Indigenous Australians’ Health Programme: Care Coordination and Supplementary Services

Grant Programme Guidelines
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Grant Programme Process Flowchart

APPLICATION
Applicant completes an application

SUBMIT AN APPLICATION
Applicant submits an application

APPRAISAL
The application is accepted. The application is assessed against eligibility and selection criteria

ADVICE TO THE APPROVER
Advice is provided to the Approver on the merits of each application against the Programme Guidelines and application requirements

DECISION/NOTIFICATION
The Approver makes a decision on the assessment outcomes of each application and the applicant is advised of the decision

CONTRACT/FUNDING
An agreement is negotiated and signed by the applicant and the department

DO/COMPLETE/ACQUIT
Applicant undertakes activity, completes milestones and provides reports including end of agreement grant assessment requirements. Department makes payments and monitors progress

EVALUATION
Department evaluates the outcomes of the Programme. Applicant provides information to assist this evaluation
1. Introduction

1.1. Programme Background

The Care Coordination and Supplementary Services Programme (CCSS), in the Indigenous Australians’ Health Programme, supports activities to improve the prevention, detection, and management of chronic disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Better management of these chronic conditions is a key factor in meeting the Government’s target of closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation. Primary health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people needs to be supported by an organised approach to integration at the primary care level and with other parts of the health system.

This Programme contributes to good quality care for people with chronic conditions, in conjunction with the Practice Incentives Programme-Indigenous Health Incentive, the Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Programme, and the Improving Indigenous Access to Mainstream Primary Care Programme, also part of the Indigenous Australians’ Health Programme. The Programme improves access to primary health care, integration of primary care with allied health and specialist care and enables other ancillary and follow-up activities necessary for effective chronic disease management. It can help overcome barriers such as lack of transport and difficulties with medicines compliance. It encourages primary care organisations to provide a target level of care and promotes continuity of care, which has been shown to improve patient outcomes.

The total estimated value of the Programme is $188 million (GST exclusive) for four years from 2014-15.

Indigenous Australians’ Health Programme

While the CCSS Programme commenced as part of the Indigenous Chronic Disease Package in 2009-10, and continued under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Chronic Disease Fund, the Programme now operates as part of the Indigenous Australians’ Health Programme (IAHP). The IAHP consolidates four previous funding streams: primary health care funding, child and maternal health programmes, Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (Health) and programmes covered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Chronic Disease Fund.

The IAHP aims to contribute to the Closing the Gap health targets through the administration of a range of activities that aim to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

These CCSS-specific guidelines will remain in effect until superseded by the Indigenous Australians’ Health Programme (IAHP) guidelines. The new IAHP guidelines will be made public and provided to all current funding recipients.

1.2. Programme Purpose, Scope, Objectives and Outcomes

The funding is being provided to further the objectives of the Programme. In particular, the funding will support activities which aim to improve health outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

The purpose of the CCSS Programme is to contribute to improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic health conditions, by supporting access to treatment and management of those chronic health conditions.

The Programme’s scope is to fund activities, services, and aids where appropriate, which support the treatment and management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic conditions to improve access to primary care, and promote continuity of care where patients need ancillary care, specialised care, or other follow up activities.

The Programme’s objective is to achieve better treatment and management of chronic conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is facilitated through better access to the required
services in a range of disciplines and allied health services, and better care coordination and provision of supplementary services.

The Programme’s outcome is better health outcomes for those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with chronic conditions. Funding recipients are expected to work with the Indigenous health sector when planning and delivering the Programme and ensure that patients of both mainstream and Indigenous health services/Aboriginal community controlled health organisations have access to care coordination.

1.3. Relevant legislation

The Programme draws its administrative authority from the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs) that are issued by the Minister for Finance under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act). The legal authority for the grant is:

- Section 23 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013; and
- Schedule 1AA of the Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Act 1997, item 415.026 (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health).

Department of Health staff involved in administration of grants are accountable for complying with the CGRGs, the PGPA Act and other policies and legislation that interact with grants administration.

1.4. Service Delivery Principles

Funding recipients are required to consider the following service delivery principles established by the National Indigenous Reform Agreement when implementing the CCSS Programme:

Priority principle: Programmes and services should contribute to Closing the Gap by meeting the targets endorsed by COAG while being appropriate to local needs.

Indigenous engagement principle: Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and children and communities should be central to the design and delivery of programmes and services.

Sustainability principle: Programmes and services should be directed and resourced over an adequate period of time to meet the COAG targets.

Access principle: Programmes and services should be physically and culturally accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people recognising the diversity of urban, regional and remote needs.

Integration principle: There should be collaboration between and within governments at all levels and their agencies to effectively coordinate programmes and services.

Accountability principle: Programmes and services should have regular and transparent performance monitoring, review and evaluation.

1.5. Roles and Responsibilities

Department

The department manages the Programme. It is responsible for the development and dissemination of all documentation regarding funding under the Programme and for ensuring that all documentation is in accordance with the objectives. It is also responsible for notifying applicants of the outcome of any funding process, responding to queries in relation to the funding process, and for resolving any uncertainties that may arise in relation to funding requirements.

The department is responsible for decisions regarding the internal administration, assessment, recommendations and programme management arrangements. These include, if applicable:
• assessing the proposals;
• developing funding agreements or any alternative contractual arrangement;
• monitoring the performance of projects to ensure that the conditions of the funding agreement or other contractual arrangement are met;
• assessing performance and financial reports and undertaking follow up activity as necessary;
• making payments as specified in the funding agreement or contractual arrangement; and
• providing feedback to funded organisations during the funding period and following the conclusion of activities.

Approver
The Approver will consider whether the proposal will make an efficient, effective, ethical and economical use of Australian Government resources, as required by Commonwealth legislation, and whether any specific requirements will need to be imposed as a condition of funding.

The final decision about the approval of funding will be made by the Minister or agency Chief Executive (including a Chief Executive’s delegate). Funding approval is at the discretion of the Approver.

Funding Recipient
Organisations, (can be a consortia lead organisation), receiving direct funding are responsible for the efficient and effective delivery of the activities in accordance with the obligations contained in any funding agreement or contractual agreement entered into under the Programme.

The Organisation will also be responsible for:
• ensuring that the terms and conditions of the funding agreement are met and that the project is managed in a cost effective and efficient manner;
• ensuring the activity achieves value with relevant money;
• employing and managing project staff;
• maintaining contact with the department and advising of any emerging issues that may impact on the success of the activity;
• identifying, documenting and managing risks and putting in place appropriate mitigation strategies;
• ensuring outcomes and output reporting in accordance with the funding agreement; and
• participating in activity evaluation as necessary.

1.6. Risk Management
The department is committed to a comprehensive and systematic approach to the effective management of potential opportunities and adverse effects. Any contractual arrangement may be managed according to its level of risk to the Commonwealth. As such, applicants and funding recipients may be subject to a risk management assessment prior to the negotiation of any contractual arrangement and periodically thereafter.

The inclusion of Supplementary Conditions, which could override and/or amend and/or impose additional terms to the Standard Funding Agreement, may be included for organisations with a risk rating of medium or above.

Consistent with the responsibilities described under Section 1.5, funded services are responsible for managing risks to their own business activities and priorities. The Commonwealth manages risks to CCSS Programme funds and outcomes through its management of the grant.

1.7. Programme Timeframes
The Programme Guidelines will be publically available on the department’s website and will form part of the approach to market documentation for any funding process.
2. Eligibility

2.1. What entities are eligible to apply for funding?

Legal entities and consortia deemed eligible against the 2015 Primary Health Networks open competitive selection process are eligible to be funded under the CCSS programme. Primary Health Network organisations eligible for funding must be a legal entity, for example:

- Incorporated association incorporated under Australian State/Territory legislation
- Incorporated cooperative incorporated under Australian State/Territory legislation
- Aboriginal corporation registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006
- Organisation established through specific Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation
- Company incorporated under Corporations Act 2001 (Commonwealth of Australia)
- Partnerships
- Trustee on behalf of a trust
- An Australian local government body
- An Australian State/Territory government

2.2. Consortia

The department encourages organisations to form collaborations, consortia or partnerships to deliver activities. If more than one organisation will be involved in the application, one organisation must be identified as the lead organisation and an authorised representative of the lead organisation must sign the application form.

2.3. What is eligible for funding?

Activities and services to be funded must be consistent with the aim, scope, objectives and outcomes and include activities supported under the CCSS Programme.

There are two main categories for funding:

- Care Coordination; and
- Supplementary Services

Care Coordination

New care coordination services or extension of existing services may be supported under the CCSS Programme. Models that are practical, build on any existing services and acknowledge local characteristics (e.g. geographic, demographic, referral pathways) are encouraged.

Supplementary Services

Fees for service

Care Coordinators can draw on Supplementary Services funding to assist patients to access medical specialist and allied health services, where these services are not otherwise available in a clinically acceptable timeframe.

Medical Aids

Supplementary Services funds can be used by Care Coordinators to access the following medical aids:

- Dose Administration Aids (DAAs);
- Assistive Breathing Equipment (including asthma spacers; nebulisers; masks for asthma spacers and nebulisers; Continuous Positive Airways Pressure (CPAP) machines; accessories for CPAP machines);
• Blood Sugar/Glucose Monitoring Equipment; and
• Medical footwear that is prescribed and fitted by a podiatrist.

Transport

Supplementary Services funding can be used to support patient’s travel to the closest regionally available health care professional, where this is necessary to access the required health care in a clinically appropriate timeframe.

Exceptional Circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, Supplementary Services funds may be used for medical aids that are not listed in the CCSS Guidelines. Such requests are considered on a case by case basis by the department.

What is not eligible for funding?

• capital works, such as the purchase of any land, the purchase or construction of a completely new premises, the demolition (whether or not followed by the replacement) of the majority of an existing premises or works including minor capital works;
• the purchase or repair of equipment or motor vehicles;
• funding of general service delivery;
• retrospective items/activities;
• activities undertaken by political organisations;
• activities which subsidise commercial activities; and
• clinical trials.

3. Probit

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that the process for providing funding under the CCSS Programme is transparent and in accordance with published Guidelines.

Note: Guidelines may be varied from time to time by the Australian Government as the needs of the CCSS Programme dictate. Amended Guidelines will be published on the department’s website.

3.1. Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest may exist if departmental staff, any member of an advisory panel or expert committee, and/or the applicant or any of its personnel:

Has a relationship (whether professional, commercial or personal) with a party who is able to influence the application assessment process, such as a departmental officer;

Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants in carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or

Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain as a result of the granting of funding under the CCSS Programme.

Each party will be required to declare as part of their proposal, existing conflicts of interest or that to the best of their knowledge there is no conflict of interest, including in relation to the examples above, that would impact on or prevent the applicant from proceeding with the project or any funding agreement it may enter into with the Australian Government.

Where a party subsequently identifies that an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest exists or might arise in relation to this application for funding, external parties must inform the department in writing immediately. Departmental staff or members of any advisory panel or expert committee must advise the chair of the assessment panel. Conflicts of interest will be handled in compliance with departmental policies and procedures at www.health.gov.au.
Conflicts of interest for departmental staff will be handled in compliance with the Australian Public Service Commission policies and procedures. These are located at:

Conflict of interest guidelines from the Australian Public Service Commission's policies and procedures

3.2. Privacy - Confidentiality and Protection of Personal Information

Each applicant will be required to declare as part of their application, their ability to comply with the following Legislation/Clauses it may enter into with the Australian Government.

The Protection of Personal Information Clause requires the funding recipient to:

- comply with the Privacy Act (1988) (‘the Privacy Act’), including the 13 Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) which are contained in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act;

- impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors it engages to assist with the activity.

The Confidentiality Clause imposes obligations on the funding recipient with respect to special categories of information collected, created or held under the funding agreement. The funding recipient is required to seek the department’s consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

Further information can be found in the terms and conditions of the funding agreement available on the department’s website.

4. Type of Application Process

To date, the majority of funding has been directly allocated. The department will directly allocate funding to specific organisations, subject to approval from the Minister for Health. Funded organisations will be approached by the department to negotiate grant funding arrangements.

In 2015-16 a non-application process will be used to directly allocate funding to Primary Health Network organisation which were selected through an open competitive round in early 2015. Organisations will be approached by the Department to negotiate grant funding arrangements.

The bulk of the grant funding will be available through:

4.1. Targeted or restricted funding

Funding through targeted or restricted funding rounds which are open to a small number of potential grant recipients based on the specialised requirements of the granting activity or project under consideration. Primary Health Network organisations will be targeted for funding in 2015-16.

Other opportunities for grant funding will be available to eligible organisations through:

4.2. One-off/ unsolicited funding

Provision will be made under the Grant Programme for one-off, unsolicited proposals, and emergency payments, provided they meet the aims, objectives and priorities of the Grant Programme.

All proposals for funding will be assessed against the assessment criteria outlined in section 6.1 of these Guidelines. Section 1.7 Programme Timeframes outlines the expected timelines for grant rounds under this Programme.
4.3. Continuation of Funding

Organisations already receiving funding under CCSS Programme from the department may be requested to provide a proposal for continuation of funding towards the end of the funding period which will be assessed to ensure value with relevant money.

5. Application Process (when applicable)

In 2015-16 a non-application process will be used to identify the organisations to receive funding under the CCSS programme. PHN organisations will be directly funded in 2015-16.

The department has established a division that is focused on managing and administering grants. Specialised assessment sections have been formed with staff that has a high level of training and expertise in the assessment process.

Where applicable an assessment committee will be established by the department to assess applications against the selection criteria and select the shortlisted applicants. Any non-Australian Public Service members or independent advisers invited to provide ‘expert’ advice to the assessment committee will be treated as agency staff as per Part 1, Section 2.8 of the CGRGs.

5.1. Application requirements

The Grant application process used to identify the organisations to receive funding under the activity in 2015-16 will build on an open competitive process already undertaken by the Department.

Funding recipients receiving funding through the CCSS Programme will be required to submit a proposal for future funding periods, which will be assessed against the eligibility and assessment criteria specified in these guidelines. Details of the proposal outline will be included in the funding agreement schedule.

Applications should address all of the relevant criteria to be considered for funding. These criteria are outlined in the approach to market documentation. It is important to complete each section of the application form and use the checklist to make sure each requirement has been considered.

5.2. How to submit an application

Proposals for funding must address the eligibility and assessment criteria specified in these guidelines. Proposals must be submitted in the format specified by the department.

For organisations already receiving CCSS Programme funding from the department, proposals for funding should be submitted to the grant officer identified in their funding agreement.

6. Selection Process

6.1. Assessment process

The department undertook an open competitive funding round in 2015 to select PHN organisations. The below process was used during the PHN selection process. The selection process of PHN organisations was finalised in April 2015.

An assessment committee will be established by the department to assess proposals against the selection criteria and select the shortlisted applicants. Any non-APS members or independent advisers invited to provide ‘expert’ advice to the assessment committee will be treated as agency staff as per Part 1, section 2.8 of the CGRGs.

The selection process is undertaken in two stages.
Stage 1 – Eligibility Criteria

Each applicant must satisfy all Eligibility Criteria in order to be considered for further assessment. This will be determined by the assessment committee.

Stage 2 – Assessment Criteria

Funding recipients that satisfy all Eligibility Criteria will proceed to Stage 2 and be assessed against the criteria listed below. Each of the assessment criteria has equal value - none is ranked higher than another. The overarching intention is to achieve grant programme outcomes and value with public money.

The Assessment Criteria incorporates the following:

Alignment with the CCSS Activity and Objectives - the proposed activities must meet the objectives and activities eligible for funding under the CCSS Activity as outlined in these Guidelines;

Demonstrated Need - the capacity of the activity to address identified emerging issues or areas of need in the community;

Capacity to Deliver - ability and experience of the organisation to successfully plan and apply resources, in order to effectively deliver the proposed project to achieve the objectives of the CCSS Activity;

Project Management - ability to implement the proposed activity within budget and timeframes as well as comply with all accountability and audit requirements;

Financial Management - ability of the organisation to manage and acquit funding in accordance with Government legislation and financial management policies;

Risk Management - appropriate assessment and mitigation strategies for risk associated with the proposed model of delivery, including risks relating to governance, performance management, issues management, viability and financial management;

Value with Relevant Money - successful projects must provide value with public money, demonstrate efficient use of funds, and utilise resources to achieve the aims and objectives of the CCSS Activity;

Community Engagement and Support - how the applicant will engage and work with local health professionals, community and residential care providers and the local community to support the CCSS Activity; and

Cultural Competency - ability to deliver culturally appropriate or culturally safe services to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

From time to time, the Australian Government may direct additional or supplementary funding to services under the CCSS Activity. For example providing targeted services to areas where evidence shows that there is a need.

To assist with the assessment of an application, the department may seek clarifying information. Potential funding recipients will be notified by email or post where further information is required.

7. Decision Making

7.1. Approval of funding

Following an assessment of the applications by the assessment committee, advice will be provided by the committee chair to the funding approver on the merits of the application/s.
The Approver will consider whether the proposal will make an efficient, effective, ethical and economical use of Commonwealth resources, as required by Commonwealth Legislation, and whether any specific requirements will need to be imposed as a condition of funding. Funding approval is at the discretion of the Approver.

7.2. Advice to Applicants
Funding recipients will be advised in writing. Letters to successful applicants will contain details of any specific conditions attached to the funding. Funding approvals will also be listed on the department’s website.

7.3. Complaint handling
The department’s Procurement and Funding Complaints Handling Policy applies to complaints that arise in relation to a procurement or funding process. It covers events that occur between the time the request documentation is released publicly and the date of contract execution, regardless of when the actual complaint is made.

The department requires that all complaints relating to a procurement or funding process must be lodged in writing. Further details of the policy are available on the 'About Us' page on the department’s internet site.

8. Governance and Accountability

8.1. Contracting arrangements
Funding recipients will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth (represented by the department). Funding documentation will include the standard terms and conditions of the funding agreement. These cannot be changed but additional supplementary conditions may apply.

Organisations should not make financial commitments in expectation of receiving funding until a funding agreement has been executed.

The department will negotiate with successful applicants with the aim of having funding agreements signed within four weeks of the approval.

Funded organisations must carry out each activity in accordance with the agreement, which will include meeting milestones and other timeframes specified in the schedule for that activity. They will also outline the record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements that will apply to successful applicants. Activities must be carried out diligently, efficiently, effectively and in good faith to a high standard to achieve the aims of the Activity and to meet the Programme’s objectives.

8.2. Specific conditions
There may be specific conditions attached to the funding approval required as a result of the assessment process or the risk rating of an organisation or imposed by the Approver. These will be identified in the offer of funding or during funding agreement negotiations.

8.3. Payment arrangements
Payments will be made in accordance with the funding agreement.

The default invoice process for the department is Recipient Created Tax Invoices (RCTI).
8.4. Reporting requirements

Funded organisations must provide the department with the reports for an activity containing the information, and at the times and in the manner specified in the funding agreement. Specific reporting requirements will form part of the funded organisation’s agreement with the department. These could include:

- Six monthly progress reporting;
- Annual expenditure reports; and
- Final report.

8.5. Monitoring

The funding recipient will be required to actively manage the delivery of the Activity under the Programme. The department will monitor progress in accordance with the funding agreement.

8.6. Evaluation

An evaluation by the department will determine how the funded activity contributed to the objectives of the Programme. Funding recipients will be required to provide information to assist in this evaluation for a period of time, as stipulated in the funding agreement, after funding has been provided.