

2020 Victorian Nurse Practitioner Candidate Support Packages

Application Guidelines

Overview

Since establishment of the Victorian Nurse Practitioner Program (VNPP), the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) has supported Victorian health services to implement Nurse Practitioner (NP) models of care that reflect the full diversity of nursing practice and any service gaps the NP role can address.

In 2020, VNPP funding will be targeted to health services committed to providing the supervision and mentorship of registered nurses that have, or intend to commence, a Master of Nurse Practitioner. In Victoria, these registered nurses are often referred to as Nurse Practitioner Candidates (NPCs). Organisations that can clearly demonstrate 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.

All eligible health services are encouraged to apply, however rural and regional organisations will be prioritised, given the limited capacity to implement NP roles in those settings. 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 \$36,000 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>

The department does not provide separate funding for NP wages. Health services are responsible for funding ongoing positions of endorsed NPs. The provision of NPC support packages by the department is not linked to, or an undertaking to, provide additional salary support in the future.

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

2. Eligibility

2.1 Eligible services are:

- All public hospitals, metropolitan health services and multipurpose services identified in schedules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the *Health Services Act 1998*.
- Victorian public sector residential aged care services as per list provided at: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/services/residential.htm>
- Other organisations that provide teaching and training² activities on behalf of a public health service to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, or development of skills.

2.2 Selection criteria:

Successful organisations 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, regional or metropolitan)
3. nominated/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. in their early/mid phase of candidacy, and enrolled in or completed 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 in the area the NPC is practising.
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 clear governance structures and ongoing support for the model (for example a Steering Committee) that will be sustained beyond the endorsement of a candidate.
7. completed a business case that supports recruitment of a candidate who will make the transition to endorsement as a NP.

Note:

- Candidate Support Packages attached to previous VNPP model development rounds will not be increased retrospectively but will be provided at the rates articulated in the relevant VNPP Phase 5 model development round guidelines.
- NPC supported in previous VNPP model development funding rounds are not eligible for additional funding.

² As defined by the Australian Teaching and Training Classification v1.0 User Manual (Section 2.1):

https://www.ihsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/australian_teaching_and_training_classification_atcc_v1.0_user_manual_2018.pdf

3. How to apply

Applications using the 2020 Victorian Nurse Practitioner Candidate Support Packages Application template and the associated business case should be sent electronically to: NMW@dhhs.vic.gov.au no later than **5:00pm Thursday 29 October 2020**.

Incomplete, unsigned or late applications will not be considered.

The application and 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>

4. Disbursement and conditions

The funds (\$36,000) will be dispersed to successful services by end of December 2020, as a one-off payment to ensure timely appointment or deployment of a NPC.

4.1 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://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/nursing-and-midwifery/furthering-your-nursing-and-midwifery-career/postgraduate-nurse-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 12 November 2020.

5. Deliverables

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 preferred.	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.*

6. Contact/further information

For further information about 2020 Nurse Practitioner Candidate Support Packages please contact:

Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine Workforce at **Email:** nmw@dhhs.vic.gov.au, using the **Subject:** 2020 Nurse Practitioner Candidate Support Packages

For more information about the VNPP or to download the application template or business case template go to: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/health-workforce/nursing-and-midwifery/furthering-your-nursing-and-midwifery-career/nurse-practitioner>