

## REQUEST FOR QUOTATION – EMERGENCY LOCUM SERVICE

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## REQUEST FOR QUOTATION – EMERGENCY LOCUM SERVICE

### 1 REQUEST FOR QUOTATION INFORMATION

This Request for Quotation (RFQ) is for services related to the operation of the Emergency Locum Service – a Rural Pharmacy Support program, funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the department). Details on the RFQ timelines, enquiries, submission due date and defined terms are provided below.

| Date of RFQ        | 1 September 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>RFQ details</b> | <p>Quotations must be submitted by email no later than 5pm AEST on <b>29 September 2026</b></p> <p>Suppliers may seek clarification on the information contained within this RFQ in writing from the contact officer</p> <p><b>Contact Officer for enquiries:</b> Emergency Locum Service, PPA Program Lead</p> <p><b>Email address for enquiries:</b> <a href="mailto:ppa@ppaonline.com.au">ppa@ppaonline.com.au</a></p> <p><b>Enquiry cut-off date:</b> 22 September 2026</p> <p><b>Closing date/time for RFQ submission:</b> 5pm AEST 29 September 2026</p> |
| Defined terms      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Transition period  | Two months following execution of the contract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| MMM                | Modified Monash Model                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Contract term      | An initial contract term of three and a half years will be awarded                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| department         | The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| PPA                | Pharmacy Programs Administrator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| PPA Portal         | The online system in which ELS claims are assessed and processed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| AHA                | AHA Pty Ltd                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 AHA and The Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA)

AHA Pty Ltd is contracted by the department to administer the 8CPA Pharmacy Programs, Rural Support Programs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Specific Programs. For the purposes of this work, AHA uses the trading name / branding Pharmacy Programs Administrator.

The Pharmacy Programs funded under the 8CPA include:

- MedsCheck and Diabetes MedsCheck
- Dose Administration Aids Program
- Indigenous Dose Administration Aids Program
- Staged Supply Service Program
- Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Program.

The Rural Support Programs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Specific Programs include but are not limited to:

- Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance
- Rural Continuing Professional Education Allowance
- Emergency Locum Service (ELS)
- Indigenous Health Service Pharmacy Support (IHSPS) Program
- Indigenous Dose Administration Aids
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Assistant Trainee Scheme.

In its role as the administrator of the Pharmacy Programs, AHA is seeking to engage a supplier to provide services in relation to the ELS from 1 January 2027.

## 3 EMERGENCY LOCUM SERVICE (ELS)

The ELS funded by the department, to support targeted programs and services that improve access to PBS medicines and quality pharmacy services for people living in rural and remote regions of Australia.

The ELS supports Community Pharmacies in rural and remote areas through direct access to pharmacist locums in emergency situations. Locums are deployed at short notice, generally in under 24 hours, to provide relief in urgent and emergency situations.

The **ELS Program** assists Community Pharmacies in rural areas MMM 3-7 by funding up to \$2,500 (GST exclusive) to contribute towards the travel costs between the locum's home and the Community Pharmacy location. The cost of Pharmacist locum wages are not covered.

The ELS Program is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Emergency locum placements are for a minimum of one day and a maximum of 7 consecutive days.

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The **ELS supplier**:

- accepts and reviews ELS applications, and if eligible, sources a suitable locum pharmacist, in return for a placement fee paid by the PPA
- arranges travel for that locum from their current location to the community pharmacy, including provision of return travel arrangements, and requests reimbursement for these travel costs by the PPA.

### 4 SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

AHA is seeking a supplier to provide day-to-day management and administration of ELS Program applications, and to **efficiently and cost-effectively** source and place locums in rural and remote locations in response to emergency situations – including:

- Providing a phone number, email and website to facilitate ELS applications from community pharmacies
- Reviewing and, if eligible, fulfilling these applications – including the placement of a locum pharmacist within the timeframe specified under key performance indicators
- Submitting claims for reimbursement of ELS fees associated with locum travel and the supplier's placement fee for each eligible and successfully placed ELS locum to the PPA
- Reporting to the PPA on the operation of the ELS as outlined in Deliverables and Meetings.

The PPA will administer all payments in respect of claims submitted by the supplier through the PPA Portal. Key responsibilities of the supplier are outlined in the following section.

Placement services should be delivered in line with the program's Australian Government budget indicated by AHA each financial year. If AHA indicate the budget may be exhausted the ELS provider may need to pause placements until the new financial year.

To assist suppliers with demand forecasting the following table details the number of ELS applications by MMM and state/territory for financial year 2025-2026.

**Table 3-1: Number of ELS applications for financial year 2025-2026 by MMM and state/territory**

| MMM           | NSW       | Vic       | SA        | QLD       | WA       | Tas      | NT       | Placed    |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 3             | 4         | 0         | 1         | 0         | 0        | 3        | -        | 8         |
| 4             | -         | 11        | 3         | 2         | -        | -        | -        | 16        |
| 5             | 9         | 7         | 6         | 6         | 6        | -        | -        | 34        |
| 6             | -         | -         | -         | 1         | -        | -        | 3        | 4         |
| 7             |           |           | 3         | 1         | 3        |          |          | 7         |
| <b>Placed</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>69</b> |

Additional service specifications are provided in Attachment C.

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### 4.1 Key responsibilities

Key responsibilities of the supplier include:

- to provide day to day operation of the ELS in accordance with the latest approved version of the Program Rules developed by the department (Attachment B)
- to develop and provide application forms and guidelines to applicants for ELS where requested in both written and electronic format
- to develop and maintain an ELS website that provides information on the ELS and access to contact details and ELS application forms in both written and electronic formats (links will be provided to the PPA for addition to the PPA website)
- to respond to enquiries and ELS applications received by email, phone and website
- to operate the ELS which must be accessible 24 hours per day, seven (7) days per week and include telephone access via a toll-free number
- to assess ELS applications received for their eligibility as per the Eligibility Criteria set out in the latest approved version of the Program Rules
- to notify an ELS applicant as soon as possible (or as a maximum within 12 hours) of receipt of an ELS application
- to arrange and place a locum in any rural or remote location nationally as soon as possible and preferably within 24 hours, for a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of seven (7) consecutive days
- to provide receipts and invoice the PPA for the travel costs associated with placing the locum up to a maximum of \$2,500 (GST exclusive)
- to undertake general monitoring of locum placements
- to collaborate with the PPA in reviewing and improving the operation of the ELS
- to provide placement reports to the PPA on a quarterly basis
- to provide any other reporting requirements as specified in the subcontract.

### 4.2 Submitting claims on the PPA Portal

The supplier will be required to submit claims associated with locum placements on the PPA Portal. To enable submission of claims the supplier must first create an account on the PPA portal. The account must be completed by an executive member of the supplier. This information will be verified by a PPA team member prior to approval of the account.

Information the supplier must provide in an ELS claim include:

- An invoice, uploaded to the claim form, detailing the following information:
  - Supplier name, ABN, invoice number and date of invoice
  - Name of the locum pharmacist
  - The beginning and end date of the placement – noting a placement length no greater than 7 consecutive days
  - Details of the pharmacy where the locum is being placed
  - The state/territory and MMM classification of the placement location

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- Placement fee and ELS travel costs to be paid (including any related GST amount, if applicable)
- The total invoice amount payable and the total GST associated with the invoice – to be entered in the online claim form fields.

Each ELS claim is reviewed by the PPA to check for eligibility and completeness prior to payment being processed. Once a claim is approved by the PPA, payment is generally made to the supplier's nominated bank account within 2-3 business days, and a remittance advice is emailed to the supplier.

### 4.3 Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) that a supplier will be evaluated against through routine reporting include:

- Placement of locums within 48 hours of a Community Pharmacy lodging an ELS request with the supplier
- Applications to the ELS can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- 100% of eligible placements must be filled or where not filled an explanation to be provided
- 100% of deliverables submitted on time in accordance with contract, unless otherwise agreed.

## 5 DELIVERABLES AND MEETINGS

### 5.1 Deliverables

The following key deliverables will be required:

- A project plan for each financial year
- Audited end of financial year reports with respect to the operation of the ELS
- Placement reports submitted every quarter, including:
  - Narrative progress report of program management and any challenges faced in previous quarter
  - Data report in line with the ELS Progress Report Template (see Attachment D).
- Final report at end of subcontract.

Further detail on the content of all deliverables and associated payment schedules is provided in the Draft Subcontract (Attachment A).

### 5.2 Progress meetings

The supplier's representative must be available for fortnightly teleconference meetings with the PPA during the transition period to:

- Provide verbal progress updates on development of materials and systems to support provision of key responsibilities
- Raise any transition risks and mitigation strategies being employed

For a period of two (2) months following the execution of the contract fortnightly meetings, conducted by teleconference, will be required to provide the PPA with updates on progress.

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Beyond this period a mutually agreed timeframe for teleconference meetings between the PPA and supplier will be scheduled.

### 6 RESPONSE FORMAT

Suppliers wishing to submit a response to this RFQ are requested to submit the following documents:

- Response Form (Attachment E) – in PDF or word format, limited to 25 pages not inclusive of CVs
  - Approach to providing ELS Program services
  - Supplier experience
  - Nominated personnel (including CVs for nominated personnel)
  - Market innovation
  - Referees – two referees that can speak to the supplier’s recent relevant experience are requested
  - Pricing response tables.

### 7 SELECTION CRITERIA

All responses will be subject to the same technical criteria, weighted as follows:

- |                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| • Approach to providing ELS services | 60% |
| • Demonstrated experience            | 20% |
| • Suitability of nominated personnel | 10% |
| • Market innovation                  | 10% |

The selection panel will also consider risk, pricing and value for money in the assessment of quotations – these selection criteria are unweighted.

### 8 FEES TO PROVIDE SERVICES

Suppliers are to provide quotations for the following elements of the required services in the designated pricing section of the Response Form (Attachment E):

- **Deliverable/milestone fees** – fees payable by AHA to the supplier in respect of contracted reporting requirements – these are paid in respect of milestone/deliverables, as outlined in the Draft Subcontract (Attachment A).
- **Supplier placement fee** – a fee payable to the supplier for placement of each locum. This fee should clearly state whether it is exclusive or inclusive of GST. In quoting for placement fees, the respondent should consider costs associated with accepting and assessing the application, placing the locum and associated invoicing and claim submission.

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### 9 ELS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following FAQs are published on the [PPA Website](#) to assist pharmacies requesting ELS support.

| Question                                                                                                                                                | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>How do I apply for an emergency locum?</b>                                                                                                           | You can make an application for an emergency locum at the ELS Provider website ( <a href="http://www.emergencylocumservice.com.au">http://www.emergencylocumservice.com.au</a> ) or by telephone on 1800 991 541                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Who is eligible to apply for an emergency locum?</b>                                                                                                 | A Pharmacy must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Section 90 Community Pharmacy</li> <li>• Located in a rural or remote location</li> <li>• Unable to undertake dispensing duties or to fully and effectively operate the Pharmacy due to an emergency situation.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>What classifies as a rural or remote area?</b>                                                                                                       | Eligible locations are classified as having a MM Category of MM3-MM7, inclusive. Your pharmacy's MM Category can be viewed on the Australian Government's Health Workforce Locator website. <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/health-workforce-locator/app?language=en">https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/health-workforce-locator/app?language=en</a>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>What classifies as an emergency situation?</b>                                                                                                       | An emergency situation is defined any situation that means the Pharmacist is unable to undertake dispensing duties or fully operate the Pharmacy, with little or no notice, that arises due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• illness or injury</li> <li>• The need to seek urgent medical care or treatment.</li> <li>• A family emergency involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Illness or injury to a member of immediate family or dependent relative.</li> <li>– Bereavement due to a death of a member of immediate family.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>I have to travel to the city for medical appointment in a week's time. Can I use ELS to obtain a locum to cover my absence for this appointment?</b> | No, the ELS can only be used where there is little or no notice of your required absence and is only designed to cover circumstances where you require urgent medical care or treatment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>What classifies as valid supporting documentation</b>                                                                                                | Valid forms of supporting documentation include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A medical certificate, preferred in emergency situations due to unforeseen illness;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Death certificate; or</li> <li>• A Commonwealth statutory declaration for all other or all other emergency situations. Please note a statutory declaration must not be made before a Pharmacist employed by the applicant's Pharmacy.</li> </ul> <p>Note: A Pharmacist will have 30 days in which to provide valid supporting documentation. If a Pharmacist fails to provide this documentation with 30 days of the emergency situation, the Pharmacist will be responsible for repaying the full amount that was provided to assist with the travel costs of the locum pharmacist.</p> |
| <b>How much funding is available under the ELS Program?</b>          | Funding is available up to \$2,500 (GST exclusive) each time you use the ELS program. There is no limit to the amount of times you can access the Program each year. However, the ELS Program is limited on the basis of available funds. Lodging an application does not guarantee access to the ELS Program. Consequently, Community Pharmacies satisfying the Eligibility Criteria will not necessarily receive access to the ELS Program.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>How long can I have a locum under the Program?</b>                | ELS placements are for a minimum of one day and a maximum of seven days.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>What are the opening hours for ELS?</b>                           | ELS can be contacted anytime 24 hours a day, seven days a week.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>What can I use the funding from ELS to pay for?</b>               | ELS funding is only intended to be used to contribute to the travel costs between the locum's home and the Pharmacy location. Other costs such as locum wages, accommodation, meals etc. will not be covered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Do I have input into which locum is placed at my Pharmacy?</b>    | No, locum placements are organised by the current ELS provider and the Program Rules stipulate that applicants must accept the locum provided to them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>What sort of accommodation do I need to provide the locum?</b>    | Accommodation needs to be of a reasonable standard, e.g. a self-contained unit or hotel/motel/guesthouse.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>How do I find out what MM category my Pharmacy is located in?</b> | <p>Your pharmacy's MM category can be viewed on the Australian Government's Health Workforce Locator website:<br/> <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/health-workforce-locator/health-workforce-locator">https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/health-workforce-locator/health-workforce-locator</a>.</p> <p>Click on the MMM 2023 tickbox in the Classification Filter, type in your Pharmacy's address and click Search Location. Your MM category will be displayed underneath your address and also on the map.</p>                                                                       |

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**I want to change my pharmacy's MM category. Can I do this?**

No. A pharmacy's MM category cannot be changed.

**How often do MM categories get updated?**

The Modified Monash Model (MMM) rural classification system is updated after each Census. The 2023 MMM is derived from 2021 ABS data.

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### 10 CONDITIONS OF TENDERING

#### 10.1 Intellectual property rights in RFQ

1. All intellectual property that exists in the information contained in this RFQ, or any related or attached material, remains the property of the department and/or AHA.
2. Each Tenderer is permitted to use this RFQ for the purpose only of compiling its Tender and, in the case of the Tenderer(s) selected through this RFQ process, for negotiating the resultant contract with AHA.

#### 10.2 Confidentiality

1. AHA will, subject to this RFQ, endeavour to treat the following information as confidential:
  - all Tenders received prior to the award of a resultant Contract
  - all unsuccessful Tenders, following the award of a resultant Contract
  - all successful Tenders, following the award of a resultant Contract but only to the extent that:
    - the successful Tenderer requests that specific information in their Tender be kept confidential, and
    - AHA has determined that specific information is to be kept confidential in accordance with the [Confidentiality Throughout the Procurement Cycle](#) from the Department of Finance and has agreed, pursuant to the resultant Contract with the successful Tenderer, to keep that information confidential.

#### 10.3 Cost of preparing and submitting tender

1. To the extent permitted by law, participation in this RFQ process is at the Tenderer's sole risk, cost and expense, and in no circumstances will AHA be responsible for any costs incurred by a Tenderer in preparing a Tender, or associated expenses related to this RFQ.

#### 10.4 Tenderers to inform themselves

1. Tenderers are deemed to have:
  - examined this RFQ, and any other documents referenced or referred to in this RFQ, and any other information made available in writing by AHA to Tenderers for the purposes of submitting a Tender
  - examined all other information which is obtainable by the making of reasonable and timely inquiries and relevant to the risks, contingencies and other circumstances having an effect on their Tender
  - satisfied themselves as to the correctness and sufficiency of their Tender, including quoted prices which are deemed to cover the cost of all matters necessary for the due and proper performance and delivery of the Services described in the RFQ
  - satisfied themselves as to the terms and conditions of the Draft Contract and its ability to comply with the Draft Contract (including by obtaining independent legal advice on the effect of its terms where appropriate)
  - obtained independent advice on the effect of all relevant legislation in relation to the Tenderer's participation in the RFQ process

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- made their own independent assessments of actual workload requirements under any resultant Contract and all prices will be presumed by AHA to have been based upon the Tenderer's own independent assessments.
- 2. It is the responsibility of Tenderers to obtain all information necessary or convenient for the preparation of their Tender.
- 3. Tenderers must not rely, and are deemed not to have relied, upon any statement or representation by AHA, whether before or after the date of this RFQ, in connection with this RFQ or this RFQ process, unless that statement or representation is made in writing by the Contact Officer for this RFQ.
- 4. Tenderers should obtain their own legal and other professional advice on this RFQ and its requirements including in respect of the potential rights and obligations in respect of the Draft Contract and should not construe this RFQ as investment, legal, tax or other advice.

### 10.5 No contract or undertaking

1. Nothing in this RFQ or in any Tender or by the submission of a Tender (in part or together) creates, or is to be construed to create, any binding contract or other understanding (including any form of contractual, quasi-contractual, restitutionary rights or other legal relationship (express or implied) between AHA and any Tenderer unless and until a resultant Subcontract (if any) is signed by AHA and a successful Tenderer.

### 10.6 Acceptance

1. Selection of the preferred Tender will be subject to the execution of a Contract between AHA and the successful Tenderer substantially in the form of the Draft Contract Attachment A.
2. Neither the lowest priced Tender, nor any Tender, will necessarily be accepted by AHA.