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Allied Health Professionals + Professional Development Reimbursement Program Framework

Version No.: V3.0

Approval date: February
2025



Government
of South Australia

SA Health

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1. Introduction

The Allied Health Professionals + Professional Development Reimbursement Program (AHP+PDRP) supplements existing funding programs to provide additional reimbursements for approved professional development (PD) activities for current SA Health employees classified as AHP; DO; GFSc; MeS; MPH; or PO. This framework (hereafter *the framework*) outlines the eligibility of and requirements for reimbursements within the AHP+PDRP. The AHP+PDRP funding is additional to training and development provided to staff for the performance of their role and should not be used in place of existing policies or funding mechanisms. This framework has been developed to assist applicants with their PD application process and the Department Head (or delegate) when recommending applications for approval.

The framework applies to staff employed by any of the following: Central Adelaide Local Health Network including Statewide Clinical Support Services, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network including Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia, Women's and Children's Health Network, SA Ambulance Services and the Department for Health.

Allied and Scientific Health staff employed by Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network, Eyre and Far North Local Health Network, Flinders and Upper North Local Health Network, Limestone Coast Local Health Network, Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network, or Yorke and Northern Local Health Network are managed via the [Country Allied Health Clinical Enhancement Program plus \(CAHCEP+\)](#).

Current SA Health employees are supported through investment in training and development as detailed by the [South Australian Public Sector Enterprise Agreement: Salaried 2021](#), specifically clause 21: Professional Development and Maintenance of Professional Registration/Accreditation and clause 22: Professional Development – Applying for reimbursement of Costs aligned with the [Commissioner's Determination 3.2 – Employment Conditions, Remuneration Allowances and Reimbursements](#) that sets out guideline provision entitlements for reimbursing staff.

The Chief Allied and Scientific Health Officer holds the delegation to approve individual applications and the Statewide AHP+PDRP Advisory Panel holds the delegation to approve group applications.

The AHP+PDRP operates in-line with the Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) year, from 1 April to 31 March in the following year, which enables reimbursements to be made for the relevant financial year. The Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO), in consultation with the AHP+PDRP Advisory Panel, sets out rounds during which applications can be made. Round open dates are available on the [AHP+PDRP website](#). Applications will only be accepted when the rounds are open. During this time, applications must be submitted by individuals or groups via the pre-approval (available only in round one) or direct reimbursement processes (available in all rounds). The payment of the PD activity must occur before the end of the round closure and within the same FBT year as the application to be eligible for reimbursement.

All application requirements are outlined on the [AHP+PDRP webpage](#) and all applications must be lodged on-line.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive (CE) has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of this framework. As far as is reasonably practicable, the CE must ensure that:

- > all levels of management are aware of their responsibilities in relation to this framework
- > all employees, access appointees and contractors are aware of their responsibilities in relation to this framework
- > adequate resources are made available to implement this framework.

2.2 Department Head (or delegate)

Department Heads (or delegate) are responsible for recommending reimbursement for eligible staff including:

- > participating in the implementation of this framework
- > complying with this framework and local process procedures
- > ensuring that the access of professional development by an allied or scientific health professional or other eligible employee has a direct benefit to their skill, knowledge or career development as a clinician providing a service to the SA public health system
- > ensuring approved HR-077 form for overseas travel is included in the relevant applications.

2.3 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- > participating in the implementation of this framework
- > complying with this framework and local process procedures
- > providing accurate, complete, timely information and documentation
- > advising the AHP+ PDRP program if they did not attend a pre-approved or reimbursed event or wish to withdraw their application.

2.4 Organisers of Group Applications

Group applications can be made for multiple allied and scientific staff where a PD activity will benefit several eligible participants and there is a financial benefit in making the booking as a group instead of on an individual basis. Group applications must have the support of the line manager.

If the cost per head is above \$200 AUD, this amount is deducted from the total annual allocation for each attendee. If the attendee has already expended the capped amount of allocated funds within that financial year, the Local Health Network (LHN) or individual will need to pay for the remaining cost for the attendee to undertake the PD activity. If per head costs are below \$200 AUD for group events, this is not deducted from the individual's allocation.

Employees who are the nominated organiser for a group event are responsible for:

- > Completion of the group application form including a detailed outline of the event with justification of the value of the PD activity with an indicative cost per head and maximum numbers
- > Gaining approval from the Statewide AHP+PDRP Advisory Panel via the group application process
- > Coordination of any associated expression of interest process to attract attendees
- > Coordination of any accommodation and airfares details for the facilitator and marketing of the event (and any associated evaluation process)

- > Providing a valid tax invoice and a confirmed attendee list to the AHP+PDRP once the PD activity has occurred
- > Providing the name of the finance representative and the 17-digit responsibility index (RI) in the AHP+PDRP application so that the reimbursement can occur if initial payment is via a departmental cost centre
- > Providing detail to the Statewide AHP+PDRP Advisory Panel to review and authorise, where the PD activity has already been approved and there are proposed changes
- > Providing any further information requested by the Statewide AHP+PDRP Advisory Panel
- > If relevant, providing a signed, simple service letter from the facilitator indicating:
 - the type of services to be received
 - the date of the event
 - the number and classification of potential attendees
 - a milestone schedule of fee payment if the facilitator has requested a development fee as well as a facilitator fee.

3. Framework Requirements

This framework is applied in accordance with Clause 21 and Clause 22 of the South Australian Public Sector Enterprise Agreement Salaried 2021, applied to AHP; DO; GFSc; MeS; MPH; PO for whom an appropriate professional degree qualification is specified by the employing public sector agency as a minimum essential qualification for the performance by the employee of the duties for which they are employed, will be entitled to reimbursement of the reasonable cost of professional development expenses incurred during their employment, provided that:

21.1.1 The professional development is a compulsory requirement of a recognised professional registration or accreditation body applicable to the employee's professional capacity for the employee to maintain or acquire their registration or accreditation in the professional occupation or capacity in which they are employed; and

21.1.2 The agency explicitly requires such registration or accreditation to be maintained or acquired for the performance by the employee of the duties for which they are employed.

Professionals where accreditation or registration is not required as part of their employment are also eligible for AHP+ PDRP if their employment classification is AHP; DO; GFSc; MeS; MPH; or PO and the PD activity has a *direct benefit* to their skill, knowledge or career development as a clinician or clinical manager providing or supporting a service to the consumers of the South Australian Public Health System.

Additionally:

21.2 Reimbursement will not apply:

21.2.1 If the employee does not successfully complete the relevant professional development; or

21.2.2 If the employee ceases for any reason to be registered or accredited or is the subject of any disciplinary process being undertaken by the registration or accreditation body that may result in loss of registration or accreditation (but reimbursement will apply if there is no adverse disciplinary finding); or

21.2.3 If the fees or charges were partly or wholly incurred before entering employment with the agency or undertaking with the agency the duties of the applicable professional occupation, provided that the agency may agree to meet any part that arises during employment or the performance of the relevant duties.

Nevertheless, a Department Head (or delegate) should be satisfied that the access to the PD activity by an Allied or Scientific Health professional or other eligible employee will have a direct benefit to their clinical skill, knowledge or career development as a clinician providing a clinical service to the consumers of the South Australian Public Health System. Approval from the Department Head (or delegate) must be given prior to any leave being taken for the purpose of the PD activity.

Reimbursement funding up to the capped allocation amount of \$2,000 AUD per employee per FBT year is available through the AHP+PDRP for individual/group activity costs incurred during the FBT year. Reimbursement will be by an electronic funds transfer (EFT) only. The minimum EFT reimbursement amount will be \$200 AUD. More than one activity can be included in one application to meet the \$200 AUD minimum.

The PD activity must be related to the employee's employment and appropriate justification and documentation must be supplied as per section 3.4. Applicants and the Department Head (or delegate) will be notified of the outcome of the application by email.

Education fees associated with courses at educational institutions are subject to FBT if they are a Commonwealth supported placement (CSP) or are part of a higher education loan repayment (HELP) scheme (e.g. HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP) and therefore will not be eligible for funding under this framework.

Any enquiries regarding the taxation interpretation of the above policies should be directed to the SA Health Taxation Services Helpdesk by email at taxhelpdesk@sa.gov.au. SA Health taxation services are not permitted by law to give personal income tax advice.

3.1 Eligible PD activities and expenses within the AHP+PDRP

Professional development activities which are eligible for re-imbursement under the AHP+PDRP Framework include those that are required to maintain or acquire their registration or accreditation in the professional occupation or capacity in which they are employed and/or have a direct benefit to the employee's clinical skill, knowledge or career development as a clinician or clinical manager providing or supporting a clinical service to the consumers of the South Australian Public Health System. Ineligible PD activities are documented in section 3.4.

Expenses associated with the below activities/items will be considered for approval and administered by the AHP+PDRP:

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- > Fees for eligible work-related conferences, seminars and workshops
- > Supervision fees when suitable supervisors are not available internally within SA Health
- > Examination, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and associated fees to extend current scope of practice skills
- > Airfares and/or accommodation expenses incurred on work-related conferences or seminars, attending an educational institution or on overseas sabbaticals where the employee is away from home overnight (see notes on overseas travel below)
- > Course or tuition fees for students in full fee-paying post-graduate courses, with the exception of fees paid via a Higher Education Loan Repayment (HELP) scheme which will not be approved. Eligible post graduate courses are those that do not have Commonwealth support. Students in Commonwealth supported places must pay Student Contribution Fees – these will not be reimbursed regardless of whether they are paid up-front or via HECS HELP.

Please note in relation to travel and accommodation associated with the above:

- > Airfares must be economy class and all travel is by the most direct or appropriate route
- > Accommodation expense reimbursement is only permitted for stays at hotels, motels, caravan parks or other direct service providers.
- > Basic baggage allowance may be approved up to 23kg, if the airline does not include any checked in luggage allowance in the airline ticket price.

Note:

I. Reimbursement applications that include airfares and accommodation will be processed after the applicant notifies the AHP+PDRP team that the PD activity has been completed and provides any additional documentation.

II. Accommodation reimbursement is capped at \$250 AUD per night. Employees who live within the [Metropolitan Adelaide Boundary Map \(Development Act 1993\)](#) are unable to seek reimbursement for accommodation for Adelaide-based events within the boundary map, this aligns with the distance allowance in the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Commissioner's Determination 3.2.

Additionally:

- > (a) Where employees share accommodation, each employee is eligible up to the capped amount per night (after providing a valid invoice and/or third-party declaration).
- > (b) Where employees share accommodation for personal use, employees are only entitled to the professional development related portion of the accommodation (i.e., the night(s) of the conference).

III. The AHP+PDRP cannot refund fees or penalties associated with cancelled bookings when the applicant chooses to no longer attend the event.

IV. Cancellation fees or penalties resulting from legitimate causes which are beyond the employee's control will be considered for reimbursement by the Statewide AHP+PDRP Advisory Panel on a case-by-case basis.

3.2 Dual-purpose travel

Dual-purpose travel has a business and private component with FBT being payable on the private (non-business) component. A PD activity will be deemed as dual-purpose where the application exceeds three days private travel. Dual-purpose PD activities will only be considered for reimbursement for conference and accommodations costs, and for 50% percent of the airfare costs.

Where expenditure has occurred for business and private purposes and cannot be separated, it will be reimbursed on a 50/50 basis: 50% will be considered business related (eligible for reimbursement via AHP+PDRP), and 50% will be considered private and subject to FBT (and not eligible for reimbursement).

Government travel insurance arrangements are not available for privately funded travel. Inquiries on the services provided by the government travel insurance arrangements should be directed to the South Australian Government Financing Authority (SAFA) on (08) 8522 0866.

See the [SA Health Travel and FBT Policy](#) for further information regarding dual-purpose travel and FBT.

3.3 Overseas Travel Policy

The [Overseas Travel Policy](#) outlines the additional process and documentation requirements for overseas travel. The HR-077 Overseas Travel Application Form must be approved by the relevant LHN Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Group Executive Director (GED) and submitted with the AHP+PDRP applications prior to overseas travel being undertaken.

See the [Overseas Travel Policy](#) for further information regarding overseas travel.

3.4 Ineligible PD activities and expenses within the AHP+PDRP

Expenses associated with the below activities or items are ineligible for reimbursement using AHP+PDRP. This is because they are either not deemed to be relevant to the program, have FBT implications, or are eligible for reimbursement and are the responsibility of the applicant's business unit as per section 7 Associated Policies, Guidelines and Resources:

- > Incidental travel expenses (e.g. petrol mileage, car parking, meals and car hire) Fleet vehicles may be used for intrastate travel.
- > Textbooks and professional or trade journals (unless deemed a pre-requisite for an approved PD activity and evidence must be supplied)
- > Coaching or mentoring activities when not accessible within SA Health
- > Entertaining colleagues/others while at courses/conferences
- > Accommodation costs on personal days within a dual-purpose application
- > Purchase of medical or scientific equipment
- > Professional registration, professional association membership or Union fees
- > Professional insurance
- > Information technology software, hardware, or digital devices
- > Internet, phone, or other subscription services

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- > Accommodation expenses for accommodation sharing services booked using Airbnb, or third-party booking sites, will generally not be approved. The reasoning being is they are not able to provide an ABN, which is a legal requirement for tax reimbursement purposes.
- > Travel transfers using public transport, taxis, shuttle services, or third-party transport services (Uber, DiDi etc) may also not be approved.
- > bookings for flights
 - any fares above economy class
 - Additional baggage purchased above 23kg

This framework aligns to the [SA Health Gifts and Benefits Policy \(PDF 257KB\)](#) . The policy places an obligation on SA Health employees for them to declare any non-token offer of a gift or **benefit**.

The following categories of PD activity are not eligible for reimbursement under the AHP+PDRP Framework:

- > Mandatory training
- > Training programs aimed at personal development outside of role-specific clinical employment duties. Applicants are to refer to the EA specific Work Level Definitions for their profession to confirm whether they are **required to provide clinical supervision for staff as well as maintain a clinical caseload to be applicable for reimbursement under the Framework**".
- > Administrative training and development programs considered as a business need, and/or aligned to the employee's performance development and succession planning (i.e. Project Management, Excel, Power BI, SQL, Python).

3.5 Application process and supporting documentation

Applications to the AHP+PDRP must be made using the dedicated AHP+PDRP portal by completing all fields, including a justification of the PD activity and how it aligns with this framework. Supporting documents must be forwarded to the Department Director (or delegate) for recommendation for approval. The Department Director (or delegate) must authorise relevant sections prior to submission via the portal. All forms and a link to the portal are available on the [AHP+ PDRP webpage](#).

3.5.1 Documents to be supplied for an individual reimbursement:

- > SA Health Employee Accounts Payable/Creation Maintenance Form
- > AHP+PDRP Expense Payment Declaration Form
- > Tax invoice/tax receipt as per section 3.5.4
- > Proof of payment as per section 3.5.5.
- > Detailed flight itinerary with proof of economy flights

Supplementary forms (if relevant):

- > HR-077 Overseas Travel Application Form
- > Travel diary (for domestic travel more than 5 nights and/or overseas travel)

- > Travel itinerary as per booking confirmation.

3.5.2 Documents to be supplied for a group application:

- > AHP+PDRP Pre-Approval Request Form
- > A quote of the proposed expenditure from the PD activity service provider

Please note following approval, group applicants must supply a tax invoice as per section 3.5.4, issued to Department for Health and Wellbeing, Allied and Scientific Health Office, AHP+PDRP, Level 5, 11 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide 5000.

3.5.3 Documents to be supplied for an individual Pre-Approval application:

- > AHP+PDRP Pre-Approval Request Form
- > A quote of all proposed expenditure.

Please note following pre-approval, applicants must supply documents as per section 3.5.1.

3.5.4 Tax invoice/tax receipt

When a PD activity is paid in currency other than Australian Dollars, applicants must provide evidence of the final amount in Australian Dollars on their proof of payment.

When a PD activity is paid in Australian Dollars, applicants must provide a compliant valid tax invoice/tax receipt as per the [ATO](#). A compliant tax invoice/tax receipt that conforms to the provisions set out by the [ATO](#) must specify the following details:

- > that the document is intended to be a tax invoice/tax receipt
- > the seller's name and Australian business number (ABN)
- > the date of issue of the invoice
- > a brief description of the goods/services sold, including the quantity and the price
- > GST amount (if any) payable – this can be shown separately or as a statement which says 'Total price includes GST'
- > if the invoice is for an amount of \$1,000 AUD or more it must be issued to the applicant and include either:
 - GST in each line item, or
 - the words 'Total price includes GST'.

3.5.5 Proof of payment

Proof of payment documentation must be provided from a financial institution and include the name of the applicant (or the name of a partner with a matching home address) and showing only the relevant transaction(s), the date of the transaction(s), and a receipt from the service provider. Where the paying

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account is in a different name and address to the applicant, a Third Party Declaration form is required (refer to 3.7 below).

3.6 Reimbursement post-employment with SA Health

Reimbursement is only available to staff employed by SA Health at the time the PD activity was undertaken.

3.7 Third party declarations

If multiple AHP+PDRP eligible staff members attend a PD event and this is combined into one payment (for example shared accommodation), each staff member seeking an individual reimbursement from this payment must provide a completed AHP+PDRP Third Party Declaration Form as proof of payment. The transaction must also have been made within the same FBT year that the expense occurred.

3.8 Receiving an overpayment

Where an applicant receives an overpayment from the AHP+PDRP they are required to contact the AHP+PDRP team via HealthAHPPlus@sa.gov.au to discuss SA Health's process for repaying any funding received as soon as reasonably practical.

Likewise, if an applicant does not attend a PD event and receives a refund from the organiser, they must immediately contact the AHP+PDRP team via HealthAHPPlus@sa.gov.au to arrange repayment.

4. Implementation & Monitoring

An annual report on the activity undertaken as part of the AHP+PDRP is provided at the completion of each financial year in line with the SA Health Annual Reporting requirements.









As required the Allied and Scientific Health Office is responsible for providing reports to Finance and Corporate Services on acquitted Allied and Scientific Health Professional overseas travel reimbursements as part of approved AHP+PDRP activities.

5. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards

The following NSQHS Standard 1: Clinical Governance under clinical performance and effectiveness:

Intent – The workforce is appropriately trained to meet the need of the organisation to provide safe and high-quality care.

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National Standard 1 – Clinical Governance	National Standard 2 Partnering with Consumers	National Standard 3 Preventing & Controlling Healthcare-Associated Infection	National Standard 4 Medication Safety	National Standard 5 Comprehensive Care	National Standard 6 Communicating for Safety	National Standard 7 Blood Management	National Standard 8 Recognising & Responding to Acute Deterioration
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6. Definitions

In the context of this document:

Benefit: means a service or intangible item which is of value to or results in an advantage to the receiver. They may include preferential treatment, privileged access, favours, invitations to sporting, cultural or social events, access to discounts and loyalty programs, promises of a new job or promotion, sponsorship of flights, conferences etc, or access to confidential information.

☐ **Benefit Scheme:** means a loyalty scheme which may include, but is not limited to, accruing value or points for schemes, such as frequent flyer schemes, car hire or other discounts, meals, hospitality and travel upgrades.

FBT year means the 12 month period from 1 April to 31 March the following year.

Professional means an Allied or Scientific Health professional classified as an AHP; DO; GFSc; MeS; MPH or PO who meet the profession's eligibility requirements for registration or membership of a professional association.

PD Activity: means conference fees, training, courses, workshops, or similar activity.

7. Associated Policies, Guidelines and Resources

Department Directors (and delegates) and employees considering applying for the AHP+PDRP are strongly advised to review the following:

- > [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in HealthCare](#)
- > [Commissioner's Determination 3.2 – Employment Conditions, Remuneration Allowances and Reimbursements](#)
- > [SA Health Allied Health Clinical Supervision Framework](#)
- > [SA Health Domestic Travel Policy](#)
- > [SA Health Employee Reimbursements and Payments Policy](#)
- > [SA Health FBT Return, Instalment, and Payment Policy and Procedure](#)
- > [SA Health Overseas Travel Policy](#)
- > [SA Health Performance Review and Development Policy](#)
- > [SA Health Travel Diary](#)
- > [SA Health Tax Fact Sheet 19 - Documentary Evidence](#)
- > [SA Health Travel and FBT Policy](#)
- > [South Australian Public Sector Enterprise Agreement: Salaried 2021](#)
- > [SA Health Gifts and Benefits Policy](#)

8. Document Ownership & History

Document developed by: Allied and Scientific Health Office, Clinical System Support & Improvement

File / Objective No.: A5274160

Next review due: 31 October 2025

Approval Date	Version	Who approved New/Revised Version	Reason for Change
21 February 2025	V3	Chief Allied and Scientific Health Officer, Allied and Scientific Health Office, Clinical System Support and Improvement	Update to Ineligible PD activities and expenses
18 October 2023	V1	Chief Allied and Scientific Health Officer, Allied and Scientific Health Office, Clinical System Support and Improvement	Original version