

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Leader of the House
Minister for Health
Minister for Health Infrastructure
Minister for Ambulance Services



Saturday, 27 January 2024

GRANTS UP FOR GRABS TO GROW VICTORIA'S GP WORKFORCE

The Allan Labor Government is once again stepping up to fill the gap in primary care – with the delivery of a generous \$32 million grant program to recruit more GPs.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced applications for 800 grants worth up to \$40,000 each are now open for medical graduates, who take up a career in general practice.

Delivering on a key election commitment – 400 grants are on offer in 2024 with another 400 grants in 2025 for those commencing a GP training program in Victoria. Doctors who commenced their training this year and who had applied, enrolled and were accepted on or after 27 November 2022 are also eligible.

All applicants will be assessed against an eligibility framework to receive the grant.

GP colleges have already seen an uptick in enrolments for GP training for 2024, laying the groundwork for more effective and expansive primary healthcare delivery for Victoria's future.

A recent survey found the number of final year medical students whose first-choice career option is general practice has fallen to just 13 per cent, with the number of GP specialists not growing at the same rate as non-GP specialists.

These grants seek to address some of the current disincentives for young doctors from pursuing a career in general practice, such as the higher remuneration typically on offer in other medical specialties.

Graduates can apply for a grant directly through the websites of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) or the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) once they have been successfully accepted and enrolled into one of the relevant GP training programs.

The Victorian Rural Generalist Program (VRGP) and several medical specialist training programs are also in place to better distribute doctors across regional and rural areas.

While primary care is the responsibility of the Federal Government, a decade of inaction from successive Coalition Governments has made it harder than it has ever been to access a GP.

That is why the Labor Government has had to step in to ensure Victorians can get the care they need, delivering in addition to these grants – 29 Priority Primary Care Centres, the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department and the Community Pharmacist Statewide Pilot.

The grants are part of our plan to grow the size of the overall health workforce, including the recruitment and training of 7,705 healthcare workers, including 3,100 workers from overseas since 2022.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"So many Victorians have built trusted relationships with their local GP over many years, but we know too many people can't get in to see a GP when they need one."

"That's why we're once again stepping in to support more graduates to become GPs so all Victorians can get the primary care they need."

"These grants are providing the incentive graduates need to consider a career in general practice and will ensure Victoria has the GP workforce we need both now and into the future."

Media contact: Isobel Loschiavo 0431 963 479 | isobel.loschiavo@minstaff.vic.gov.au