

Area of Need Assessment Protocol

Criteria

- All applications must be made on the appropriate form, which can be found at:
http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/healthprofessionals/area_of_need_declaration
- All Area of Need applications must address the following criteria:
 - evidence of need; and
 - evidence of adequate labour market testing.
- **Criterion One - Evidence of need:**
 - Applicants must supply the following information:
For General Practitioner and other Specialist
 - reason for the vacancy
 - details of the health service/practice, including size and type
 - access to other existing health services for patients in the local area
 - impact on service delivery and/or public health services if the position is left vacant
 - any specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in local area
 - outreach services provided by the health service
 - District of Workforce Shortage status
Additional required information for other Specialist posts
 - overall staff numbers at principal location and vacancy rates
 - options explored for secondment from other facilities/services
- **Criterion Two - Labour market testing:**
 - All applications must provide documented evidence of labour market testing to recruit to the specific position locally and/or nationally within the previous six months, demonstrating a minimum of four weeks of advertising.
 - Advertisements must have appeared in at least two forms of local and national advertising; for example, health related/job search websites, newspapers, journals/publications, and medical college media sites. The advertisement must be specific to the role associated with the vacancy.

- Applicants **must** supply a summary of the recruitment process including:
 - a summary of the advertising schedule
 - number of candidates who applied for the position
 - proportion of local Australian trained and IMG candidates (including any reasons for not employing a local applicant)
 - number of candidates interviewed, and
 - a brief summary of why candidates were unsuccessful. (Note individual applicants are not to be identified)
- Area of Need applicants should show evidence that they have considered alternative strategies to providing services such as consulting with relevant medical colleges and other health services.

Process

- Applicants must also supply a role description as part of their Area of Need application
- Upon expiration of an Area of Need Declaration, a new application needs to be submitted. The Area of Need Application needs to be completed in full, with accompanying information attached, prior to it being considered.
- The Minister, or delegates, will assess the application for an Area of Need Declaration against the above criteria. The applicant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the assessment within 30 days of receipt of a fully completed application. Applications are made to the Medical Director, General Practice and Primary Care or to the Office of the Principal Medical Advisor.
- Applications will be returned to the applicant for clarification of issues if they are not able to be correctly assessed against the agreed criteria.
- If the delegate declines the application and the applicant wishes to appeal the decision, they must apply in writing to the delegate within 14 days of receiving written notification of the decision.
- An appeal must be reviewed by an appropriately experienced senior delegate. Applicants must provide grounds for the appeal and may provide additional information to inform the appeal process. The appeal delegate will take this into consideration along with the original application.

Principles

- An Area of Need Declaration is based on a geographic area with evidence of a medical workforce shortage, and that the specified health service can be declared an “area of need” due to an identified vacant position that is proposed to be filled.
- Each Area of Need application should include information about the applicant(s) who will fill each discrete position. If two applicants will fill one position (i.e. job share) then both applicants should be included on the same form. If a practice wishes to have two or more positions declared as Area of Need then a separate applications need to be made for each position.
- The process of granting an Area of Need Declaration should be managed in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness ensuring high ethical standards are maintained.
- Applications will only be considered via the formally documented process and assessed against published criteria as detailed above.

- The maximum operational duration for any declared Area of Need is two (2) years for General Practice and three (3) years for other Specialist posts. An Area of Need Declaration is not transferrable to another location or position, although additional practice sites may be specified at the time of application.
- If an Area of Need Declaration expires and a new application is rejected or declined or not submitted prior to expiry then the position and the service will no longer be hold Area of Need status.
- If an Area of Need Declaration is due to expire but the Dr initially employed has a continuing contract then an Area of Need Extension Application needs to be completed and submitted
- If a position is currently under negotiation with an incumbent prior to submitting an application, evidence that the incumbent successfully completed the PESCI (Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interview) must be attached to the submission.