

Working in the Australian health system

The Australian health system is a mixture of public and private services involving all three tiers of government (Commonwealth, state and territory and local government). An overview of the Australian healthcare system can be found at <www.healthconnect.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/healthsystem-overview-contents>.

In broad terms the health system consists of four major clusters of services:

- Primary care - addresses needs which are episodic and provides first contact to the health system. Commonly they are general practitioner services (Commonwealth funded) and nursing and allied health care services (state funded).
- Acute health - generally provided in hospitals, public or private (predominantly state funded).
- Coordinated care - met by a range of organisations such as nursing homes (largely Commonwealth funded), hostels and community based services.
- Public health - funded largely through the state and local government.

Two national subsidy schemes, Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme are funded by the Commonwealth Government and aim to provide all Australians, irrespective of circumstance, access to health care at no or low cost. These schemes subsidise payments for services provided by doctors and optometrists, and for a high proportion of prescription medications bought from pharmacies.

Additional mechanisms (such as greater rebates) aim to further support vulnerable individuals such as those with disabilities, veterans and those receiving social welfare.

Victorian workplaces

The Victorian health workplaces are as diverse as the people who staff them. From very remote health services to large tertiary metropolitan health services there are certain rights and responsibilities for both employers and employees. Many of these rights and responsibilities are covered in the legislation and common law that governs the Australian employment system.

For information about pay and conditions, taxation, privacy, health care levy, superannuation and workplace safety visit the Live in Victoria website <www.liveinvictoria.vic.gov.au>.

Further information

The Live in Victoria website <www.liveinvictoria.vic.gov.au> is the key gateway to everything you need to know about Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Details of Victorian public health services are listed on the Victorian Government website: www.health.vic.gov.au/publichospitals/pubwebs.htm.

The Victorian Government also hosts the Health Jobs website <www.health.vic.gov.au/jobs> where health services can post their employment vacancies.



Living and working in Victoria as a health professional



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Living in Victoria

There are many reasons why a health career in Victoria should be the next step you take. Victoria is home to over a quarter of Australia's total population - more than five million people. One in four Victorians were born in another country. English is the official language but more than 20 per cent of Victorians and almost 30 per cent of Melbournians speak a language other than English at home - representing a total of 180 different languages and dialects.

Everything is within easy reach in Victoria – from the snowfields to the beaches, from the city to the rivers and valleys. Victoria boasts some of the best scenery in the world, including the Grampian ranges, Victorian Alps and the famous Great Ocean Road, which winds many kilometres through some of the most spectacular coastal scenery in Australia.

Victoria is renowned for many things: food, fashion, arts and entertainment; a temperate climate, festivals, world class education and housing; sporting activities and major events.

Victoria's capital, Melbourne, is Australia's second largest city and was rated by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2002 and 2004 as the 'world's most liveable city'. Melbourne is the food, fashion and cultural centre of Australia. An energetic city; it has hundreds of restaurants and cuisines, enjoyed by a population of more than three million people living in the metropolitan area.

The Live in Victoria website <www.liveinvictoria.vic.gov.au> is the key gateway to everything you need to know about Melbourne and regional Victoria. The site provides extensive details about major towns, the local government councils, and the skills in demand in each regional area.

Choosing the Victorian health system

The Victorian health system provides a world class service. Since 1999, the Victorian Government has upgraded over 50 hospitals and allocated \$4 billion in extra health and aged care funding.

The Victorian health system is large enough to have the full range of clinical services including super specialty, or tertiary, state-wide services and regional hospitals serving rural and remote communities. Our rural and remote communities need health professionals who are resilient, innovative and flexible and who look forward to the challenges and rewards that rural and remote practice offers.

The Victorian health system provides a valuable career opportunity for Victorian, interstate and overseas health professionals, as it continually seeks staff to expand services to meet the demands, expectations and access to health care.

In Victoria, health services directly employ health professionals to provide health, community and aged care services to the community. This means that staff apply to, and negotiate employment, directly with the individual health service/hospital.

Details of Victorian public health services are listed on the Victorian Government website: www.health.vic.gov.au/publichospitals/pubwebs.htm. Most health services have their own websites that provide information about the health service, range of clinical services they provide, and employment opportunities.

The Victorian Government also hosts the Health Jobs website <www.health.vic.gov.au/jobs> where health services can post their employment vacancies.

Department of Human Services

The Department of Human Services is Victoria's largest state government department and is responsible for the planning, funding and delivery of health, community and housing services.

Although individual health services directly employ health professionals, the department also employs more than 11,500 people and funds organisations such as hospitals, aged care facilities, ambulance services and community service agencies that collectively employ more than 80,000 people.

The department is responsible for the following health, mental health and aged care services:

- health care services through the public hospital system, community health services and ambulance services
- health promotion and protection through emergency management, public health and related preventative services, education and regulation
- a range of alcohol and drug prevention and treatment services
- the public mental health service system consisting of clinical services and psychiatric disability rehabilitation and support services
- residential and rehabilitation care for older people, along with support and assistance to enable them to remain independently in their own homes.

