

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 6 April 2023

IT'S A GREAT TIME TO BECOME A NURSE OR MIDWIFE

There's never been a better time to become a nurse or midwife – with free degrees, scholarships, and sign-on bonuses available thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's *Free Nursing and Midwifery* initiative.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Monash University – which has seen a 19 per cent increase in nursing undergraduates this year – to meet some of Victoria's newest nursing students, and announce applications for degrees and scholarships will open on 26 April.

The Labor Government's \$270 million investment will see more than 17,000 nurses and midwives recruited and trained, removing the financial barriers to studying and training the next generation of nurses and midwives locally.

As part of this initiative, more than 10,000 Victorian nursing and midwifery students who begin their studies this year or next will be reimbursed up to \$16,500 – covering the cost of their degree.

All new domestic students enrolling in a professional-entry nursing or midwifery course will receive \$3,000 a year over a maximum of three years while studying, and the remaining \$7,500 once they complete two years' work in a Victorian public health service.

There are also strong incentives for nursing and midwifery graduates to take up work in the Victorian public health sector, with an additional \$5,000 in bonus payments after two years of work – with the first round of new graduates set to receive initial payments in May.

The package also includes generous support for nurses and midwives re-joining the workforce – with scholarships of up to \$15,000 to update qualifications and complete any training required to get their registrations up to date.

This package isn't just about recruiting more nurses – it will also upskill our current workforce and make sure we have the right nurses to deliver the specialised care Victorians need, with generous support for nurses to grow their practice and specialise.

Scholarships are available to support up to 2,000 enrolled nurses to become registered nurses, for postgraduate nurses to complete studies in specialty areas like intensive care, emergency, paediatrics and cancer care, and to recruit 100 extra highly skilled nurse practitioners across the state.

In eight years, the Labor Government has grown the number of nurses in the public hospital system by more than 29 per cent – increasing by 10,400 to almost 46,000 nurses as part of the more than 26,500 extra healthcare workers who have joined the public health system since 2014.

Applications for all scholarships open 26 April. To apply, visit health.vic.gov.au/nursing-and-midwifery.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"With scholarships to cover degrees, generous support to upskill and sign-on bonuses – there's never been a better time to become a nurse or midwife in a Victorian public hospital."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"We're recruiting thousands of nurses and midwives, which means more support for our healthcare workers already on the ground – so they can continue to deliver patients the care they need."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

“We’re removing the financial barrier to studying nursing or upskilling – giving Victoria the highly skilled home-grown workforce to deliver the best care in our public hospitals.”