

Strengthening Wound Management Practice: Information Sheet for Wound Management Clinical Nurse Consultant Position

1. Background

In May 2008, the Minister for Senior Victorians announced a range of initiatives to strengthen wound management practice in Victoria, with a particular focus on district nursing and public sector residential aged care services (PSRACS). The establishment of the Regional Wound Management Clinical Nurse Consultant positions is one of these initiatives.

2. Aim of Wound Management Clinical Nurse Consultant Position

To improve outcomes for clients of Home and Community Care (HACC) funded district nursing services and high care residents of PSRACS by strengthening the wound management practice of staff providing these services. This aim will be achieved through enabling staff and clinicians caring for people with chronic wounds to access a Wound Management Clinical Nurse Consultant who will provide expert advice in the management of chronic and complex wounds and build capacity in staff through mentoring, on site support and the delivery of specialist training sessions.

3. Target group:

Nurses at HACC funded district nursing services who are caring for people with chronic wounds and nurses staffing PSRACS with high care beds in the five Victorian Department of Human Services rural regions.

4. Development and management of initiative

Department of Human Services regional offices will work with local stakeholders to determine an agency to auspice the Regional Wound Management Clinical Nurse Consultant on behalf of the Region.

It is expected that a consultation process will occur with district nursing and PSRACS to determine how the consultant position will operate in the region to best provide support to staff. A regional steering group should be developed to oversee the position with representation from stakeholders across the Region. A work plan for the first 12 months should be developed by 30 September 2008.

It is essential that support, supervision and mentoring structures are available for these positions. This should be offered at both a regional and statewide level. Regional support structures should be specified within the work plan. The establishment of structures to assist the people in these five positions to provide peer support to each other and other possible statewide support options will be explored in a meeting of all projects to be held in late August 2008 in the Department of Human Services Central office.

5. Role and context of position

Each region will have flexibility in how to establish and organise the position. All position descriptions would need to encompass the following important aspects of the role:

- Provide a wound management consultancy service to all HACC funded district nursing services and PSRACS services with high care beds in their region, with a focus on supporting the management of people with complex and chronic wounds.

- Identify learning needs of staff and undertake clinical teaching and training activities relating to wound care as appropriate.
- Provide mentoring and support for staff with an interest in wound care.
- Provide expert assessment in the case of complex and chronic wounds.
- Operate collaboratively with the various project stakeholders in the region.
- Provide a conduit by which services can access expert advice in a consistent manner, achieving uniform information being supplied and utilised by services.
- Develop and maintain key links with specialist agencies.
- Ensure evaluation data is collected.
- Provide input into improved practice and systemic change in relation to wound management at a service and regional level.
- Contribute to research in the area.

Persons obtaining the roles would be expected to have the following experience and competencies:

- A post graduate degree or at least certificate in wound management
- Been working in the specialty for at least three years
- Belong to the their professional wound association (WMAV)
- Evidence of advanced clinical skills
- Experience in teaching and mentoring
- Demonstrated leadership skills
- Evidence of involvement in policy development at a local, state organisational level.

Given the geographical challenges of the role, consultants will need to make use of various strategies to ensure effective regional access and coverage including telephone, e-mail (information updates and pictures of wounds sent electronically to provide accurate information for advice), teleconference and video conference options amongst others. It is anticipated however, that the consultant will physically spend a significant amount of time on site at agency locations in either an educational or consultative capacity.

6. Evaluation

The Rural Region Wound Management Clinical Nurse Consultant positions are being established for an initial three year period and will be evaluated during the course of this time. The future of the positions will be determined at the end of this period, depending on the outcomes achieved.

The evaluation strategy and outcomes to be measured will be developed in conjunction with agencies and the consultants themselves. The regular teleconferences with consultants will be utilised to develop appropriate evaluation mechanisms for the three year positions.

Broader evaluation of the impact of the range of strategies included within the Strengthening Wound Management Practice initiative is currently being explored at a statewide level.

7. Funding amount

Each rural region has been funded an establishment grant of \$25,000 of one off funds, and a further \$130,000 per year for an initial 3 year period.

8. Further information

For further information please contact your relevant Regional Aged Care or HACC contact or from Aged Care Branch, Kriss McKie on (03) 9096 7988 or kris.mckie@dhs.vic.gov.au or Lisa Jarvie on (03) 9096 6963 or lisa.jarvie@dhs.vic.gov.au.