential applicants who work in Queensland and meet the above eligibility criteria should apply directly to Health Workforce Queensland using the Self-Service Portal via the HWSP webpage. Applicants may need to register an account before completing the application.
b. Case Management
Successful applicants will be appropriately case managed by Health Workforce Queensland throughout their scholarship/bursary activity relevant to the value of the scholarship/bursary and the scope of any Return of Service Obligation (see Section 4d and Section 4f below).

c. Payments
Payment of scholarships funds will be paid upfront to the successful applicant.

Payment of bursary funds will be reimbursed to the successful applicant after the applicant has booked and organised their professional development activity. Only in special circumstances will Health Workforce Queensland pay bursary funds upfront.

d. Return of Service Obligations
Return of Service Obligation (ROSO) will be negotiated with the applicant as part of the application process. The ROSO will be clearly stated in their contract with Health Workforce Queensland, which the successful applicant will need to sign before commencing the activity.

e. Debt Recovery
Where a successful applicant does not fulfil their contract with Health Workforce Queensland, they will seek to recover the relevant monies.

f. Complaints, ROSO Waivers and Appeals
Unsuccessful applicants who wish to appeal the outcome of their application should initially discuss their situation with the Service Delivery Manager to determine if they may be eligible to submit a future application for the HWSP or if there are other avenues to access funding and/or support to meet their upskilling or professional development needs.

Should the above not resolve their concern, the unsuccessful applicant can appeal to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to consider their case. The CEO is the final arbiter for any appeal on the HWSP.

Successful applicants who are unable to meet their ROSO due to exceptional circumstances are able to request to negotiate alternatives with their Case Manager. Exceptional circumstances means any circumstances beyond the control of the successful applicant, which were not reasonably foreseeable by the successful applicant at the time they entered into the contract and which prevent the successful applicant from meeting their ROSO.

The Case Manager will, however, seek to find alternatives to allow successful applicants to meet their ROSO before a waiver will be considered. Health Workforce Queensland reserves the final right to hold the successful applicant to their ROSO, however, and can recover the debt where a mutual outcome cannot be found.

Should the above not resolve their concern, the successful applicant can appeal to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to consider their ROSO. The CEO is the final arbiter for any appeal on the HWSP.