

Nurse Practitioner Pharmacotherapy Scholarship Guidelines 2018

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WESTERN VICTORIA

An Australian Government Initiative

BARWON SOUTH WEST PHARMACOTHERAPY NETWORK

NURSE PRACTITIONER SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

One of the workforce development priorities for the Barwon South West (BSW) Pharmacotherapy Area Based Network (PABN) is to increase the number and capacity of AOD Nurse Practitioners (NPs) in the region¹. AOD NPs are a small but rapidly-growing specialist workforce in Victoria, based in both hospital and community settings.

AOD NPs constitute a significant value-add to the pharmacotherapy for opioid dependence service system and to the AOD service system more broadly, as they are able to offer diagnostic and prescribing expertise while operating from a holistic nursing framework. Some of the service system enhancements that AOD NPs provide in the rural and regional context are:

- Advanced assessment, consultation and education
- Enhanced withdrawal capacity
- Opioid replacement therapy
- Shared care AOD treatment with General Practitioners
- Capacity building of general practice and AOD treatment services.

The Western Victoria Primary Health Network (PHN) is the lead agency for the BSW PABN.

BACKGROUND & AIMS

Opioid dependence contributes to a significant burden of disease within the Victorian community. The emerging issue of pharmaceutical opioid dependence has resulted in a rapid increase in opioid pharmacotherapy service demand which the current workforce is finding difficult to absorb.

The Victorian pharmacotherapy / opioid replacement therapy (ORT) model is a 'community based' approach that promotes prescribing ORT in a general practice setting. Research identifies better outcomes in this setting than in public 'clinic' based settings. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) supports this approach and promotes a tiered service model that aims to deliver a more efficient and effective ORT service that responds to fluctuating levels of patient need.

DHHS has established five Pharmacotherapy Area Based Networks (PABNs) across the state to ensure a more localised approach to connecting care, driving best practice and improving ORT patient outcomes. The PABNs aim to improve service coordination and referral pathways and enhance workforce capacity.

The BSW PABN provides support to community based ORT practitioners as outlined in Appendix 2.

Nurse Practitioners add significant value to the BSW's opioid pharmacotherapy service system, the alcohol and other drug (AOD) service system and the general practice environment more broadly via the capacity to offer diagnostic and prescribing expertise while operating from a holistic nursing framework, thus increasing patient service delivery.

¹ Details of the BSW region is provided in Appendix 1.

Examples of service system enhancements that Nurse Practitioners offer include:

- Assessment, consultation and education.
- Enhanced withdrawal and management capacity.
- ORT prescribing.

The PABN's Nurse Practitioner Scholarship Program aims to attract motivated Nurse Practitioners to the field and support and develop their capacity through the provision of scholarship funding.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Western Victoria Primary Health Network (PHN) is seeking applications from AHPRA Registered Nurses (Division 1) practicing in the region who are prepared to:

- Commit to undertaking an AHPRA approved Masters of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner) in a stream relevant to primary health care and general practice.
- Commit to selecting a specialty domain that enables graduate Nurse Practitioners to prescribe Schedule 8 opioid analgesics and work in a primary care / general practice environment. The Victorian DHHS list ([access the current list here - https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/drugs-and-poisons/nurses-and-midwives/nurse-practitioners-and-others-registration-endorsements/nurse-practitioner-lists-approved-by-minister](https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/drugs-and-poisons/nurses-and-midwives/nurse-practitioners-and-others-registration-endorsements/nurse-practitioner-lists-approved-by-minister)) includes:
 - Acute care
 - Aged care
 - Critical care
 - Maternity
 - Mental health
 - Paediatric
 - Perioperative
 - Primary care.
- Commit to undertaking DHHS approved MATOD training through RACGP ([access details here - https://www.racgp.org.au/education/courses/racgppevents/vic/](https://www.racgp.org.au/education/courses/racgppevents/vic/)) to gain expertise and competence as an opioid pharmacotherapy prescriber (currently 1.5 day duration).
- Obtain the endorsement of their employing organisation.

SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS

These BSW scholarships are to offer financial support towards the completion of a master's degree for three AOD NPs working within the BSW region.

The value of each scholarship is \$10,000 and is available for the payment of the approved course tuition fees due on submission of the university enrolment semester-by-semester invoice.

SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

An application form and sample scholarship agreement are available at <https://westvicphn.com.au/>. Applications by eligible applicants require the endorsement of their employing organization.

Applications are open for AHPRA Registered Nurses (Division 1) practicing in the Barwon South West PABN region who are, or wish to, undertake the Masters of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner) course. Preference will be given to those nurses already working in AOD service delivery.

In determining suitability for one of the scholarships, Western Vic PHN will seek confirmation from each employing organisation that the applicant is supported to undertake their clinical internship/practice, and will require a brief description of how that organisation's model of service will enhance and sustain rural and regional capacity in pharmacotherapy. Priority will be given to applicants working in BSW geographic areas of high need for increased ORT services.

A panel of BSW network members will oversee the awarding of the scholarships in order to ensure transparency of decision-making and funds allocation.

Criteria for scholarship grants

Any AHPRA Registered Nurse (Division 1) **AOD Nurse Practitioner** practicing in the BSW region may apply for this scholarship.

Funds are to be utilised for the payment of tertiary tuition fees for the Masters of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner) course.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Western Vic PHN is responsible for:

- Provision of scholarship funds to eligible recipients via a transparent process
- Monitoring the use of scholarships to ensure the promotion of pharmacotherapy service capacity. In the event that a scholarship recipient discontinues their studies, BSW reserves the right to review and potentially rescind the scholarship funds depending on the circumstances. Extenuating circumstances (eg: serious ill-health) will be taken into account.

Individual grant recipients are responsible for:

- Completion of their masters studies in keeping with the aims of the BSW to promote ORT
- Timely provision of the university tuition fee invoices.

In the event that a scholarship recipient changes employer the balance of monies will continue to be provided so long as:

- The recipient remains in alcohol and drugs service delivery
- The recipient continues to work within the BSW network catchment.

Employing organisations are responsible for:

- Supporting their employed scholarship recipient's professional development.

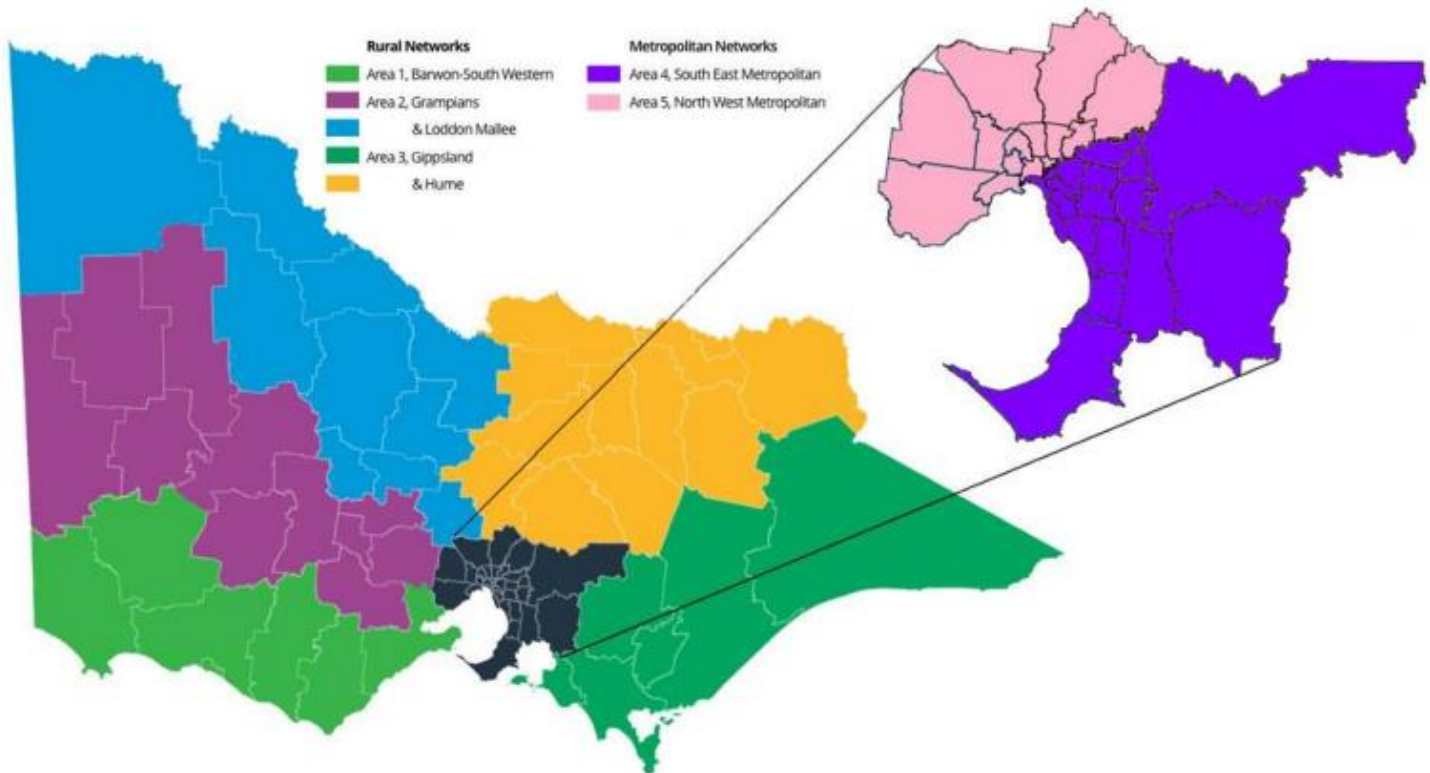
HOW TO APPLY

Please complete the two-page application form with attachment(s) and email to pene.wood@westvicphn.com.au by close of business, Friday **14 April 2018**.

Successful applicants will be advised by 28 April 2018.

For any queries regarding details of the scholarship and the application process, please contact Ms Pene Wood, Pharmacotherapy Lead on (03) 5222 0809 on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Appendix 1 – Barwon South West Region Details

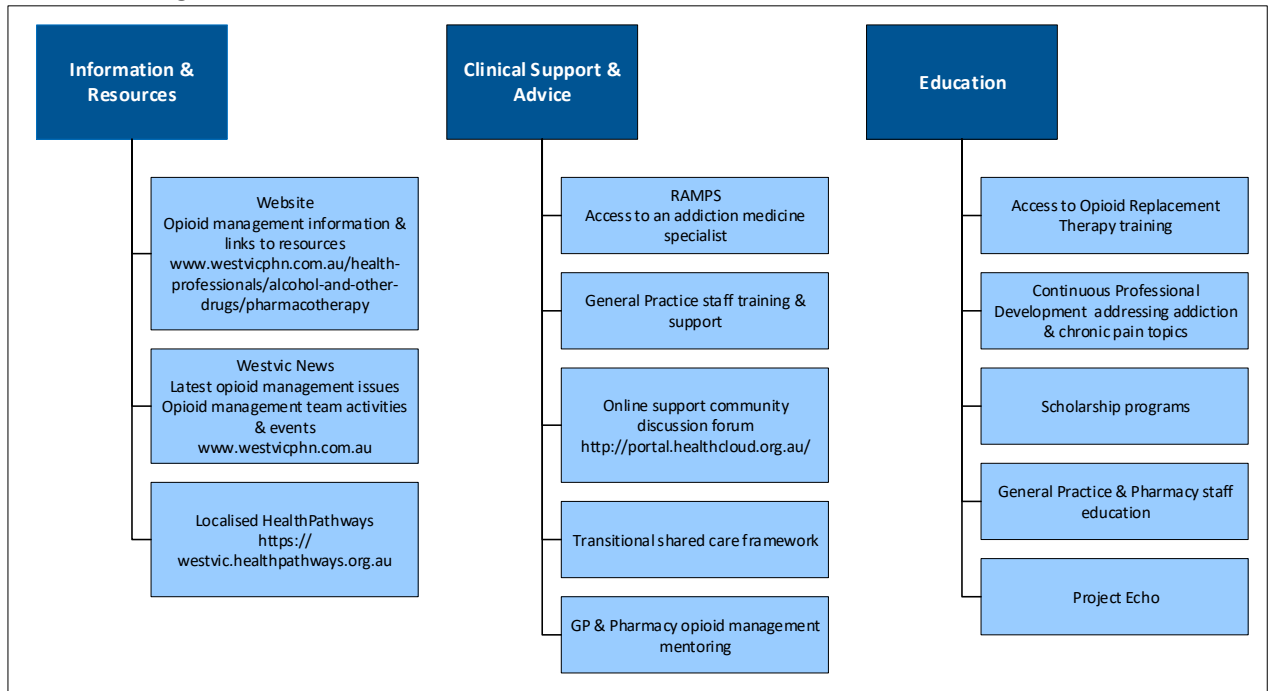


Key Town Centres

Aireys Inlet, Anglesea, Apollo Bay, Camperdown, Colac, Geelong, Hamilton, Lorne, Port Campbell, Port Fairy, Portland, Torquay and Warrnambool.

Appendix 2 - PABN Services

The PABN supports general practitioners and pharmacists to manage patients using opioids in the Barwon South West region of Victoria. The PABN team offers :



Information and Resources

- Localised HealthPathways and referral pages - related to ORT, opioid dependence and pain management
- Access to latest guidelines, resources, online forums and support from health professionals working in opioid dependence
- Clinical support and advice
- RAMPS (Rural Addiction Medicine Pharmacotherapy Specialists) provides access to an Addiction Medicine Specialist (AMS) for GP secondary consults and education
- Project ECHO – which provides multidisciplinary advice on specific opioid dependence cases
- Guidance on DHHS requirements for prescribing Schedule 8 high risk medications.

Education

- Access to MATOD prescriber training
- Access to Opioid Management Communities of Practice (CoP) which is a BSW health professional led, informal, self-organised network of peers with diverse skills and experience. CoP members are provided with collegial support, development and learning opportunities to enable them to improve the quality of pharmacotherapy services across the region.