Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Guidelines 2013

The overall aim of the Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Scholarship Program is to improve the recruitment of allied health practitioners to rural Victorian locations. Research and practice indicates that a practitioner's rural background is a good predictor of their intention to work in a rural area. Therefore by encouraging people from a rural background to undertake undergraduate studies in an allied health discipline it is anticipated that the recruitment of qualified practitioners to rural Victoria will be enhanced.

The Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Program seeks to encourage Victorian or Victorian border town students with a rural background to participate in undergraduate allied health studies in a metropolitan or rural location. It does this by providing financial assistance to these students to assist them in meeting the additional costs that they may face while making the transition into undergraduate studies.

It is anticipated that the following impacts will result from the provision of undergraduate allied health scholarships to students from a rural background:

- Increased awareness of undergraduate allied health discipline study opportunities amongst rural secondary school students
- Increased completion levels for rural students in undergraduate courses
- Increased participation by people from rural backgrounds in graduate-entry courses
- Increased recruitment and retention of appropriately qualified allied health professionals in rural Victoria
- Improved skills and practice expertise of allied health practitioners in rural Victoria
- Improved supply of allied health professionals in rural Victoria

Scholarships

Scholarships to the total value of $5,000 for bachelor level degrees are available to students on the following basis -

Funding will be provided in two equal payments:

- 50% upon commencement of Semester 1
- 50% upon successful completion of Semester 2
Eligibility

Scholarships are available to Victorian students in one of the following eligible disciplines:

- Art Therapy
- Audiology
- Biomedical Science
- Dietetics
- Exercise Physiology
- Health Promotion
- Hospital Pharmacy
- Medical Laboratory Science
- Medical Radiation (Diagnostic Imaging, Radiation Therapy, Nuclear Medicine)
- Music Therapy
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- Orthoptics
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Prosthetics/Orthotics
- Psychology (Clinical Psychology, Clinical Neuropsychology)
- Social Work
- Speech Pathology

- Scholarships are available for students from rural Victoria or communities adjacent to the Victorian border relating to Victoria, who propose to enter into an undergraduate course in a metropolitan or rural location in 2013. Rural Victoria excludes metropolitan Melbourne, Geelong and the Bellarine and Mornington peninsulas
- Scholarship applicants must have resided in rural Victoria in the year prior to entering an undergraduate course. For example, applicants originally from rural Victoria who have resided in metropolitan Melbourne in the year prior to entering an undergraduate course are excluded from applying for this scholarship
- Scholarships are open for application by first time undergraduate students, as well as graduate entry students into an undergraduate course
- Scholarship applicants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents
- Scholarships are granted for the first year of studies only, and will not be granted retrospectively
- Scholarships will only be granted once per eligible applicant
- Scholarships are available for those applicants intending to commence study in 2013 only

Selection Criteria

Applications for scholarships will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The applicant’s academic record
  - Mature age students must provide evidence of previous experience in allied health, detailing their commitment to study
- The applicant’s demonstrated understanding of rural communities and practice
- The applicant’s demonstrated interest in, and commitment to rural practice in Victoria
The applicant’s financial status. Preference will be given to applicants whose financial situation may be a hindrance to their undergraduate studies, for example, those who qualify for Austudy/Abstudy, Youth Allowance and Family Tax Benefit A

Enrolment in eligible undergraduate studies at an accredited Australian tertiary institution in 2013

The level of need for health professionals from particular disciplines in rural Victoria

Please note that the total budget for the scholarship program is capped and therefore not all applicants that meet the criteria will necessarily be granted a scholarship.

Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a written agreement stating that they will:

- Give preference to working in public practice in rural Victoria after completing their studies. Although these scholarships are not bonded, it is hoped that the issues affecting rural Victoria, for example for recruitment and retention of appropriately qualified allied health professionals, will reinforce to students that they can contribute significantly as a result of their choice to practice in rural Victoria
- Participate in a rural students club at their University (where available) or nearest affiliated rural health club
- Promote rural practice as a viable career choice to rural students
- Provide notification of withdrawal from, or changes to their course of studies (within one month of occurrence). Those changing courses to a non-allied health course or withdrawing from university studies will be required to repay scholarship monies
- Provide immediate notification (within one month of occurrence) of a change of contact details
- Participate in tracking and evaluation exercises in relation to their receipt of the scholarship
- Repay scholarship funding if they fail to comply with the conditions of the agreement

Further Information

If you require further information or have any queries in regards to requirements, please contact the VHA via email at vha@vha.org.au or refer to the Frequently Asked Questions section on the Rural Allied Health Scholarships page of the VHA website.

Send completed applications and information to:

Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Scholarship Program 2013
Victorian Healthcare Association Limited
Level 6, 136 Exhibition Street
MELBOURNE  VICTORIA  3000
These guidelines take effect on 19 November 2012 and are subject to revision by the Department of Health (DH). Changes to these guidelines may only be made by, or with the approval of, DH.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5PM FRIDAY 8 MARCH 2013