

Implementation Plan for the Northern Territory Medical Program

National Partnership Agreement on Health Services

Preliminaries

1. This Implementation Plan is created subject to the provisions of the **National Partnership Agreement on Health Services** and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement. The objective in the National Partnership is to commit to improving the health and wellbeing of Australians through delivering high quality health services.
2. The Northern Territory Government has supported the Northern Territory Clinical School (a clinical medical education program) since 1996 to deliver the final two years of medical training.
3. The Northern Territory Medical Program (NTMP) will provide medical training activities across the full four years of the graduate entry medical course.
4. The initial provider of the NTMP delivered wholly in the Northern Territory is Flinders University.
5. The Program will contribute to addressing severe medical workforce shortages and retention issues in the Northern Territory by facilitating an increase in the number of medical students who stay to practice in the Northern Territory after they graduate. Students undertaking the program will include Northern Territory-based students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

TERMS OF THIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

6. This Implementation Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Minister for Health and Ageing, and the Northern Territory of Australia, represented by the Northern Territory Minister for Health
7. This Implementation Plan will cease on completion of this program period as specified in this Implementation Plan, including the acceptance of final reporting and processing of final payments against deliverables specified in this Implementation Plan. This Implementation Plan will be reviewed no later than 12 months prior to its expiry.
8. This Implementation Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Ministers.
9. Either Party may terminate this agreement by providing 30 days notice in writing.

10. In the event this Implementation Plan is terminated, the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory Governments will consider alternative pathways and appropriate funding mechanisms to enable the NTMP students to complete their medical education, given the Northern Territory Government has a minimum four year obligation to the NTMP students.
11. The Parties to this Implementation Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to this Implementation Plan.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

12. The objective of this Implementation Plan is to develop and implement the Northern Territory Medical Program in the Northern Territory to cover medical training activities across the full four years of the graduate entry medical course. This is designed to contribute to measures to address severe medical workforce shortages and retention issues in the Northern Territory. An Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited provider will be engaged to deliver the program.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of the Commonwealth

13. The Commonwealth is responsible for reviewing the Territory's performance against the program's benchmarks specified in this Implementation Plan and providing any consequential financial contribution to the Territory for that performance.

Role of the Territory

14. The Territory is responsible for all aspects of program implementation, including:
 - (a) fully funding the program, after accounting for financial contributions from the Commonwealth and any third party;
 - (b) establishing and maintaining an agreement with an Australian Medical Council accredited University to develop and implement the NTMP; and
 - (c) meeting all conditions including providing reports in accordance with this Implementation Plan.

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

15. The maximum financial contribution to be provided by the Commonwealth for the program is \$6,662,000 payable in accordance with performance benchmarks listed below and in Table 1. All payments are exclusive of GST.
16. Performance will be measured against the following benchmarks:

- (a) The Northern Territory maintains a partnership for the delivery of the NTMP with a university that holds Australian Medical Council (AMC) accreditation, which will initially be Flinders University,
- (b) an industry sponsored scholarship funding agreement is in place between the Northern Territory and in the first instance, Flinders University;
- (c) payments are made in a timely manner to the University provider in accordance with the industry sponsored scholarship Agreement;
- (d) student places available in the first (2011) and subsequent intakes are substantially filled;
- (e) the selection process of students is undertaken according to University guidelines with priority given to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and Northern Territory residents;
- (f) annual reporting from 2012 to 2014 provides overall student statistics with a demographic breakdown including subject/year completed;
- (g) programs in place to ensure support of the priority student group;
- (h) curriculum for the students reflect skills required to deliver services appropriate for rural and remote communities.

Table 1: Performance benchmarks and associated payments

Performance benchmark	Expected Progress report due date	Amount
(i) 2011 intake finalised	March 2011	\$532,000
(ii) 2011 end of year academic and demographic student report	December 2011	\$814,000
(iii) 2012 intake finalised	March 2012	\$814,000
(iv) 2012 end of year academic and demographic student report	December 2012	\$1,106,000
(v) 2013 intake finalised	March 2013	\$1,106,000
(vi) 2013 end of year academic and demographic student report	December 2013	\$1,125,000
(vii) Submission of final project report detailing the completion of the implementation phase of the Northern Territory Medical Program.	March 2014	\$1,125,000

17. Any Commonwealth financial contribution payable will be processed by the Commonwealth Treasury and paid to the Northern Territory Treasury in accordance with the payment arrangements set out in Schedule D of the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations*.

BUDGET

18. The Northern Territory Medical Program budget is outline in Table 2.

Table 2: Project budget (\$ million)

Funding	Year 2010-11	Year 2011-12	Year 2012-13	Year 2013-14	Total
(i) Commonwealth	0.5	1.6	2.2	2.3	6.6
(ii) Northern Territory Government	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.4	9.3
Combined NTMP Funding	2.7	3.9	4.6	4.7	15.9

19. Having regard to the estimated costs of programs specified in the overall program budget, the Territory will not be required to pay a refund to the Commonwealth if the actual cost of the program is less than the agreed estimated cost of the program. Similarly, the Territory bears all risk should the costs of a program exceed the estimated costs. The Parties acknowledge that this arrangement provides the maximum incentive for the Territory to deliver programs cost-effectively and efficiently.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

20. The Territory will provide progress reports to the Commonwealth to demonstrate its achievement of performance benchmarks set out in Table 1.
21. The end of academic year report (December) will contain the following information:
- a) a description of actual performance of the Territory in the period to date against the performance benchmarks,
 - b) promotional activities undertaken in relation to, and media coverage of, the project during the reporting period;
 - c) a description of the work that will be undertaken to complete the remaining performance benchmarks and any expected promotional opportunities during the next reporting period;
 - d) the number of students successfully completing each year of the program to be provided on an annual basis and related demographic data, including information on the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and NT residents in the Program, in accordance with the performance benchmarks outlined in clause 16.
 - e) measures and programs delivered ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have support mechanisms to assist students to complete their course

- f) curriculum delivered ensure the developing workforce is prepared to meet the health needs of rural and remote communities.

Year commencement reports (March) reports will contain the following information:

- a) promotional activities planned in relation to, and media coverage of, the project during the next reporting period;
- b) number of students enrolling each year and their demographics including the number of students who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and NT residents.

The final program report is due within 60 Business Days of the completion of this term of the program or termination of this Implementation Plan.

- 22. The final program report will be a stand-alone document that can be used for public information dissemination purposes regarding the program and must:
 - a) describe the conduct, benefits and outcomes of the program as a whole;
 - b) include a discussion of any other matters relating to the program as agreed with the Northern Territory Government, which the Commonwealth requests to be included in the final program report at least 30 days before it is due.