

Postgraduate mental health nurse scholarship program

Semester 1, 2017

Applicant guidelines

Applications close on **11.59 pm Wednesday 1st February 2017**

Purpose

Postgraduate mental health nurse scholarships provide financial support to nurses employed (or commencing employment) within the Victorian public clinical mental health sector to assist the transition to from generalist to specialist mental health nursing and to build the capabilities required to deliver high quality, evidence-based and consumer-centred care.

About the scholarships

The Victorian Government [Department of Health and Human Services](#) (DHHS) provides \$3,000 scholarships to mental health nurses working in [Victorian Area Mental Health Services](#) to support postgraduate study in mental health nursing / advanced mental health care.

Scholarship funds are a contribution towards the cost of undertaking postgraduate studies, including tuition fees, student contributions or study loans (including HECS, Full-Fee and direct payment to academic institution), books and equipment, travel required to attend lectures and clinical placements, child care and other related study costs.

For information about other postgraduate nurse scholarships in a range of practice areas (including Nurse Practitioner Scholarships), please refer to <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing/furthering/postgrad>

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, applicants must:

1. Be a registered nurse with [the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia](#)
2. Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident or New Zealand citizen
3. Be employed (or commencing employment) in a [Victorian Area Mental Health Service](#).
4. Be enrolled in Semester 1 2017 in a postgraduate course (level 8 or higher under the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#)) delivered by a [university or accredited higher education provider](#) that leads to a tertiary qualification in mental health nursing or a related field the advances the applicant's knowledge, skills and capacity to provide effective mental health care.
5. Have the support by Director of Mental Health Nursing, as demonstrated through them endorsing the application.
6. **Applications must be typed; handwritten applications will not be accepted.**

Scholarship process

The following process will be followed:

1. Applications will be assessed provided that they satisfy the above conditions of eligibility.
2. Consideration will be given to the information applicants provide in the following areas:
 - *Whether applicants have previously received a Postgraduate Mental Health Nurse scholarship.* Applicants who have not previously received a scholarship will be prioritised.
 - *The type of study place* i.e. Commonwealth Supported Place, FEE-HELP or Direct Payment to Academic Institution. Applicants with FEE-HELP and Direct Payment to Academic Institution places will be prioritised over Commonwealth Supported applicants.
 - *Whether applicants are receiving funding support from other sources.* Applicants not receiving other funding support (scholarships) received for the course of study e.g. from a professional body or a university will be prioritised.
 - *The applicant's commitment to mental health nursing, as demonstrated through professional development activities and career aspirations*
 - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) applicants.* Applicants who identify as ATSI will be considered.
 - *Regional/Rural applicants.*
3. Scholarships will be granted at the discretion of a selection panel through a competitive process taking into consideration the above factors. The selection panel will comprise of at least three members appointed by DHSS.
4. The final list of recommended applicants is approved by the Deputy Secretary, Health Service Performance and Programs.
5. Applicants are expected to be notified of their outcome by the late-February 2017.
6. Payments are expected to be sent in early April 2017, after the first semester census date (31 March 2017).

Additional Information

An unsuccessful application is either unsuccessful for the reason that they were ineligible or they were not recommended by the selection panel. Ineligible applicants will be advised on the specific eligibility criteria they did not meet, upon request from the applicant. Applicants who have not been recommended by the selection panel will not receive further feedback from the selection panel.

Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have read these guidelines, obtained employer support and compiled all necessary documentation before submitting an application. Applicants should ensure that their application meets the eligibility requirements detailed in these guidelines.

Successful applicants are responsible for enrolling and paying course fees (or deferring fees) or HECS-HELP by the due date, and are responsible for debts incurred in the course of study including FEE-HELP and HECS-HELP loans. More information about FEE-HELP and HECS-HELP is available at the Commonwealth Government's *Study Assist* website: <http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist/>

Scholarships may be classed as taxable income depending on your financial situation. Please note DHSS cannot provide advice to applicants/recipients about taxation. For further information consult your taxation agent or visit Australian Taxation Office at <http://www.ato.gov.au/>

Supporting documentation

Applicants are required to submit a number of supporting documents at the time of application. These must include:

1. **Evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent residency or New Zealand citizenship (Applicants from New Zealand must submit a copy of their current passport)**

2. Copy of current **Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia registration** – front and back – showing name, registration number, endorsements and if there are conditions or restrictions on registration

3. **Evidence of enrolment** in Semester 1 2017, in the form of:
 - An official university letter confirming enrolment

OR

 - An official Student Tax Invoice or Statement of Account for Semester 1 2017.

Evidence provided *must* include:

- The names of enrolled units, subjects or courses for Semester 1 2017.
- The enrolment status – part time / full time study load.
- The type of place / student status – e.g. Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP), Higher Education Loan Program (HECS-HELP) or Direct Payment to Academic Institution.

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Direct Deposit Payment Form and supporting documentation:

DHHS Direct Deposit Payment Form

Applicants must fill in the DHHS Direct Deposit Payment Form and submit with application.

Supporting documentation can be in the form of:

- Bank statement (**please blank out account balance and transactions**)
- Official confirmation of account letter

Applications will not be considered unless all of the documents are provided at the point of application.

Application process

Step 1 - Ensure you have employer support and meet the eligibility criteria

- Confirm if your employer will support you to undertake postgraduate studies and seek paid study leave if required.
- Download the application form from the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) website or follow the instructions provided by your employer.
- Check your eligibility against the eligibility criteria in these guidelines.
- Check that you are able to meet the scholarship conditions.
- Please ensure your application is typed and not hand written.

Step 2 - Complete the Semester 1, 2017 Application Form.

- Applications without the applicant's signature and Director of Mental Health Nursing's endorsement will not be accepted.

Step 3 - Submit application - Applications close on **11.59 pm Wednesday 1st February 2017**

Email

MHNurseScholarships@dhhs.vic.gov.au

(pdf., .jpeg and tiff. files only)

Note: please print the form, sign the declaration and obtain Senior Psychiatric Nurse endorsement *before* scanning and emailing the application form (with supporting documents) to the above email address.

Handwritten and late applications will not be considered.

Contact

Phone: 03 9096 8311 or 03 9096 7571

Email: mhnursescholarships@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Scholarship conditions

Continued employment

The scholarship recipient must be employed within mental health in the Victorian public health sector for a period of one year full-time, or pro-rata equivalent, following the completion of the postgraduate course for which a scholarship has been awarded. Students unable to fulfil this condition may be required to refund all scholarship funds to the department.

Deferment from course

If a student is required to defer his/her studies for any reason they must notify the department within 14 business days of the change in study arrangements. All or part of the scholarship funds may be required to be returned.

Withdrawal from course

Scholarship recipients withdrawing from the course are required to notify the department within 14 business days of withdrawal. All or part of scholarship money may be required to be returned. Students are encouraged to be aware of their university's fees policy as most universities will not refund course fees if the student withdraws or defers after the census date.

Consent to share student information

Scholarship recipients may be required to sign a consent form, granting the selection panel and university permission to share application information with the department for the scholarship administration purposes.

FAQs

1. What kinds of degrees are considered 'relevant'?

Relevant degrees are those that build the capabilities required to deliver high quality, evidence-based consumer-centered care in the specialist mental health sector and/or build the capacity of the Victorian mental health sector by improving the skills and knowledge of other mental health nurses within the sector. Relevant degrees may include:

- Master of Nursing (majoring in mental health)
- Master of Mental Health Nursing
- Graduate diploma/ certificate in Mental Health Nursing
- Master of Forensic Mental Health
- Postgraduate certificate/diploma in Nursing Practice
- Master of Advanced Nursing Practice
- Graduate Certificate in Alcohol and Other Drug Studies
- Master of Addictive Behaviours
- Master of Professional Education and Training
- Master of Education

Please note, individuals undertaking studies to become a nurse practitioner are ineligible for this scholarship program and are encouraged to apply for the DHHS' [Nurse Practitioner Scholarship Program](#). The department offers a range of scholarships, which can be found on the [Nursing in Victoria](#) website.

2. My fees are due very soon. Can the scholarship be paid before the census date?

No. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they pay any fees for their courses by the agreed due date with the education provider or with the Australian Taxation Office. Scholarships will be paid after the census date (31 March 2017).

3. Can the scholarship be paid directly to my university or to the ATO?

No. Scholarships are provided directly to the applicant via direct deposit. Applicants are responsible for paying any fees/student loans.

This document is available as a Word document / PDF on the internet at:
www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/careers/benefits.htm

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