

# Rural health workforce incentives scheme

## Factsheet for applicants

### What is the Rural Health Workforce Incentives Scheme?

The Rural Health Workforce Incentives Scheme (RHWIS) is a comprehensive incentive package that focuses on recruitment and retention in areas of critical need in rural and regional NSW. It is targeted at all applicants who are looking at positions critical to service delivery.

### What does the RHWIS package include?

Each NSW Health agency will discuss the range of available incentives on offer for the position as part of the RHWIS. Incentive packages can be up to \$10,000 AUD in value dependent on the position and location, in addition to base incentives.

### Who is eligible for the RHWIS?

The RHWIS is applicable to eligible positions and health workers as determined by the NSW Health agency. Not all rural and regional health locations and positions may be eligible under the RHWIS. Jobs that have incentives offered under the RHWIS should be easily identifiable on the job postings, or through contacting the hiring manager or local recruitment office.

All applicants who are successful in obtaining an incentivised position will have an opportunity to discuss their incentive packages with the NSW Health agency.

Existing health workers may also be eligible for the RHWIS and should discuss these arrangements with their manager.

A health worker in the context of the RHWIS, refers to employees of the NSW Health Service, engaged under the Health Services Act. Incentives under this policy do not apply to contactors, locums, agency nurses, Visiting Medical Officers, or contingent workforce who are not paid through NSW Health payroll.

### How do I apply for the RHWIS?

Positions that are eligible for incentives will be identified specifically on the NSW Health Jobs board in the job posting title, or in the job position description. General details about incentives can be discussed at any stage of the application process with the job convenor or local recruitment unit.

Successful applicants to these positions will then be able to discuss the specific incentives available with their hiring manager.

Existing health workers should discuss with their managers whether they are eligible for incentives.

### Can I be in more than one incentivised position?

No, you can only receive one incentive package at a time.

If you are working across multiple incentivised positions, such as part-time/timeshare work, you should discuss the incentives available to you with your local recruitment office or human resources department.

## Can I transfer to another location with the same incentives?

It will depend on the location and position to which you are transferring to, as well as the time you have served in your current position. Discuss this with both the hiring manager and your current manager.

## Am I eligible for incentives if I'm contracted or temporary?

Contracted and temporary staff may be eligible for incentives. Discuss this with the hiring manager and/or your current manager.

## How are incentives paid, and how long are they paid for?

This depends on the types of incentives that have been accepted and should be discussed with the hiring manager. Incentives can be paid as a lump sum or over a period and are payable until the health agency determines the role is no longer eligible for incentives. Should the health agency determine the role is no longer eligible for incentives, staff who are currently being paid incentives will be given 12 months' notice.

## Will I need to repay any of my incentives if I were to leave my role?

If a health worker who has accepted and commenced an incentivised appointment and is in receipt of relocation and incentive payments leaves the role within 18 months of commencement, the following repayment requirement will apply.

Time served in role	Repayment requirement
Less than 6 months	100% of relocation and incentive payments received
Greater than 6 months and less than 1 year	65% of relocation and incentive payments received
Greater than 1 year and less than 18 months	35% of relocation and incentive payments received
Greater than 18 months	Nil

For health workers engaged in work for less than 18 months, the repayment requirement will be adjusted as appropriate relative to the time served in the role. The repayment requirement relevant to your engagement should be communicated to you by your hiring manager and/or your current manager.

## How does the RHWIS impact my tax?

Health agencies are responsible for the application of appropriate taxation treatment to all incentive items being provided. Applicants are advised to consult a financial advisor before finalising their package. The incentive package made available to individual employees is valued at its gross value. Any fringe benefit tax liability is not counted as part of the value of the package and the employing health agency is responsible for payment of any fringe benefit tax incurred.

Incentives offered that are reportable fringe benefits (where the employee's total taxable value of certain benefits exceed \$2,000 a year) are required to be reported as a "reportable fringe benefit amount" (RFBA) on employee income statements (previously known as payment summary). Total RFBA is not taxable income but is taken into consideration when assessing eligibility for certain government benefits and concessions such as Medicare Levy Surcharge, Higher Education Loan Payment (HELP), superannuation benefits, child support and family assistance.

## What should I consider about working in rural and regional NSW?

Working in rural and regional NSW can be an extremely rewarding experience. You are delivering essential services to communities, reducing the need for them to travel long distances to access care. There are frequent opportunities for professional development and growth compared to what might be

available in metro areas.

There are also challenges that some health workers face when working in these large geographical areas including professional and personal isolation, homesickness, and an initial anonymity in a community that you have just moved to. It is important to understand these challenges and prepare yourself.

There is plenty of support in and throughout rural and regional NSW that will contribute to your transition and resilience. Your time in rural and regional NSW can be a fantastic career opportunity and rewarding personal experience.

### **Who can I contact if I have further questions?**

Please contact the relevant health agency for queries relating to a position's incentives.

Further information can be found in the policy: [Rural Health Workforce Incentive Scheme \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/health-workforce/rural-health-workforce-incentive-scheme).