

## **SPECIALIST TRAINING PROGRAM (STP) AND INTEGRATED RURAL TRAINING PIPELINE (IRTP)**

### **RURAL SUPPORT LOADING GUIDELINES**

As part of the Specialist Training Program (STP), the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) has made available funding of up to \$22,500 per annum (GST exclusive) pro rata per FTE for STP and Integrated Rural Training Pipeline (IRTP) funded training posts in rural settings, where additional costs are incurred by a trainee. The rural support loading must be used to support the trainee during their specialty training in the rural, regional or remote STP / IRTP post.

“Rural” is defined as [Australian Statistical Geography Standard](#)- Remoteness Areas (ASGS-RA) 2-5

The training setting must submit to RACMA an Activity Work Plan at the beginning of the funded period detailing how it intends to allocate the Rural Support Loading. A reporting template is provided by RACMA. Upon acceptance of this Activity Work Plan, the training setting can proceed with the Activity.

The Activity Period is the 12 months of the specialty training academic year. Once the Activity Period has ended, training settings will be required to report on the outcomes of the Activity. Detailed expenditure receipts are not required for the report, however, RACMA must be satisfied that Activities are delivered as agreed.

Payment of Rural Support Loading will be made in arrears in August (50%) and March (50%).

### **Use of rural loading support funds under Contracts with Settings**

The College will administer funds to health settings in the following manner:

- If a post is not filled to the full FTE originally approved, a pro-rata amount of the Rural Support Loading will apply;
- If the health setting has delivered, or indicates that it is proposing to deliver, substantially different Activities than was agreed, RACMA must approve this change to the Activity; and seek the advice of the Department if a dispute arises;
- Funding is conditional on the FTE working and training in a rural health setting, identified as [ASGS RA2-RA5](#)
- If rural support loading is used to purchase infrastructure e.g IT hardware this remains the property of the health service to ensure provision for each trainee who occupies the training post

### **How RSL can be used**

Funds received through this grant may be used as a contribution towards Activity costs, assisting in meeting those additional costs which may be incurred to support a specialty trainee in rural, regional and remote locations.

Such expenses may include (but are not limited to):

- Accommodation costs –accommodation /rent subsidies
- Purchase of resources (eg text books, computers, tablet, phone, journal subscriptions)
- Attendance at training courses, meetings and conferences (within Australia only)

- Video conferencing facilities (eg equipment, installation, software)
- Broadband access / IT upgrade and or access, IT hardware relating to the training post, not the entire site
- Research project requirements - access to online library, laboratory equipment, subscriptions)
- Relocation costs- flights, household removal, vehicle removal
- Travel costs –flights, car mileage, taxis and costs associated with attending teaching sessions such as lectures, tutorials, conferences, meetings within Australia.
- Travel expenses related to day-to-day travel between health settings within a region for the purpose of training – car hire, use of vehicle, flights

**NOTE** – the following **cannot** be included in applications for Rural Support Loading:

- Supervisor salaries or travel expenses
- Trainee salaries and on costs
- Hospital equipment and stationery
- Expenses related to the accreditation of the training post
- Locum costs
- Administration staff costs
- Office equipment (Unless setting up an office or workspace for trainee. Such costs can only be claimed once.)
- International travel and accommodation
- Recruitment costs
- Internal induction training

**RSL payments are not made to individual trainees or where the post is or has become vacant.**

### **Reporting Requirements**

Those sites that are eligible for Rural Support Loading will be required to submit two Performance Reports to RACMA.

- The first Performance Report is due in July each year and will include an income and expenditure statement for the reporting period and a budget expenditure projection for the next reporting period.
- The second Performance Report is due in February each year and will include an income and expenditure statement for the final reporting period of the Activity Period.

### **How RSL is paid**

On receipt and acceptance of the two Performance Reports (July and February) RACMA will pay funds in two 50% instalments in arrears in August and March. Additional information and clarification may be sought from the health setting to ensure the proposed allocation of RSL funds is eligible.