

Rural Health Continuing Education Sub-Program (RHCE)

Stream One



RURAL HEALTH
CONTINUING EDUCATION

STREAM ONE

Grants for Individual Specialists Accessing Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Guidelines

Funding Round Seven - 2015

The closing date for RHCE PMU to receive verified applications is 5:00pm EST on Friday 6 February 2015. Late applications cannot be accepted.

Rural Health and Continuing Education Sub-Program (RHCE) Stream One

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1. Background

- 1.1 RHCE is an Australian Government funded initiative, to support health professionals in rural and remote Australia in accessing continuing education and training.
- 1.2 RHCE is divided into two funding streams:
 - **Stream One supports medical specialists in rural and remote areas (with the exception of general practitioners); and**
 - Stream Two supports allied health providers, nurses, general practitioners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers in rural and remote areas.
- 1.3 **These guidelines apply to Stream One of the Program, which is managed by the Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC).**
- 1.4 RHCE Stream Two (RHCE2) is managed separately by the National Rural Health Alliance. For more information regarding RHCE2 visit <http://rhce.ruralhealth.org.au>.
- 1.5 For the purpose of these guidelines, RHCE Stream One is simply referred to as RHCE, or the RHCE Program.
- 1.6 The RHCE Program is funded until 31 December 2015.

2. Objectives of the RHCE Stream One Program

- 2.1 The objectives of the RHCE Stream One Program are to:
 - identify, develop and deliver suitable CPD and MDT activities, and peer support programs to medical specialists in rural and remote areas of Australia;
 - encourage increased collaboration between stakeholder groups and foster MDT-based education and joint continuing education projects; and
 - assist in building inter-college and stakeholder capacity to deliver these activities to medical specialists practicing in rural and remote areas of Australia.
- 2.2 Meeting the above objectives will enable to Program to fulfil its intended outcomes:
 - to enhance the delivery of quality clinical care in rural and remote Australia by improving the skill and competence of specialists working in these areas; and

- to increase the retention of health professionals in rural and remote areas.

This second outcome can be addressed through the RHCE program because in rural and remote areas, CPD is vital to:

- o providing clinicians with relevant professional education systems and networks to maintain clinical and professional standards;
- o reducing professional isolation; and
- o addressing the specific challenges of life-long learning in rural and remote settings.

2.3 RHCE funding is divided into two distinct components:

1. Individual grants for specialists to participate in CPD activities; and
2. Project grants for Specialist Medical Colleges to develop and enhance CPD initiatives for medical specialists in rural and remote locations.

3. RHCE – General Information

3.1 RHCE Program Management Committee and the RHCE Program Management Unit

3.1.1 The RHCE Program Management Committee (PMC) has been established in consultation with the member Colleges of the CPMC and the Department of Health to provide oversight and expert advice over the life of the program.

3.1.2 The RHCE Program Management Unit (PMU) currently located within The Royal Australasian College of Physicians is contracted by the CPMC to administer the RHCE Program.

3.1.3 The contact details for program staff are:

RHCE Program Manager: admin@ruralspecialist.org.au

Telephone: (02) 9256 5419

Website: www.ruralspecialist.org.au

3.2 Applications

3.2.1 Applications for RHCE Individual Grants will be assessed by an Assessment Panel appointed by the PMC. Applications will be assessed according to the criteria of each RHCE Program component as outlined in the RHCE Guidelines. The Guidelines and Application Forms are available at: www.ruralspecialist.org.au

3.2.2 Applications for funding must be based on the relevant Guidelines and Application Forms and submitted in the prescribed format.

3.2.3 Further information regarding the RHCE Program can be found at: www.ruralspecialist.org.au

4. RHCE Individual CPD Support Grants

4.1 As part of the Program, grants to support access to CPD are available to individual medical specialists who live and work in rural and remote Australia. Applications from individuals must meet the Eligibility Criteria and Application Requirements described below, and be supported by their relevant medical college.

4.2 Eligibility Criteria

4.2.1 Funding will be available to rural and remote medical specialists according to the following eligibility criteria:

1. Medical specialists who live and work in areas determined using the Australian Standard Geographical Classification – Remoteness Areas (ASGC-RA) system categories 2 to 5 as follows:
 - RA2: Inner regional
 - RA3: Outer regional
 - RA4: Remote
 - RA5: Very remote

Information on the remoteness classification of any town or community in Australia is readily available through the Australian Government's [DoctorConnect](#) website.

2. All applicants must hold current practice qualifications and registration, including compliance with any state and territory requirements and compliance with the Medical Board of Australia. International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who are undertaking Specialist Medical College requirements for specialist recognition following assessment by the College via the Australian Medical Council Specialist Assessment Pathway are eligible to apply.

Please Note: General Practitioners (ACRRM and RACGP) are ineligible to apply for funding under the Scheme, as CPD for these practitioners is funded through other Australian Government programs.

4.2.2 The CPD course provider must be either nationally accredited, nationally recognised or an accredited/professional private educational provider. Training providers may include but are not confined to universities, registered training organisations (RTOs) or professional bodies such as medical colleges and their equivalents.

4.2.3 Other forms of education, such as clinical attachments in specialist units are eligible for grant funding, but must conform to meet individual Specialist Medical College CPD program frameworks.

4.2.4 Funding under this program supplements areas not currently serviced by state and territory or other Australian Government programs.

4.3 Application Requirements

The following application requirements should be taken into account in the preparation of a funding submission:

- The Applicant must meet the Eligibility Criteria as outlined in paragraph 4.2 above;
- Individuals must demonstrate that the proposed activity meets a specific learning need;
- The CPD event must be directly relevant to the applicant's current employment in a rural or remote area of an Australian state or territory;
- The CPD event must be undertaken in Australia and must take place within the time frame specified in the Application Form;
- Courses and/or education activities nominated must be accredited by the relevant professional body;
- Courses and/or education activities must include a minimum of 6 hours of face-to-face learning per individual;
- The CPD event must have specific and explicit learning objectives and contain specific learning activities planned according to the educational objectives. The application must clearly document the outcomes of learning and implications for practice and outline a clear process for monitoring the achievement of learning objectives; and
- The CPD event that an applicant intends to undertake must be approved by the relevant specialist college.

4.4 Selection Criteria

All applications MUST address the specific selection criteria

- Demonstration of identified need at 'local' level with respect to identified healthcare needs in context of individual educational needs.
 - Location; rural and remote focus. The aim of the RHCE program is to provide CPD and education opportunities for eligible medical specialists and MDTs in rural and remote areas of Australia.*
 - Demonstration of appropriate educational principles to enable key knowledge / skills attainment and transfer.
 - Ability to integrate learning to wider context.
 - Ability to contribute to / demonstrate sustainable changes in practice.
 - Relative 'cost effectiveness' / 'value'.
 - Ability to reduce isolation.
 - Demonstrated hardship or difficulty in participating in approved CPD activities.
- * Weighting will be given to rural and remote prioritisation.

4.5 Application Assessment

- 4.5.1 Applications for Individual Grants will be assessed by an Assessment Panel appointed by the PMC. Applications will be assessed according to the criteria of each RHCE Program component as outlined in the RHCE Guidelines.
- 4.5.2 Annual Scientific Meetings are considered to be lower priority than practical skills workshops.
- 4.5.3 Further information regarding the RHCE Program can be found at: www.ruralspecialist.org.au

4.6 Budget Guidelines

Applications will be accepted up to a value of \$2,000 per training day up to a maximum of 5 days education per person.

4.7 Travel and Accommodation Guidelines

Please note that all expense items claimed under a RHCE individual CPD grant require a tax invoice showing the supplier's name, address, ABN number and GST amount.

Air travel

Only economy class air travel costs will be reimbursed.

Accommodation

Overnight accommodation prior to an event will be reimbursed only where the travelling times makes it impractical to travel on the morning of the event or to return on the same day following the event.

Where overnight accommodation is required, a maximum of \$275 per night will be refundable per night.

Reimbursement of taxis

Taxis between home/airport/location of activity identified in the Grant Application Form will be reimbursed.

Private car travel

If a private car is used in place of air travel, please consult with RHCE Program Management Unit staff to obtain approval.

Private car travel will be reimbursed at a rate of 0.69c per km. Where a private car travel will be used in place of air travel, the total amount reimbursable will be to a maximum of the respective flight cost.

Meal allowance

Amounts refundable for meals are as follows:

Breakfast up to \$20.00

Lunch up to \$30.00

Dinner up to \$60.00

Airport parking

Airport parking facilities may be used where necessary and will be reimbursed.

Accompanying Persons

RHCE Grant funds do not cover costs associated with accompanying persons.

5. RHCE Program Further Information

5.1 Complaints

Complaints must be submitted in writing to the RHCE PMU and addressed to the CPMC.

5.2 Evaluation

The participant will be required to complete a brief online evaluation following the completion of the CPD activity/ies nominated within the Application Form.

5.3 Other Funding Sources

RHCE is one of a number of measures to support health professionals in rural and remote Australia to access MDT and CPD activities. There are a number of other Australian Government programs which also support rural specialists and research.

Information about other programs is available from the Department of Health at www.health.gov.au

Contact your College to enquire about other funding opportunities available to you.

5.4 Further Information

For further information on the RHCE Stream One Program, please contact the **RHCE Program Manager** on (02) 9256 5419 or at admin@ruralspecialist.org.au.

6. Specialist Medical College contact details

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