

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



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GP WORKFORCE GROWS AS GRADUATE DOCTORS TAKE UP GRANTS

The Allan Labor Government is again stepping in to fill gaps in the primary care system with the next round of a generous program to recruit more GPs and improve health outcomes for Victorians, now open.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Harp Family Clinic in Kew East to announce the first 400 grants, worth up to \$40,000 – have now been awarded to medical graduates who take up a career in general practice.

A further 400 grants are available in 2025 for those commencing a GP training program in Victoria. Doctors who commenced their training this year and who had applied, enrolled and were accepted on or after 27 November 2022 are also eligible.

This \$32 million program addresses some of the disincentives that stop young doctors from pursuing a career in general practice, such as the higher remuneration typically on offer in other medical specialties.

The grants are already making a difference to primary care in Victoria, with a survey of applicants showing:

- 59 per cent of recipients are now doing their placement in regional Victoria
- 13 per cent said they moved to Victoria from overseas or interstate because of the program
- 64 per cent said it had some influence on their decision to enrol in GP training in Victoria
- 44 per cent said they would have pursued a different career path in medicine if they program did not exist.

Graduates can apply for a grant directly through the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) or the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) once they have been successfully accepted and enrolled into one of the relevant GP training programs.

Applicants are assessed against an eligibility framework and preference is given to applicants who are Australian medical graduates and doctors training in rural locations and areas of workforce need.

It comes as 2023/2024 marked Victoria's biggest ever yearly workforce growth, with a massive 6.7 per cent jump in new roles, that saw 7,664 nurses, doctors, allied health professionals and other frontline positions filled.

While primary care is the responsibility of the Federal Government, a decade of inaction from successive Coalition Governments that destroyed Medicare has made it harder than it has ever been to access a GP.

That's why the Labor Government has stepped in to ensure Victorians get the care they need, also delivering 29 Urgent Care Clinics, the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department, Nurse-on-Call, and the Community Pharmacist Statewide Pilot.

For more information please visit, health.vic.gov.au/general-practitioners-grant-program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"So many Victorians have built trusted relationships with their GP over a number of years, but we know for many others, it is a lengthy wait or too expensive – that's why we have stepped in to make primary care more accessible."

"Supporting more graduates to pursue a career in general practice and improving access to primary care will help to ease pressure on our busy emergency departments and prevent delayed care."

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Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Region Ryan Batchelor

“These grants are such an important incentive for medical graduates to choose Victoria as the place to practice – and with suburbs right across Melbourne’s south continuing to grow at pace, we need all the GPs we can get.”

Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Region John Berger

“We know there is a significant need for more GPs and these grants are helping to ensure we have the workforce we need both now and into the future – giving our communities better access to primary care.”