

PROGRAM RULES

Rural Continuing Professional Education Allowance

April 2026





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RURAL CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

1 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Program Rules governing the Rural Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Allowance. This document must be read in conjunction with the *Pharmacy Programs Administrator General Terms and Conditions* (General Terms). Definitions in the General Terms apply to these Program Rules.

The Rural CPE Allowance is designed to strengthen and support the rural pharmacy workforce, which in turn will provide increased access to quality pharmacy services for Patients residing in rural and remote regions of Australia.

The Rural CPE Allowance is part of the suite of Rural Support Programs funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the Department) support targeted programs and services that improve access to PBS medicines and services for people living in rural and remote regions of Australia.

2 BACKGROUND

The Rural CPE Allowance provides financial support to assist Pharmacists from rural and remote areas to access Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities. The Allowance may be awarded to practicing Pharmacists, Intern Pharmacists, Pharmacists preparing to re-enter pharmacy practice in rural locations or a professional educator travelling to a group of practicing Pharmacists to deliver CPD.

3 ALLOWANCE VALUE

CPE payments are not subject to GST.

Allowances have a maximum value of \$2,000. However, applications over \$2,000 will be considered where additional documentation is supplied to substantiate the reasons for the additional costs (e.g. airfares or other additional transport links from remote centres). These applications will be subject to review by the Pharmacy Programs Administrator.

3.1 Eligible CPD Events

The activities that are eligible to be funded through this Allowance are travel and accommodation costs associated with:

1. Participating in or delivering, in-person Group 2 activities relevant to pharmacy practice
2. Delivering in-person Group 3 activities relevant to pharmacy practice
3. Participating in Nationally Recognised Training First Aid courses
4. Participating in preceptor training activities
5. Participating in pharmacy workforce re-entry courses and other courses that will assist with re-entry into pharmacy practice
6. Obtaining locum relief while undertaking CPD.

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Funding will **not** be considered for:

1. Registration fees
2. Overseas conferences
3. Compulsory workshops and examinations for Intern Students undertaking an Intern Training Program (eligible Interns may apply for assistance with these costs through the [Rural Intern Training Allowance](#))
4. Meals
5. Locum wages
6. Car hire
7. Travel to and from an accommodation venue and a CPD venue.

4 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Eligibility of Applicants

The Allowance is open to those who meet the eligibility criteria. Applicants must:

8. Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident and provide certified documents to demonstrate this
9. Be a practicing Pharmacist, Intern Pharmacist, a Pharmacist preparing to re-enter the workforce in a rural area, or a professional educator who travelled to a rural area to deliver CPD
10. Reside and work in a rural or remote area of Australia (this criterion does not apply to professional educators travelling to a rural area to deliver CPD)
11. Provide attendance-based evidence to substantiate their claims.

Receipt of the Allowance does not disqualify the applicant from receiving other awards that support rural and remote pharmacy practice.

4.2 Eligible Expenses

The Pharmacy Programs Administrator will reserve the right to deem what costs will be considered as 'reasonable' in relation to the Allowance. Applications for the Allowance must be accompanied by a complete record of expenditure and supporting documentation verifying course/conference attendance and payment details, including receipts (i.e. official tax invoices), within 60 days of completion of the activity. Items for which no official tax invoice can be provided will not be funded.

In exceptional circumstances, the Pharmacy Programs Administrator will reserve the right to make discretionary decisions if notification is received from the applicant within 60 days of completion of the event that they are having difficulty gaining receipts or supporting documentation. The Pharmacy Programs Administrator may request attendance-based evidence to support such claims.

Please note that some claimable activities have additional requirements, including capped amounts. See below for more information.

Travel Expenses

When claiming travel costs associated with participating in a CPD event, applicants should also ensure the following:

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- Where a particular CPE course is provided in a number of locations, the course is attended at the location closest to the applicant's place of residence. If this is not possible the applicant should provide evidence on why the course was undertaken in the alternative location
- That any travel being claimed by the applicant must have occurred within one week prior to the event commencing and one week after the end date of the event to be deemed eligible for reimbursement under the Program
- That the travel undertaken was from the applicant's place of residence to the location of the CPD event and back. Travel to another location on the way to or from the event (unless as a required stopover) will not be eligible for payment.

The minimum distance claimable for car travel is 200 km and the maximum distance claimable is 500 km. The car travel must be part of a round trip from your home to your accommodation and home again.

Accommodation Expenses

When claiming accommodation costs associated with participating in a CPD event, only the following costs will be eligible for reimbursement:

- A maximum of \$200 per night for each eligible night of accommodation
- The night directly preceding the CPD event and the night/s of the event.

4.3 Eligible Rural Locations

For the purpose of the Rural CPE Allowance, 'rural and remote' will be determined by the Modified Monash Model (MMM). Applicants must be residing and working in a MM Category 3 to Category 7 location or be a professional educator who delivered CPD in a MM Category 3 to Category 7 location. Applicants must have their principal place of work and residence in a MM Category 3 to Category 7 location. Temporary, occasional, or incidental work or residence in a MM Category 3 to Category 7 location will not, on its own, satisfy this requirement.

MMM categorisation for a particular location can be found by visiting the [MMM website](#). Please ensure that eligibility is determined by using the street address, not the suburb or postcode.

The Pharmacy Programs Administrator reserves the right to determine whether a location is deemed eligible based on the categories above.

5 APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants who meet the Eligibility Criteria must first register for the Rural CPE Allowance Program on the Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) Portal by uploading all required documentation in order to be considered for payment of the Allowance.

After successfully registering for the Program, Applicants may submit claims for each eligible CPD event they have attended. A separate claim must be submitted for each CPD event. Multi-day events are to be submitted as one claim however, evidence of attendance at a Group 2 activity is required for each day being claimed.

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Claims under this allowance will only be accepted following completion of the CPD event. All claims must be received by the Pharmacy Programs Administrator within 60 days of the conclusion of the CPD event. Claims submitted past the 60 days will not be accepted.

Eligible applicants must provide a travel log book as evidence to support any fuel expenses being claimed (refer to the [Travel Log Book](#)). When calculating fuel expenses using the applicant's own vehicle, for activities commencing on or after 1 October 2022, the amount provided will be calculated at a rate of 78 cents per kilometre. For activities on or after 1 July 2024, the amount provided will be calculated at a rate of 88 cents per kilometre.

Formal notice of payment of the Allowance will be emailed to the applicant if and where all Eligibility Criteria are met.

The Pharmacy Programs Administrator and/or the Australian Government may at any time request evidence from the applicant in receipt of the Allowance to substantiate CPD registration and expenditure. The Pharmacy Programs Administrator may also verify proof of attendance with course providers.

6 IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Allowances are limited on the basis of available funds. Lodging an application does not guarantee receipt of an Allowance. Consequently, applicants satisfying the Eligibility Criteria will not necessarily receive payment of an Allowance.

The Pharmacy Programs Administrator may provide the Australian Government with information about the assessment and allocation of the Allowance and about any issues that may arise in relation to an application.

To meet registration requirements, pharmacists are not required by the Pharmacy Board of Australia to undertake accredited continuing professional development (CPD). Pharmacists may complete accredited or non-accredited CPD activities, provided those activities support their professional development and are recorded in accordance with the Pharmacy Board's registration standards. Eligibility under this Program is a Departmental funding decision only and does not imply regulatory approval, endorsement, or recognition of any CPD provider, activity, or standard.

7 AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Program applicants must retain full and true records in relation to the receipt and use of the allowance for not less than seven years after receipt of the allowance. Evidence of in-person attendance and relevance to pharmacy practice must be retained and may be verified as part of audit or compliance activities. Such records must be kept in a manner that permits them to be conveniently and properly audited. Program applicants may be subject to audits by the Department (or its representative) to ensure that the allowance is paid and used in accordance with the General Terms and these Program Rules, and must provide all and any records requested as part of such audit(s).

Program applicants that wrongfully or incorrectly receive support and/or do not meet the requirements set out in the General Terms and these Program Rules may be subject to compliance action (as determined by the Department or Pharmacy Programs Administrator) and repayment may be required. Under section 137.1 of the Criminal Code, giving false and misleading information is a

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serious offence. If an audit/compliance action is to be conducted, Program applicants will be required to produce documentation within a specified time frame.

8 RESOURCES

Rural CPE Allowance resources are available for download on the [PPA website](#).



CONTACT THE SUPPORT CENTRE: 1800 951 285 | support@ppaonline.com.au

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APPENDIX A TRAVEL LOG BOOK

Applicant Name	
Event Name	

Date	Start Suburb & Postcode	Finish Suburb & Postcode	Start Odometer	Finish Odometer	Distance Travelled	Comments

Note: This form is for general information only and does not constitute tax advice.