

Doctors in Secondary Schools program

Frequently Asked Questions

General

What is the Doctors in Secondary Schools program?

The Doctors in Secondary Schools program will provide funding for up to 100 Victorian Government secondary schools in disadvantaged areas to have an adolescent health-trained GP attend up to once a week to provide medical advice and health care to its students.

This initiative will also provide for:

- staff co-ordination and training
- modern, fit-for-purpose rooms where required¹.

What is the aim of the program?

The objectives of this program are to:

- make primary health care more accessible to students
- provide assistance to young people to identify and address any health problems early
- aim to reduce the pressure on working parents and community-based GPs.

How will the program work?

Selected Victorian Government secondary schools will work together with local GPs to enable primary health care services to be delivered on school premises. It is anticipated that the program will enable a GP to attend the school for up to one day a week to assist students to identify and address any health problems early.

All secondary school students who are enrolled in the participating Victorian Government secondary school will be able to access the GP, subject to providing the requisite consent for the services.

The participating Victorian Government Secondary Schools, students and their parents/guardians/carers will not incur any out-of-pocket expenses for consultations with the GP on the school premises.

When will the program commence?

This targeted expression of interest invites select Victorian government secondary schools in disadvantaged areas to lodge an application to participate in the Doctors in Victorian Government Secondary Schools program. **Applications close 5pm, Monday 13 June 2016.**

¹ The infrastructure provided to individual Victorian Government schools will depend on the needs of the individual school and will either consist of a refurbishment of an existing room, or the provision of a new building. The Victorian Government will determine which is most appropriate for each individual Victorian Government school selected to participate in the program.

The Victorian Government will then assess the submitted Expressions of Interest and determine which Victorian Government secondary schools will be selected to participate in the program. It is anticipated that successful schools will be notified in August 2016.

The participating Victorian Government secondary schools will then be supported to:

- recruit and train staff to co-ordinate the program
- work with the Department of Education and Training to create rooms that are fit for purpose
- establish local partnerships

It is anticipated that a number of the selected Victorian Government secondary schools will be ready to deliver GP services on their school premises from Term 1, 2017. The program will continue to roll out and most schools are expected to be delivering GP services by Term 1, 2018.

Schools who have been invited to submit an Expression of Interest

How many schools have been invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)?

A total of 192 Victorian Government secondary school campuses across the state have been invited to submit an Expression of Interest.

Why has my school been invited to submit an EOI?

Your school has been invited to participate in the Doctors in Secondary Schools program for two reasons:

1. Identification as disadvantaged

The GPs in Victorian Government Secondary Schools program aims to improve access to primary care for young people in disadvantaged communities across Victoria. Your school has been identified as 'disadvantaged' based on the following two criteria:

- **Student Family Occupation and Education (SFOE)**
SFOE is calculated based on parental occupation and education data collected at school level. It is considered the most accurate measure of disadvantage. The Victorian Government secondary schools with the highest SFOE index (thus the highest density of students from low socio-economic backgrounds) have been targeted for participation.
- **Access to health services**
Consideration has also been given to Victorian Government secondary schools located in areas that have limited access to a local GP.

2. Infrastructure capacity

As part of the program, the Department of Education and Training will work with the selected Victorian Government secondary schools to establish appropriate GP consultation facilities on the school premises. This means that Victorian Government secondary schools invited to lodge an Expression of Interest have already been assessed by the Department as having capacity to refurbish an existing building, or install a small or large relocatable for this purpose.

Do I have to apply?

No. Victorian Government secondary schools that have been invited to submit an Expression of Interest are not obligated to apply. However, we encourage you to consider submitting an application for this important program to support the health and wellbeing of your students.

More than one of my school's campuses has received an invitation to apply. Can all campuses submit an Expression of Interest?

The Department will consider your needs at both a campus and school level. The Department will work with your school to determine the best approach to providing care to their students across the campuses.

If you do apply and have multiple campuses, it would be helpful to describe the individual issues associated with each campus.

How will Victorian Government secondary schools be selected to participate in the program?

The Department of Education and Training has invited 192 campuses of Victorian Government secondary schools to lodge an Expression of Interest to participate in the Doctors in Secondary Schools program.

These Victorian Government secondary schools should carefully consider the following key selection criteria to determine their readiness to commit to this important health and wellbeing program:

1. Demonstrated student need

1.1 Provide an overview of the key health and wellbeing needs of your students and how they would benefit from having a GP on the school premises.

2. Capacity to build relationships with the community, including health services and the parent body

2.1. Describe how you envisage working with a local GP in your school. How would you engage and collaborate with your parent community in setting up and implementing this program?

2.2. If you have any current relationships with community health services (e.g. headspace, mental health, sexual health services), please describe them, including the nature of these relationships (informal arrangement, formal agreement etc.), the current services provided to the school community, and any relevant operational matters.

3. Long-term commitment to student health and wellbeing, including consideration of how young people from the school will be involved in the establishment and operation of the program.

3.1. Outline the activities your school currently undertakes to support student health and wellbeing.

3.2. Outline the roles and responsibilities of your existing health and wellbeing staff (e.g. school nurse, student support officers etc.) including any staff or services employed or engaged by the school council.

3.3. How do all of these professionals work together? (i.e. how do they demonstrate a holistic approach to student health and wellbeing?).

3.4. How do you envisage these health professionals working together with a GP?

3.5. Outline your vision for the health and wellbeing of your students for the next three years. You may like to draw on your school's implementation plan or health promotion plan.

3.6 How will you engage young people from your school to be involved in the establishment and operation of this program? How will you make the service youth friendly?

Any schools that determine they meet the criteria and would like to participate in the program should complete and submit an Expression of Interest online at Survey Monkey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DoctorsinSecondarySchools> by no later than 5pm, Monday 13 June 2016. Please enter the password: Doctor 2017

Infrastructure

How does the government know whether I have the capacity for the required capital works?

In late 2015, the Department of Education and Training commissioned BHA Architects to undertake an initial capital works analysis of the eligible secondary schools. From this analysis, the Department has determined if a school is eligible for refurbishment of existing permanent space or provision of a relocatable building. Schools were assessed on whether they had:

- sufficient capacity in their permanent buildings to run the program, with possible refurbishment, or
- insufficient capacity in the school's permanent buildings, yet sufficient space to site a relocatable building on the school site to run the program.

Regardless of the type of consulting room provided, all works will be to an equally high standard and provide the school with a fit-for-purpose consulting room.

What infrastructure will be required?

In order to run the program, schools will be required to have modern, fit-for-purpose GP consultation facilities on their grounds. Depending on the type of building the school can accommodate, there may be additional rooms to use for health and wellbeing support, as well as a waiting area for students.

The consultation facilities will have sound-attenuation materials to preserve privacy and a sink with plumbing for the GP use. The facilities will also have furniture and equipment suitable for a consultation room.

If a relocatable building is required, in most cases a new, two-mod, purpose-built relocatable building will be constructed and delivered.

The school co-ordinator will have the opportunity to work with the builders and the Department to determine the location of the facility, along with some aspects of the internal design such as colour scheme (choice of four colour schemes prepared by a qualified interior designer). Schools may also use a portion of the furniture and equipment grants to order from a range of educational break-out furniture, in order to make the clinic adolescent friendly.

How can I find out what capital works I am eligible for?

The Department of Education and Training has determined that schools are eligible for a purpose-built relocatable building if there is insufficient capacity in the school's permanent buildings. Capacity has been determined by reviewing the schools current enrolment and total capacity. If a school is significantly over-entitled (has in excess of 115 per cent excess capacity in permanent facilities), the school is eligible for refurbishment of permanent facilities. If a school has less than 115

per cent excess capacity, the school is eligible for a relocatable building. Consideration is also given to what has been committed to in the 2016-17 capital works pipeline.

Will I have to contribute financially towards the building?

Schools will not need to contribute financially to the infrastructure for the Doctors in Secondary Schools program unless they would like additions beyond the core requirements necessary to run the initiative.

When will building works start?

It is anticipated that site inspections of the successful schools will be undertaken in July-August 2016. Building works will commence in a staged process from mid-October 2016. It is anticipated that all 100 schools will have the required infrastructure in place by July 2017.

How long will my school have the building for?

The school will have the relocatable buildings for the duration of the program. The relocatable buildings will be part of the Department's fleet and, as such, are a state-wide resource. The buildings may be transferred from the school site at the conclusion of the program and repurposed for educational use at other schools if required.

Can I use the building for other purposes?

Given the GP will be in attendance for up to one day per week, schools may wish to use the room(s) on the other four days for student health and wellbeing support.

Program coordination

How much funding will I receive for the program coordinator?

The Department of Education and Training will work with the successful schools to ensure they have sufficient funding for the school coordination role for the duration of the program.

What core tasks will they be required to do?

School coordinators will be central to the success of the program and in line with Program Operational Guidelines (finalised later in the year) may be required to:

- establish a partnership and positive relationship with a local health service (**Note:** schools will not be required to find their own GP. The Department is working with the primary health care sector in Victoria to ensure a GP will be available to work with your school)
- establish school processes to support program implementation
- support the administration and operation of the program (i.e. arrange GP appointments and reminders)
- facilitate collaboration between school health and wellbeing staff

The nature of the school coordination role is yet to be finalised so the descriptions above will vary depending on the workforce recruited to the role. This is subject to further deliberation by the Victorian Government.

Will the school program coordinator receive any training?

Yes. All coordinators will need to undertake training in order to co-ordinate the program. This training is likely to cover key issues in adolescent health, understanding the role of a GP, and program operation.

Costs of CRT, travel and accommodation for this training will be covered by the Department.

Partnering with a General Practitioner

Will I have to find my own GP?

No. Victorian Government secondary schools selected to participate in the program will not be required to find their own GP. The Department of Education and Training is working with the primary health care sector in Victoria to ensure a GP will be available to work with each school.

However, Victorian Government secondary schools participating in the program will be expected to form a strong and positive partnership with their local primary health care service in order to run the program.

How often will they attend the school?

It is anticipated that a GP engaged under the program will attend the school for up to one day per week.

How will they work within a school?

GPs will work closely with the school program coordinator to provide an adolescent health service on the school premises. Prior to commencement at the school, all participating GPs will be required to undertake training in adolescent health that conforms to the standards of accreditation for continuing professional development set by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. They will also receive training on providing primary health care within a school, including understanding the school context, roles and responsibilities, legal and consent issues, communication etc.

There will be comprehensive program and operational guidelines for both the GP and school staff.

What health issues will they see students about?

The services the GPs will provide students under this program are the same as those provided by any local GP and therefore may include mental health, sexual and reproductive health and physical health.

Operational questions

Will students be required to pay anything for their medical appointment?

No. There will be no out-of-pocket expenses for the student and their family.

How will billing work?

The model of billing may differ depending on the local context and primary health service. Further information on this aspect of the program will be available later in 2016. Schools can be assured that their school and their students will not incur expenses.

How will appointments be made?

The school program coordinator will work with the local primary health service and school staff to establish a system of appointments and reminders.

How will parents and students provide their consent to see the GP?

Victorian Government secondary schools selected to participate in the program will receive comprehensive guidelines about obtaining informed consent for the student to see the GP.

Can the GP refer to other health services if the student needs it?

Yes. It is anticipated that referrals will be an important part of this program. The school program coordinator will work with the GP, the student and parent/carer to make referrals.

Who else can I get involved in the GP clinic?

All Victorian Government secondary schools selected to participate in the program are encouraged to take a holistic approach to the Doctors in Secondary Schools program. This means that other health and wellbeing staff within your school are encouraged to be involved. How this works will vary, but may, for example, take the form of multidisciplinary teams or meetings to discuss relevant cases, or closer working relationships with the GP to facilitate a comprehensive clinical approach to the student in need.