

FAQ: Strengthening Medicare – General Practice Grants Program

About the program

General information

<p>What is the Strengthening Medicare – General Practice Grants Program?</p>	<p>The Australian Government is investing \$220 million over two years in Medicare general practices, and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs).</p> <p>One-off Grants of \$25,000, \$35,000, and \$50,000 will be available to eligible practices to expand patient access and provide better, safe, accessible quality care.</p> <p>For further information on the Program, please refer to the Strengthening Medicare – General Practice Grants Program Factsheet.</p>
<p>What is the total Program funding amount available?</p>	<p>The Program has a budget of \$220million available to be distributed to general practices and ACCHOs nationally.</p> <p>Every eligible practice will have access to the Grant funding.</p>
<p>What are the three Grant tier amounts?</p>	<p>Three tiers of Grants are available through the Grants program, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small practice tier – eligible for Grants of \$25,000 • Medium practice tier – eligible for Grants of \$35,000 • Large practice tier – eligible for Grants of \$50,000 <p>*Unaccredited practices of any size are only eligible for Grants of \$25,000.</p>
<p>What can the Grants be used for?</p>	<p>The Grants can be used by general practices and ACCHOs to invest in innovation, training, equipment, and minor capital works across <u>one or more</u> of the below investment streams:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance digital health capability – to fast-track the benefits of a more connected healthcare system in readiness to meet future standards. 2. Upgrade infection prevention and control arrangements – to support the safe, face to face assessment of patients



	<p>with symptoms of potentially infectious respiratory disease (e.g., COVID, influenza).</p> <p>3. Maintain and/or achieve accreditation against the Royal Australian College of General Practitioner (RACGP) Standards for General Practice, under the General Practice Accreditation Scheme – to promote quality and safety in general practice.</p>
Can we use the Grant for multiple streams or just one?	Practices will receive a single one-off Grant that can be used for one or more of the investment streams.
How will general practice size be determined?	<p>Practice size will be determined using the GPFTE model (see Method Paper) which estimates the total effort spent by GPs delivering primary care services based on Medicare Benefits Schedule items claimed within a GP's scope of practice.</p> <p>For each GP, the measure provides an estimate of the billable time, non-billable time, and non-clinical time spent on claims.</p> <p>Communication detailing what tier your practice falls into will be sent to you directly by Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN).</p> <p>For more information on the GPFTE model see Method Paper: General Practice Full Time Equivalent (GPFTE) – Workforce.</p>
What are the eligibility requirements for a GP Grant?	<p>To be eligible for the Program, you must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general practice that is currently open and operating; and • ACCHOs that deliver general practice services that are not owned or operated by a state, territory or local government agency or body.
What is the definition of a general practice?	<p>A general practice, as per the RACGP definition for the purposes of practice accreditation against the Standards for General Practice, that meets all the following three core criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The practice or health service operates within the model of general practice described in the RACGP's definition of general practice. 2. General practitioner (GP) services are predominantly* of a general practice nature. 3. The practice or health service is capable of meeting all mandatory indicators in the RACGP Standards for General Practice.

	<p>*‘Predominantly’ is defined by the Health Insurance Regulations 2018 (made under the <i>Health Insurance Act 1973</i>) as ‘more than 50% of the practitioner’s clinical time, and more than 50% of the services for which Medicare benefits are claimed, are in general practice.</p> <p>Please refer to the RACGP fact sheet to assist in determining whether a health service meets the definition of a general practice.</p>
<p>Does my practice need to be accredited or registered for accreditation to apply for the GP Grants Program?</p>	<p>No, a practice does <u>not</u> need to be accredited or registered for RACGP practice accreditation against the Standards for General Practice to be eligible for the Program.</p> <p>However, an unaccredited practice will only be eligible for a one-off Grant of \$25,000.</p>
<p>Is a general practitioner who works in a single field (such as laser/skin care services, women’s health issues or single field issues) eligible for a GP Grant?</p>	<p>No, they are not eligible as the health services provided by the GP are specialised services and do not cover whole-person, comprehensive primary care that is provided in general practices.</p>
<p>What if I own more than one practice/my practice is part of a corporate group. Do I apply separately or as a group?</p>	<p>Each practice can apply separately for a Grant if they meet eligibility requirements.</p>
<p>What can be purchased with a Grant?</p>	<p>The General Practice Grants Program provides the flexibility for applicants to identify investments within one or more of the three investment streams that best address individual practice needs.</p> <p>The Grants can be used for staff training, purchase of equipment and/or services (including consultant services), innovation, and minor capital works, and the reimbursement of staff time associated with these activities – for any of the three investment streams.</p> <p>Please refer to the Department of Health and Aged Care’s Quick Reference Guide for examples of possible investment activities under each stream, noting this is a guide only and it is recognised that each practice will have different investment needs.</p>
<p>Is there anything the Grant cannot be used for?</p>	<p>The Grants cannot be used to cover expenses or costs outside of the three investment streams. For example, the following activities are <u>not</u> to be funded with a Grant under the General Practice Grants Program:</p>



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major capital works – unless it forms part of activity/ies under one of the investment streams. 2. Staff wages/salaries for performing business-as-usual duties. 3. Business-as-usual costs associated with operating a general practice (e.g., utilities, rent, administration, taxes). 4. Activities, purchases, or expenses that your general practice has undertaken or undertakes outside of the start date/end date of the grant, e.g., cannot be used to retrospectively fund activities, purchases, or expenses that the grantee has already undertaken. 5. The same activities, purchases, or expenses that your general practice has received funding for through another grant program (e.g., Mental Health Initial Assessment and Referral Tool training).
<p>How can General practices and ACCHOs apply for Grants?</p>	<p>General practices will be able to apply for the Grants through their local Primary Health Networks (PHNs), who will administer and manage the Program in relation to general practices.</p> <p>Eligible ACCHOs will be able to apply for the grants through the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), who will administer and manage the Program in relation to ACCHOs.</p>
<p>How will Grants be distributed?</p>	<p>Grants will be distributed via PHNs.</p> <p>The Grants for general practices in Northern Queensland (NQ) will be distributed by NQPHN, and for NQ ACCHOs by NACCHO.</p>

If you have any questions about the General Practice Grants Program, please contact the NQPHN at grants@nqphn.com.au

