

GP Relocation and Retention Grants 2024

The Hunter New England and Central Coast (HNECC) Primary Health Network (the PHN) through the [2023-2028 Strategic Plan](#) has a focus on increasing equity of access to primary care services for those in the Hunter, New England and Central Coast geographical area.

With declining numbers of GPs in the rural and regional parts of the Hunter and New England as the existing workforce retire and relocate out of the area, pressure is being added to the remaining workforce. This is also impacting Registrar’s as the number of supervisors able to support training is reduced.

The PHN is making available six (6) GP Relocation and Retention Grants.

The six (6) available grants will be available to support **selected communities** to secure a GP from outside the HNECC geographical region. Each of the grants will be accompanied by a ‘Welcome Ambassador’ relocation support service for the relocating GP.

The identified 6 locations are priority areas in the GP Workforce Planning and Prioritisation Program (WPPP). For more information, refer to the link below.

[Workforce Planning and Prioritisation Project \(WPPP\) - Primary Health Network \(thephn.com.au\)](http://thephn.com.au)

Selection Criteria

The GP Relocation and Retention Grants will be allocated via expression of interest from practices in the selected locations that have secured a prospective GP.

Practices may recruit final year Registrars to a permanent GP position to be eligible.

Table 1: Proposed Distribution of Grants

Location	LGA	Number of Grants	Grant Value
Moree	Moree Plains	1	\$25,000.00
Quirindi	Liverpool Plains	1	\$25,000.00
Narrabri	Narrabri Shire	1	\$25,000.00
Warialda	Gwydir	1	\$25,000.00
Gloucester	Gloucester Shire	1	\$25,000.00
Manilla	Tamworth Regional	1	\$25,000.00
Ambassador Support package		6	1 per area provided

Stages of payment include:

1. Contract Executed: \$10 000 ex GST to the **practice** upon evidence of securing a GP being supplied. Funding to be used for costs related to the employment of a GP.
2. First 2 weeks of GP employed at Practice: \$7 500 ex GST to be paid to the **GP** once the PHN has received 2 weeks of de-identified MBS billings. Payment will be via the practice but must be included as a condition of employment in the GP’s contract.
3. First 6 months of GP employed: \$7 500 ex GST to the **GP** once the PHN has received 6 months of de-identified MBS billings. Payment will be via the practice but must be included as a condition of employment in the GP’s contract.

Evidence is required of continuous employment and of the GP incentive payments being used in the specified manner. The GP incentive payments must be included in the GP employment contract and a copy of the signed contract supplied to the PHN.

As a General Practice works through the recruitment process and identifies a potential candidate, they can use the incentive payments as a key negotiating tool.

The grant supports a General Practice to negotiate with a GP and provide funds to assist the GP with expenses such as (but not limited to):

- sign on payment
- wage supplement to enhance leave entitlements
- initial rent or mortgage payments
- professional fees such as AHPRA and insurance

Once the grant is allocated, the General Practice will need to provide proof of employment upon the signing of the new GP, who is to be from outside of the HNECC PHN region and **contracted for a two year/minimum three days per week employment.**

The payment of \$10 000 ex GST to the practice is included to cover costs associated with recruitment, advertising and contracting.

Eligible activities for the funding will be communicated to the General Practice and appropriate documentation will be requested to support payments.

Welcome Ambassador Service

Attached to the grants is a Welcome Ambassador service valued at approximately \$7,500 ex GST per GP which will run over a six-month period. Each GP will be assigned a Welcome Ambassador who will provide support across several areas including:

Pre relocation contacts and needs surveys	Personalised Local Life Manuals
Home search service	Arrival guided tours
Hosted pre move visits	Turnkey move management services
Local introductions into essential services including social groups and sporting clubs	Regular fortnightly/monthly check ins

The service will be negotiated by the PHN on the practice’s behalf who will require that the General Practice provide the GP’s contact details enabling the GP and Welcome Ambassador to communicate directly.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the grants, the applicant/general practice must:

- Be a General Practice or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation physically located within the townships identified.
- Have secured a GP or converted a last year Registrar to a permanent GP who will deliver face to face services in the town.
- The GP must commit to working a minimum of 3 days per week for a period of two years.
- Recruited GP’s are relocating from outside the HNECC PHN area.
- The General Practice must provide the requested documentary evidence including:
 - Name of GP
 - Signed Employment Contract with the GP dated after 1/2/2024 (this may be provided once final negotiations are completed)
 - Practitioners AHPRA number + Practitioners Provider number
 - Medical Indemnity Insurance
 - Location of where the practitioner has relocated from.

Evidence of billing (patient de-identified) will be required 2 weeks after commencement of the GP and then 6 months of continuous employment by the GP, to facilitate payment. Previous grant recipients will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Priority will be given to practices that have not received previous assistance.

Not Eligible

- Applicants/General Practices that do not meet the eligibility criteria.
- NSW state government funded primary health care services (LHD's and council's are ineligible).
- Applicants/General Practices that are located outside of the HNECC PHN operating area and/or not located in the identified locations.
- Practices are eligible only if they have fully complied with any previous PHN funding contract commitments and/or have no existing GP recruitment grants in progress.
- Practices deemed not eligible by HNECC PHN or judged to not meet the criteria of the grant.
- Practice already receiving funding from other sources for GP Recruitment.
- Activities including recruitment not carried out in the grant period and retrospective costs.
- A practice that does not demonstrate capability.
- Applicants without the appropriate insurances and an ABN.

Terms and conditions

Funding is available for recruitment that commences between 1st February and 30th June 2024 subject to meeting eligibility criteria.

The following terms and conditions will apply to all successful grantees:

- HNECC PHN Terms and Conditions will apply,
- Applicants must be a General Practice, or Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisation.
- Applicants must obtain appropriate insurances and provide certificates of currency.
- Only one (1) GP Relocation and Retention Grant is available per General Practice/Entity.
- Only one (1) Welcome Ambassador package is available per prospective GP and practice upon the practice providing the GP's contact details,
- If a part use of a Welcome Ambassador package is used on an unsuccessful recruitment, the Welcome Ambassador service provision ceases.
- If a recruited GP leaves employment before the specified grant time periods, no further payments will be provided.

How to apply

Applications are open via completion of the online form on the PHN grants portal, SmartyGrants and close 30th June 2024 or when all grants have been allocated (whichever comes first).

HNECC PHN reserves the right to close the grant round if all grants have been awarded prior to the closing date or extend the grant closing date if funds are still available.

Applicants may be contacted to discuss their eligibility and ability to meet the grant criteria. This will constitute part of the grant assessment.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a grant agreement outlining staged payments and milestones, terms and conditions and evidence or reporting required at each stage.

For more information contact:

Contact grants@thephn.com.au