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District Health**
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Expression of Interest

Aboriginal Nursing & Midwifery Postgraduate Scholarship Program

The Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Program is aimed at registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander¹ nurses and midwives, who are seeking to, or currently undertaking a postgraduate nursing or midwifery qualification, and are currently employed within a Victorian public health service.

The Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Program aligns with Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Agreement and Action Plan.

The Aboriginal postgraduate nursing and midwifery scholarships targets the following areas of practice:

- Palliative care (Cherie Waight Nursing Scholarship)
- Aged care, renal dialysis, chronic disease, diabetes, and oncology
- Other postgraduate nursing and midwifery courses.

The program includes the Cherie Waight Nursing Scholarship. This scholarship recognises the government's commitment to ensuring the Victorian health system is reflective of, and meets the palliative care needs of, our Aboriginal community. Ms Cherie Waight worked to improve access to palliative care for the Aboriginal community and ensured that palliative care service providers across Victoria were appropriately educated and able to deliver culturally safe care.

For more information contact Jayne Stead, Staff Education Manager, P: 03 5033 9448 E: jstead@shdh.org.au

Expressions of interest applications together with your resume can be forwarded to People & Culture, E: employment@shdh.org.au

Closing Date: 30th November 2023

Swan Hill District Health is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and people with disability

Aboriginal nursing and midwifery postgraduate scholarship program

Guidelines and Application Form 2023-2024

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Summary

What is it?	The Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Postgraduate Scholarship Program is for registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives, who are seeking to, or are currently, undertaking a postgraduate nursing or midwifery qualification, and are currently employed within a Victorian public health service
Key Characteristics	<p>Eligible postgraduate courses must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ be delivered by a university or other accredited higher education provider ➤ lead to an award qualification at postgraduate certificate, or postgraduate diploma level ➤ include clinical nursing or midwifery practice related to the selected area of study. <p>Supported areas of practice may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ palliative care (Cherie Waight Nursing Scholarship) ➤ aged care, renal dialysis, chronic disease, diabetes, and oncology ➤ other postgraduate nursing and midwifery courses.
Important Dates	<p>Funding applications open – Monday 3 July 2023</p> <p>Funding applications close – Friday 11 August 2023</p>

Introduction

The Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Program is aimed at registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander¹ nurses and midwives, who are seeking to, or currently undertaking a postgraduate nursing or midwifery qualification, and are currently employed within a Victorian public health service.

The Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Program aligns with Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Agreement and Action Plan.

The Aboriginal postgraduate nursing and midwifery scholarships targets the following areas of practice:

- palliative care (Cherie Waight Nursing Scholarship)
- aged care, renal dialysis, chronic disease, diabetes, and oncology
- other postgraduate nursing and midwifery courses.

The program includes the Cherie Waight Nursing Scholarship. This scholarship recognises the government's commitment to ensuring the Victorian health system is reflective of, and meets the palliative care needs of, our Aboriginal community. Ms Cherie Waight worked to improve access to palliative care for the Aboriginal community and ensured that palliative care service providers across Victoria were appropriately educated and able to deliver culturally safe care.

Purpose

The key purpose of the Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Program is to provide opportunity for Aboriginal nurses and midwives to gain specialty skills whilst employed within a Victorian public health service. For the individual applicant, the scholarship will contribute toward their achievement of career development goals, while reducing some of the financial burden of undertaking postgraduate studies.

At the organisational/regional level, the scholarship will contribute to a stronger Aboriginal health workforce and to improve outcomes for the community, by supporting Aboriginal nurses and midwives to gain further skills and advance their knowledge.

In seeking to improve representation of Aboriginal people within Victorian health workforces, the benefits of the program include:

- increased opportunity for Aboriginal nurses and midwives interested in developing their knowledge and skills in specialty nursing and midwifery practice
- increased opportunity for Aboriginal nurses and midwives to integrate theoretical knowledge into clinical practice
- financial support for Aboriginal nurses and midwives seeking to complete relevant postgraduate qualifications
- best practice in the care of patients in Victorian health services.

Funding

Scholarships attract the following funding to support one year of study, and include:

- \$10,000 to undertake a postgraduate certificate
- \$20,000 to undertake a postgraduate diploma.

¹ Throughout this document, reference to Aboriginal people considers all people living in Victoria who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The Department of Health (the department) provides the scholarship with the aim to offset study costs, which can include tuition fees and student contributions, study loans, books and equipment, travel required to attend lectures and clinical placements, child-care, and other related study costs.

Employers have a responsibility to ensure they facilitate scholarship recipients to successfully complete their postgraduate qualification, by:

- satisfying study leave requirements in accordance with industrial provisions and fair and equitable rostering practice
- enabling access to learning opportunities in the clinical environment
- enabling access to library and e-learning opportunities.

Health services may contribute funding in addition to the department scholarships, as appropriate.

Key Dates

Action	Indicative Date
Funding applications open	Monday 3 July 2023
Funding applications close	Friday 11 August 2023
Health services anticipated to be notified of application outcome	Friday 8 September 2023
Funding distributed to health services	October 2023

Scope

In Scope

The Aboriginal Postgraduate Scholarship is aimed at Aboriginal nurses and midwives who are currently employed at a Victorian Public Health Service.

Out of Scope

Non-Aboriginal nurses and midwives.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicant eligibility

Scholarship applicants must:

- be employed as a Registered Nurse or Registered Midwife 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 1988, a community health service, or an Aboriginal medical service
- demonstrate support from their health service employer to undertake studies
- be currently registered as a nurse or midwife with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA)
- identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person
- provide evidence of current/pending enrolment in a postgraduate program
- not have previously received a department scholarship to study in the area
- be committed to the successful completion the specified postgraduate course.

Postgraduate course eligibility

Eligible postgraduate courses must:

- be delivered by a university or other accredited higher education provider
- lead to an award qualification at postgraduate certificate, or postgraduate diploma level
- include clinical nursing or midwifery practice related to the selected area of study.

Specialty areas to consider when selecting a study program

Aboriginal nurses and midwives are encouraged to consider postgraduate studies, particularly in areas such as:

- Palliative care (In honour of Cherie Waight)
- Aged care
- Renal dialysis
- Cardiac care
- Chronic disease management
- Diabetes education
- Oncology
- Mental health
- Midwifery.

Please note that other relevant specialty areas not listed can be considered.

Course dates and duration

Scholarship funding will support one year full-time or equivalent part-time study.

It is anticipated that applicants will commence their studies in the 2024 academic year.

Scholarship allocations process

All applications that satisfy the above conditions of eligibility will be assessed.

Scholarships will be granted at the discretion of a selection panel through a competitive process, based on the content of the application.

The selection panel will include at least three departmental members.

The final list of approved applicants will be approved by the Director, Workforce Strategy and Planning or their delegate.

Health services will be required to administer and report on scholarships provided and track enrolments and successful completions.

Funding conditions

The following conditions of funding apply to Aboriginal Postgraduate Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships:

Deferment from course

If a student is required to defer their course participation, they must notify their employer and the department's Health Workforce Policy Team 1 within one week of the change in study arrangements.

If the recipient plans to recommence study in the next 12 months, they will not need to return the funds. If the recipient does not return to study within this time the scholarship funds will be recalled. The amount to be repaid will be based on the 'Withdrawal from course' rules (see below).

Students may re-apply in subsequent scholarship rounds.

Withdrawal from course

Scholarship recipients who make the decision to withdraw from their course are required to notify their employer and department within one week of formally withdrawing. Scholarship recipients are encouraged to seek support and advice prior to any decision to withdraw.

Following withdrawal, total funds may be required to be returned if completion of their semester enrolment is unsuccessful. If the candidate withdraws post successful completion of semester one, they will be required to notify the department to discuss options as soon as possible all unspent scholarship funds that would otherwise have been allocated to semester two costs.

Disbursement and conditions

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

The employing health service will disseminate funds directly to the recipient/s 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 funding.

Successful applicants are responsible for enrolling and paying course fees (or deferring fees) or Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) fees by the due date and are responsible for debts incurred during study, including FEE-HELP and HECS-HELP loans.

- Refer [here](#) for more information about study assist – help loans.

Students with a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) may be eligible for a discount if the student's HELP contribution is paid ahead of the census date for each semester.

- Refer [here](#) for more information about study assist – Commonwealth Supported Places.

Taxable Income

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

- they may be liable to pay tax on their scholarship. For more information about tax liability and scholarships refer to the calculator on the Australian Taxation Office website [here](#)
- they may be entitled to claim a tax deduction for self-education expenses. For more information about claiming self-education expenses please refer to the Australian Taxation Office website [here](#).

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

Roles and responsibilities

Health services will be responsible for supporting eligible staff to participate in the Aboriginal postgraduate scholarship program.

Participating health services will be asked to participate in quarterly meetings (online) of the Aboriginal Graduate and Cadetship Network. The Network consists of approximately 20 health services, currently chaired by Eastern Health. The Network is a forum for information sharing and advice, encouraging links across programs and ensures that participating health services can deliver culturally appropriate support and mentoring for Aboriginal cadets and graduates.

How to Apply

Victorian public health services are invited to submit the attached funding application form outlining their expected activity commitment for 2023-2024.

Assessment criteria

Applicants are requested to address the following points via the attached application form:

1. Details of current employment.
2. Evidence of NMBA registration.
3. Name of course, university and chosen specialty area of practice.
4. Evidence of enrolment including enrolment status – part time/full time course load and course dates.
5. Evidence of course details – enrolled units and subjects.
6. A description of how this funding will assist your career in nursing or midwifery.

Completed funding application forms must be submitted via email to nmw@health.vic.gov.au by **11 August 2023**.

Late or unsigned applications may not be accepted.

Assessment of Applications

Applications will be assessed by a departmental selection panel and will include a transparent and rigorous process based on applicant's responses to key selection criteria as specified in the attached guidelines.

Funding Conditions

Funds will be disbursed to the health service for payment to the scholarship recipient through the usual departmental budget payment system, and in line with existing finance arrangements.

By accepting funds under the program, a recipient health service agrees to:

- commence the program in 2023-2024
- provide data including process, participation, and outcomes, about the health service's postgraduate scholarship program, including from scholarship recipients where appropriate consent has been sought and permissions given
- provide financial acquittal and any other necessary departmental reporting for the program as required

- notify and discuss with the department any issues that may impact the establishment, implementation, or evaluation of the program, including any changes to the number and names of any cadetship program participants, and
- maintain their own financial and program records, and ensure the department has two organisational contacts to maintain corporate knowledge of the program.

Further Information

Please direct any enquires to: nmw@health.vic.gov.au

Aboriginal Programs EOI Coordinator
Policy Team 1 (Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine Workforce)
Department of Health
Email: nmw@health.vic.gov.au

Application Form

Health service
name

Key contact
name

Position/Title

Email

Telephone

Applicant details

Title		Family name		Given name/s	
Residential address					
Suburb		State		Postcode	
Postal address					
Contact details	Work		Mobile		
E-mail					
Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia registration number				Registration expiry date	
<i>Applicants are required to provide a copy of their current Nursing or Midwifery registration certificate</i>					
Have you received a scholarship or funding from the Department of Health in the past? (Please tick ✓)				Y	N
If yes, health services must contact the department to discuss eligibility					

Employment details

Position	
Area of practice	
Employer	
Name and title of employer contact	
Campus	

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Employment status	Full time		Part time	
Is your employment for the duration of the course confirmed?	Y		N	
Is your employer/ manager aware that you are undertaking a course with a supervised clinical component? <i>(Please tick ✓)</i>	Y		N	
If not, provide explanation:				

Course details

Name of course				
Name of tertiary institution (including campus)				
Course commencement date	/	/	Course completion date	/ /
What qualification level will you attain with this funding? <small>Please tick award qualification (exit point) at completion of studies.</small>	Graduate Certificate		Graduate Diploma	
Is your study part-time or full time in semester one 2024? <small>Please tick ✓</small>	Part time		Full time	
Course place <small>Please tick ✓</small>	Full-Fee Paying		CSP or HELP	
Fees payment method for semester one 2024 <small>Please tick ✓</small>	Upfront payment to the university		FEE-HELP Loan	
	HECS-HELP		Combination	
Course costs and other related study expenses				
<i>Please include evidence of enrolment - enrolment status (part time/full time course load), evidence of course details (enrolled units, subjects) and evidence of payment or deferment of fees (full-fee paying students only)</i>				
Provide details below of other professional development assistance sought				
Have you been awarded a scholarship, grant or professional development funding from another source for this course? <small>Please tick ✓</small> <i>Exclude loans from your employer or other bodies that you are required to repay.</i>	Y		N	
Name of Source		Amount	\$	

Relevant education and clinical history

Briefly describe any relevant post-secondary education qualifications			
Year of course completion	Name of course/program of study	Institution/education provider	Additional comments
Briefly describe details of relevant professional experience (prior to course commencement)			
Dates	Description of clinical/professional experience		

Commitment to specialty area of practice

Provide a brief description of your interest/commitment to the specialty area of nursing / midwifery practice for which the scholarship is sought.
How will this funding assist your career in nursing or midwifery?

Declaration by Chief Executive Officer / Director	
<i>In submitting this application, the signatory confirms they have read the Guidelines attachments, is to the best of their knowledge, true, accurate and complete in all material and declares that the information contained in the application, including all particulars.</i>	
Name & Title	
Signature (An authorised electronic signature is acceptable)	If you are unable to insert an authorised electronic CEO signature, emailing a scanned copy is acceptable, providing that it is of reasonable quality.
Preferred email (Please print)	
Date	