

Victorian HACC Program Expenditure Priorities Statement 2006-09

Equity

The approach to equity published in the consultation paper proposed that regions should receive funding to maintain per capita funding levels relative to growth in their HACC population and also emphasized the need to move under funded regions closer to equity, with clear regional benchmarks for per capita funding to be reached by the end of the triennium.

The regional benchmarks were based on indicative figures for both the distribution of funds in the base and the target population since final figures were not available at the time. During the consultation period, new population figures were released showing a higher rate of growth than predicted. Per capita funding amounts have been adjusted accordingly and also now include the full year effect of 2005-06 growth funding.

As a result of these changes, the amount of funds required for population growth has increased. This means that the funds distribution method will respond to those regions experiencing population growth particularly those local government areas in growth corridors.

The final amount of growth funds available for distribution in 2006-07, and subsequent regional funding allocations, is subject to State and Federal budget decisions and to joint ministerial approval of the HACC Annual Plan in accordance with the HACC Agreement.

In response to feedback received and updated data, the equity approach has been refined, consistent with the basic principles published in the consultation paper. The revised approach increases the per capita funding benchmark for all metropolitan regions to the 2005-06 end of year statewide average (\$523) and increases the rural benchmark to the 2005-06 end of year rural average (\$598). These benchmarks are achievable by the end of the triennium

The revised approach will continue to adhere to the basic principles in the consultation paper. That is:

1. All regions will receive funding to maintain existing per capita funding levels, responding to population growth during the triennium.
2. Additional funding will be provided to five under funded regions (North & West Metropolitan Region, Southern Metropolitan Region, Eastern Metropolitan Region, Barwon-South Western Region and Gippsland Region) to move them to defined funding benchmarks over the triennium, thus moving them closer to equity.

Priority 1 (2006–09)

In 2006-09 'HACC Basic'¹ activities will be expanded within the overarching equity framework described above. Recommendations for funding will be informed by program redevelopments incorporating:

- A commitment to facilitating the national redevelopment agenda.
- Implementation of the assessment framework in response to the increasing focus, at both a national and state level, on the need for consistency, well marked access points and the impact of a more active model of service.
- Strategies to increase the HACC Program's effectiveness in maximising client independence through supporting the development of person centred and capacity building approaches to service delivery.
- Redevelopment of food services so that they are more targeted to respond to variation in clients' need for social support as well as managing nutritional risk.
- A research and development project during the first 18 months of the triennium leading to a funding strategy for respite and social support.
- A commitment of up to 5% of total regional growth funding, or approximately \$875,000 in 2006-07, to expand planned activity groups.

Priority 2 (2006-09)

In 2006-09 Priority 2 should focus on enhancing access to HACC services including planned activity groups.

- The quantity and quality of HACC Basic services for people from CALD backgrounds should be increased. Work should continue to develop linkages and raise cultural awareness between mainstream, multi-cultural and ethno-specific organisations.
- Further time should be allowed to realise and evaluate the outcomes of strategies implemented over 2003-06, including the Culturally Equitable Gateways Strategy (CEGS).
- Growth funds should be allocated to planned activity groups where there is evidence to support new services for new and emerging communities or to expand services for established communities that have a growing ageing population, within the parameters of the recommended funding commitment in Priority 1, up to 5% of growth funding or approximately \$875,000 in 2006-07.

Priority 3 (2006–09)

Maintain the underlying objectives and principles of Priority 3 to increase and enhance access to HACC services for Indigenous people. In 2006-09 Priority 3 will have two major themes:

- To continue progress against the 'Going Forward Together' strategy with a particular focus on increasing the viability and capacity of Indigenous agencies to better meet the needs of their communities and to meet Program accountability requirements.
- To contribute to the DHS Project 'Improving the way we consult with and fund Indigenous organisations'.

¹ HACC Basic activities are domestic assistance, personal care, assessment, client care co-ordination, property maintenance, delivered meals, nursing and allied health.