



**SUPPORT FOR RURAL
SPECIALISTS IN
AUSTRALIA**

Individual Grants for Rural Medical Specialists Accessing Continuing Professional Development

Application Guidelines

SRSA Program Management Unit must receive completed applications by 5:00pm EST on the closing date of the funding round. Late applications will not be accepted.

Support for Rural Specialists in Australia

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1. Background

The Support for Rural Specialists in Australia (SRSA) program is a Department of Health funded initiative, and is administered by the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC). It has been established as part of the consolidation of the Rural Health Continuing Education (RHCE) Stream One program.

2. Aims of the SRSA Program

- 2.1 The overall aims of the SRSA Program are to provide rural specialists with access to professional support and training opportunities.
- 2.2 This will be achieved by:
 - a. providing support and training via online learning programs; and
 - b. providing individual grants to enable rural specialists to access training not available in their home town.
- 2.3 SRSA will provide a streamlined program of support and education for health professionals in rural and remote Australia to access multidisciplinary or continuing education projects.

3. General Information

3.1 Eligibility and Target Groups

- 3.1.1 Core to the SRSA Program will be the delivery of CPD to rural health professionals to:
 - (a) support clinical and professional capacity, recognising that in rural and remote areas CPD is vital to:
 - supporting rural workforce retention;
 - providing clinicians with relevant professional education systems and networks to maintain clinical and professional standards;
 - reduce professional isolation; and
 - addressing the specific challenges of life-long learning in rural and remote settings.
 - (b) help improve the skill and competence of specialists working in rural areas and enhance the quality of services provided to their communities.
- 3.1.2 Funding under the SRSA is available to rural and remote medical specialists to support activities for specialists working in MM2 to MM7 as defined by the Modified Monash Model (MMM) system categories.

3.1.3 The total funding under each component will be determined by the CPMC in consultation with the Department of Health and may vary over the life of the Program. Total funds will be divided to support the two components outlined in 2.2:

1. SRSA e-Learning platform to deliver CPD; and
2. SRSA individual CPD support grants.

3.1.4 Through its CPD support and associated activities, the SRSA program aims to achieve increased knowledge and skills that will be transferable to clinical practice with relevant and site appropriate education.

3.2 SRSA Sub-Committee and the SRSA Program Management Unit.

3.2.1 The SRSA Sub-Committee is established in consultation with the member Colleges of the CPMC and the Department of Health to provide oversight and expert advice over the life of the program.

3.2.2 The SRSA Program Management Unit (PMU) currently located within The Royal Australasian College of Physicians is contracted by the CPMC to administer the SRSA Program.

3.2.3 The contact details for program staff are:

SRSA Program Manager: admin@ruralspecialist.org.au

Telephone: 02 9256 5419

Website: www.ruralspecialist.org.au

3.3 Applying for the Grant

3.3.1 Applications for funding must be submitted electronically.

3.3.2 Application submissions must be completed in conjunction with reading the Application Guidelines.

3.3.3 Late applications will not be accepted.

3.3.4 Before applications are submitted please ensure all questions are answered accurately and completely. Keep a copy of your application for your own records.

3.3.5 Further information regarding the SRSA program can be found at: www.ruralspecialist.org.au

4. SRSA Individual CPD Support Grants

4.1 As part of the program, grants to support access to CPD are available to individual medical specialists who live and work in rural and remote Australia. Applications from individuals must meet the Eligibility Criteria and Application Requirements described below and supported by their relevant medical college.

4.2 Eligibility Criteria

4.2.1 Funding is available according to the following eligibility criteria:

1. Medical specialists who live and work in areas determined using the Modified Monash Model ([MMM](#)) system categories MM2 to MM7 as follows:

Modified Monash Category	Inclusions
MM 2	Areas categorised ASGC-RA 2 and ASGC-RA 3 that are in, or within 20km road distance, of a town with population >50,000.
MM 3	Areas categorised ASGC-RA 2 and ASGS-RA 3 that are not in MM 2 and are in, or within 15km road distance, of a town with population between 15,000 and 50,000.
MM 4	Areas categorised ASGS-RA 2 and ASGS-RA 3 that are not in MM 2 or MM 3, and are in, or within 10km road distance, of a town with population between 5,000 and 15,000.
MM 5	All other areas in ASGS-RA 2 and 3.
MM 6	All areas categorised ASGS-RA 4 that are not on a populated island that is separated from the mainland in the ABS geography and is more than 5km offshore.
MM 7	All other areas – that being ASGS-RA 5 and areas on a populated island that is separated from the mainland in the ABS geography and is more than 5km offshore.

Information on the remoteness classification of any town or community in Australia can be readily provided through the Department of Health “Map Locator” which is available online via:

http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/publishing.nsf/Content/MMM_locator

2. All applicants must hold current practice qualifications and registrations including compliance with any state and territory requirements and compliance with the Medical Board of Australia. International Medical Graduates who are undertaking Specialist Medical College requirements for specialist recognition following assessment by the College via the Australian Medical Council Specialist Assessment Pathway are eligible to apply.

Please note: General Practitioners (ACRRM and RACGP) are **ineligible** to apply for funding under the Program, as CPD for these practitioners is funded through other Australian Government programs.

4.2.2 The CPD course provider must be either nationally accredited, nationally recognised or an accredited/professional private educational provider. Training providers may include but are not confined to universities, registered training

organisations or professional bodies such as medical colleges and their equivalents.

4.2.3 Other forms of education, such as clinical attachments in specialist units or proctoring by relevant visiting specialists are eligible for grant funding, but must conform to meet individual Specialist Medical College CPD program frameworks.

4.2.4 Funding under this program supplements areas not currently serviced by state and territory or other Australian Government programs.

4.3 Application Requirements

The following application requirements should be considered when preparing a funding submission:

- The applicant meets the eligibility criteria as outlined above in paragraph 4.2;
- Individuals must demonstrate that the proposed activity meets a specific learning need;
- The CPD event must be directly relevant to the applicant's current employment in a rural or remote area of an Australian state or territory;
- The CPD event must be under taken in Australia and must take place within the time frame specified in the Application Form;
- Courses and/or education activities nominated must be accredited by the relevant professional body;
- Courses and/or education activities must include a minimum of 6 hours of face-to-face learning per individual;
- Annual Scientific Meetings are considered to be lower priority than practical skills workshops.
- The CPD event must have specific and explicit learning objectives and contain specific learning activities planned according to the educational objectives.
- The application must clearly document the outcomes of learning and implications for practice and outline a clear process for monitoring the achievement of learning objectives.

4.4 Selection Criteria

Applications MUST address the specific selection criteria

The following criteria will be applied to applications for funding of individual CPD activities by individual medical specialists:

- Demonstration of identified need at 'local' level with respect to identified healthcare needs in context of individual educational needs.
- Location; rural and remote focus. Provision of CPD and educational opportunities for eligible medical specialists and multidisciplinary teams in rural and remote areas of Australia with an ability to reduce isolation.

- Demonstration of appropriate educational principles to enable key knowledge/skills attainment and transfer.
- Ability to integrate learning to a wider context.
- Ability to contribute to / demonstrate sustainable changes in practice.
- Relative 'cost effectiveness' / 'value'.
- Demonstrated hardship or difficulty in participating in approved CPD activities.

4.5 Application Assessment

4.5.1 Individual Grant Applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel, and according to the criteria of each SRSA Program component as outlined in the SRSA Guidelines.

4.6 Budget and Travel Expense Guidelines

Applications will be accepted up to a value of \$2,000 per training day up to a maximum of 5 days per person, per annum (\$10,000).

Air travel

Only economy class air travel will be reimbursed.

Accommodation

Overnight accommodation prior to an event will be reimbursed only where the travelling times makes it impractical to travel on the morning of the event or to return on the same day following the event.

Where overnight accommodation is required, a maximum of \$350 per night will be refundable per night.

Reimbursement of taxis / Uber

Taxis/Uber between home/airport/location of activity identified in the Grant Application Form will be reimbursed.

Private car travel

If a private car is used in place of air travel, please consult with SRSA PMU staff to obtain approval. Private car travel will be reimbursed at a rate of 0.69c per km. Where a private car travel will be used in place of air travel, the total amount reimbursable will be to a maximum of the respective flight cost.

Meal allowance

Amounts refundable for meals are as follows:

Breakfast up to \$30.00

Lunch up to \$50.00

Dinner up to \$70.00

Airport parking

Airport parking facilities may be used where necessary and will be reimbursed.

Accompanying persons

SRSA grant funds do not cover costs associated with accompanying persons.

4.8 Reimbursement process

All expense items claimed under this grant requires a tax invoice showing the supplier's name, address, ABN number and GST amount. Following the completion of the CPD activity / activities participants are to scan and email receipts to admin@ruralspecialist.org.au and include their nominated bank account details where funds can be transferred. Reimbursements will be made once the CPD activity and evaluation survey have been completed.

4.9 Evaluation

The participant will be required to complete a brief mandatory evaluation following the completion of the CPD activity / activities.

5. SRSA Program Further Information

5.1 Complaints

Robust and transparent complaints resolution policies and procedures will be established by the CPMC. These are available from the SRSA PMU.

5.2 Other Funding Sources

SRSA is one of many measures to support health professionals in rural and remote Australia to access MDT and CPD activities. There are a number of other Australian Government programs which also support rural specialists and research. Information about other programs is available from the Department of Health at: <http://www.ruralhealthaustralia.gov.au/>

Contact your College to enquire about other funding opportunities available to you.

5.3 Privacy

Any information provided to the SRSA program by an applicant will be dealt with in accordance with *Privacy Act 1988*.