

Regional Health Service Partnership

Victorian Nurse Practitioner Candidate Support Packages

**Application Guidelines**

Overview

Since the establishment of the Victorian Nurse Practitioner Program (VNPP), the Department of Health (the department) has supported Victorian health services to implement Nurse Practitioner (NP) models of care. With models now operating in most areas of practice and healthcare settings, funding has shifted to better support health services committed to the supervision and mentorship of registered nurses that have or intend to commence a Master of Nurse Practitioner.

In partnership with the VNPP, the department’s Priority Population Groups and Communities unit is offering regional Health Service Partnerships (HSPs) the opportunity to apply for a Nurse Practitioner Candidate (NPC) support package(s) for models of care operating at the health/aged care interface. These support packages are intended to foster an increase in the number of NPs working at this interface in order to enhance opportunities for aged care residents to access the health care they need from their place of residence.

It is expected that health services within the HSP will collectively consider and identify opportunities to support NPCs within their catchment area. Regional and rural health services that can clearly demonstrate that they have a model of care established or in development, supporting governance arrangements and an approved1 business model will be considered in a competitive process. Regional and rural health services interested in applying for a package are encouraged to consider existing NP models operating at the health/aged care interface.

This document provides the funding framework for this initiative, selection criteria for funding of health services, funding conditions and deliverables. Organisations applying for NPC support packages should also consider allocating a master level Nursing and Midwifery Postgraduate Scholarship to the registered nurse they will have recruited to this role.

1. **Amount and purpose**

The department is offering $42,500 per candidate to health services as a contribution towards the costs of providing clinical and professional supervision and mentorship to a NPC. Following a successful selection process, funding will be provided to health services as a one–off, capped unit price.

Eligible organisations can apply for a NPC support package for a registered nurse, already employed or to be recruited, into an advanced practice role leading to endorsement as a NP. These packages are a contribution to the full costs associated with supporting the clinical and professional elements required to meet the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) NP Registration Standard, available at: https://[www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements.aspx](http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements.aspx)

The department does not provide separate funding for NP wages. Funding for ongoing positions for endorsed NPs must be found from existing funding streams within the health service. The provision of NPC support packages by the department is not linked to, or an undertaking to, provide additional salary support in the future.

1 Signed by that organisation’s Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors of Nursing and Finance (or equivalent roles)

Completion of a business case is a mandatory element of the application process and must include an analysis of internal budget options to support the transition from NPC to employment as an endorsed NP.

1. **Eligibility**
   1. **Eligible services are:**
      * All public hospitals and public health services (excluding metropolitan public health services) identified in schedules 1, 4 and 5 of the *Health Services Act 1998*.
   2. **Selection criteria:**

Successful applicants must provide evidence the registered nurse they wish to support is:

1. eligible for endorsement as a NP in Australia (NMBA registration number required)
2. employed by an eligible service (rural or regional)
3. nominated or recently engaged as a NP candidate with a formal letter of employment stating the expectations and responsibilities of both employer and employee with respect to the candidacy, including negotiated timeframes to complete studies, present application for endorsement and commitment to employment as NP when endorsed.
4. where the NP candidate has already been engaged, they are in the early phase of their candidacy and enrolled in a master’s level course of study leading to endorsement as a NP.
5. practising in an area/setting that is aligned with the organisation’s service and/or strategic plan, state or national service/policy framework for the targeted clinical area.

Organisations must provide evidence they have:

1. developed or are developing a structured program of clinical and professional support designed to assist in meeting the appointed candidate’s endorsement and course requirements.
2. developed or have a commitment to develop a model of care, inclusive of a NP role that demonstrates the service benefits at the health/aged care interface.
3. demonstrated capacity to successfully manage workforce initiatives of this size, complexity and type.
4. the ability to accept the funds in the current financial year.
5. the support of executive management and specific clinical sponsors (who are considered clinical leaders) in the targeted area of practice.
6. evidence of collaboration across your Health Service Partnership to maximise the value to the region of the NP role.
7. evidence of clear governance structures and ongoing support for the model (for example a Steering Committee) that will be sustained beyond the endorsement of a candidate.
8. completed a business case that supports recruitment of a candidate who will make the transition to endorsement as a NP.

**Note:**

* + 1. Candidate Support Packages attached to previous VNPP funding rounds are not eligible for additional funding in this funding round.

1. **How to apply**

Applications using the Nurse Practitioner Candidate Regional Support Packages Application template and the associated business case should be sent electronically to: [belinda.gilsenan@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:belinda.gilsenan@health.vic.gov.au) no later than **5:00pm Thursday 28 April 2022.**

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

The application and a recommended business case template are available at: https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/nursing-and-midwifery/furthering-your-nursing-and- midwifery-career/nurse-practitioner

1. **Disbursement and conditions**

The funds ($42,500) will be dispersed to successful services by end of June 2022, as a one-off payment to ensure timely appointment or deployment of a NPC.

* 1. **Funding conditions**

Funds are to be directed to the following activities:

* + - candidate support including recruitment costs related to the appointment of NPC and development of an individualised NP candidacy program
    - clinical and professional supervision and mentorship
    - specific NPC skills acquisition in alignment with the identified model of care and the NPC scope of practice.

VNPP candidate support funding is **NOT** to be used for model development activities such as:

* + - review of specific service planning and workforce analysis, data/demand analysis, service gap identification
    - budget and business case development (that identifies how the ongoing salary costs will be met by the service)
    - stakeholder consultation and communication (internal and external) regarding role implementation or recruitment
    - establishment of corporate, clinical and educational governance structures to support candidates and endorsed NPs
    - employment of a project worker or NPC salary
    - project management overheads (such as administrative assistance, stationary, printing, mobile telephone, computer and communication facilities, library fees, corporate costs)
    - NPC postgraduate tertiary education costs (See Postgraduate Nursing Scholarships: https://www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing-and-midwifery/postgraduate-scholarships)
    - patient/client-related costs such as patient care, consumables, tests and investigations
    - costs directly associated with candidate’s NMBA application for endorsement as NP
    - case consultation and other activities considered part of regular health care process
    - clinical equipment, refurbishment, capital works or general infrastructure.

The department anticipates that health services will be advised of the outcome of their submission, via email by 26 May 2022.

1. **Deliverables**

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| **No.** | **Deliverable** | **Format** | **Date Due** |
| **1** | A business case supporting the recruitment of a candidate and their ongoing employment upon endorsement. | The VNPP business template was designed to address all elements of interest to the department, but health services may use their own templates if that is their preference. | **Attached to Application** |
| **2** | Evidence of recruitment and appointment of an eligible registered nurse to the identified model of care | A signed copy of a contract or employment variation clearly demonstrating the role meets the NMBA requirements of an advanced practise role leading to endorsement as a NP.  If candidate details were unknown at the time of application, ensure all requested candidate details are provided at this time. | **3 months post payment \*** |
| **3** | Budget Acquittal | Excel worksheet with executive sign off (1 page) | **12 months post payment** |

*\* Failure to vary the employment contract of an existing registered nurse or to recruit an appropriate candidate within the 3 months allocated, will result in a recall of funding so that it can be reallocated to another organisation.*

1. **Contact/further information**

For further information about these Nurse Practitioner Candidate Support Packages please contact: Belinda Gilsenan

Senior Policy Officer

Tel: (03) 9456 3156 or

[belinda.gilsenan@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:belinda.gilsenan@health.vic.gov.au)

For more information or to download the application template or business case template go to: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing-and-midwifery/furthering-your-nursing-and-midwifery-career>

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