



# PROGRAM RULES

## Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme

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**Australian Government**  
Department of Health

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## RURAL PHARMACY SCHOLARSHIP MENTOR SCHEME

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Program Rules governing the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme (RPSMS). This document must be read in conjunction with the *Pharmacy Programs Administrator General Terms and Conditions* (General Terms). Definitions in the General Terms apply in these Program Rules.

The RPSMS is an initiative of the Rural Pharmacy Workforce Program (RPWP). The RPWP is designed to strengthen and support the rural pharmacy workforce, to in turn provide increased access to quality pharmacy services for Patients residing in rural and remote regions of Australia.

RPWP is one of the Rural Support Programs funded under the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement to support targeted programs and services that improve access to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines and services for Patients living in rural and remote regions of Australia.

### 2 BACKGROUND

The RPSMS is designed to provide pharmacy students with guidance and support from a practising rural Pharmacist. Involvement in the Mentor Scheme is compulsory for all holders of the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship and holders of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship.

The Scheme provides funding of \$375 to Mentors per mentored scholar per year.

### 3 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 Mentor Eligibility

In order to participate in the Scheme, Mentors must meet the following Eligibility Criteria. They must:

1. Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
2. Be a practising Pharmacist
3. Have the capacity to be in contact at least quarterly with their scholar
4. Be practising in a rural area
5. Agree to provide reports in accordance with these Program Rules
6. Agree to participate in longitudinal studies or annual surveys.

For the purpose of the Mentor Scheme, 'Rural' will be determined by the Modified Monash Model (MMM).

Mentors practising in the Modified Monash (MM) categories 3-7 will be deemed eligible. MM categories for a particular location can be viewed on the Australian Government's Health Workforce Locator website: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/health-workforce-locator/health-workforce-locator>.

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

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### 4 PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHEME

Participation in the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme involves three main responsibilities:

- Registering as a Mentor
- Undertaking Mentor Activities
- Submitting a Mentor Report

#### 4.1 Registering as a Mentor

The Mentor must register for the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme through the Pharmacy Programs Administrator Portal and submit details to enable payment. They must also submit the details for each scholar they are mentoring. This can be completed by visiting the Pharmacy Programs Administrator website, <http://www.ppaonline.com.au>, and following the link to the Pharmacy Programs Administrator Portal.

As part of this process, the Mentor must indicate whether they wish to be paid for participating in the Scheme and, if so, if they wish to be paid as a business or as an individual.

#### 4.2 Undertaking Mentor Activities

The aim of the Scheme is to reinforce the scholar's ties to rural and regional Australia and provide support to scholars during each year of their pharmacy studies, outside of the university and formal study environment. To assist in achieving this, Mentors are required to develop a Learning Plan with their scholar and have ongoing contact on at least a quarterly basis.

**Learning Plan:** Go to [Pharmacy Programs Administrator website](#) and click on Rural Support Programs. From here the Learning Plan template can be accessed through the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme page. Using the template provided, the Mentor and scholar should together develop a realistic and meaningful Learning Plan at the beginning of each academic year. The activities in the Learning Plan should be achievable and relevant to the current level of study and should include activities to be undertaken with the Mentor, participation in the Rural Health Club and any other rural activities.

Suggested Rural Activities for inclusion in a Learning Plan:

- Promote rural pharmacy to rural secondary school students
- Participate in activities that promote pharmacy as a career choice to rural secondary school students
- Actively participate in Rural Health Club activities such as excursions, special visits, or by being on the executive board
- Spend time with Mentors by engaging in a range of day-to-day activities that will inform their scholar's understanding of rural health practise.

Mentors and scholarship holders may identify other appropriate activities.

**Ongoing Support:** Mentor support includes at least quarterly contact. The method (e.g. email, telephone and face-to-face sessions), timing and duration of contact is to be negotiated by the scholarship holder and the Mentor.

Ideally, scholarship holders and Mentors should endeavour to conduct at least one face-to-face meeting each academic year. It is recognised that there may be circumstances where distance may preclude face-to-face contact.

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If either party believes that the mentoring relationship is not proving to be effective and satisfying, they should contact the Pharmacy Programs Administrator Support Centre to discuss the issue.

### 4.3 Submitting a Mentor Report

Using the template provided, the Mentor must upload a brief report at the end of each academic year via the Pharmacy Programs Administrator [Portal](#), outlining contact with their scholar and detailing the scholar's rural health activities. Once the Mentor Report is submitted, the Mentor will receive payment within 30 days via EFT to the bank account nominated at Pharmacy Programs Administrator Portal Registration.

As the scholar's final yearly payment is also reliant on the Mentor Report being received, Mentors should aim to submit their Report prior to the end of November to avoid delays to their scholar's receiving payment.

If either the Mentor or the scholarship holder believes that the mentoring relationship is not proving to be effective and satisfying, they should contact the Support Centre to discuss the issue.

## 5 IMPORTANT INFORMATION

These Program Rules are administrative and reflect the intention of the Pharmacy Programs Administrator and the Australian Government to outline how the Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme is to be administered.

These Program Rules do not confer any entitlement to a person to receive payment as a Mentor. Neither the Pharmacy Programs Administrator nor the Australian Government will accept liability for any loss or damage incurred by a person in expectation of payment for Mentor duties.

The Pharmacy Programs Administrator may provide the Department of Health with information about the Scheme, the use of funds under this Scheme and on any issues that may arise in relation to a particular circumstance.

The Program Rules that govern all Rural Support Programs undergo a continuous quality improvement process that may result in revisions to the rules from time to time. All revisions will be undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Health and may involve a consultation process.

## 6 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. 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 Australian Government Department of Health (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 Australian Government Department of Health or Pharmacy Programs Administrator) and repayment may be required. Under section 137.1 of the Criminal Code, giving false and misleading information is a serious offence. If an audit/compliance action is to be conducted, Program applicants will be required to produce documentation within a specified time frame.

## 7 RESOURCES

Rural Pharmacy Scholarship Mentor Scheme resources are available for download at [Pharmacy Programs Administrator website](#).



**CONTACT THE SUPPORT CENTRE:** 1800 951 285 | [support@ppaonline.com.au](mailto:support@ppaonline.com.au)