



EMHS Aboriginal Mental Health Research Scholarship Guidelines for Applicants

Introduction

The East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS) comprises an extensive hospital and health service network that aims to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of more than 725,500 Western Australians in its catchment area.

Our hospital network works together to provide a combination of tertiary, secondary and specialist health care services including emergency and critical care, state trauma, elective and emergency surgery, general medical, mental health, inpatient and outpatient services, aged care, palliative care, rehabilitation and women's, children's and neonates services.

Our Vision

Healthy people, amazing care. Koorda moort, moorditj kwabadak.

EMHS has identified Aboriginal mental health as a priority and is offering a PhD or Masters by Research 'top up' scholarship to an Aboriginal candidate at a WA University to conduct research that will improve services to Aboriginal consumers experiencing mental illness.

The total value of the scholarship will be:

PhD Candidate: Up to \$60,000 (tax exempt) over three years full-time, with a maximum payable rate of \$20,000 per annum.

Masters Candidate: Up to \$30,000 (tax exempt) over two years full-time, with a maximum payable rate of \$15,000 per annum.

Applications are invited from doctoral or masters students enrolled or seeking enrolment at a WA University whose postgraduate research is in the field of mental health with a focus on Aboriginal health. Further information on the objectives of this scholarship, possible focus areas and eligibility criteria are provided below.

The scholarship is for a project that will commence in 2022.

Timeline

Applications Open	15 December 2021
Applications Close	21 February 2022
Formal notification by	14 March 2022
Results announced by	28 March 2022
Scholarship awarded by	28 March 2022

Candidate Eligibility Criteria

1. Applicants must identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
2. Applicants must hold an Honours degree or equivalent in medical sciences, nursing, biological/health sciences, allied health, psychology, pharmacology or related fields.
3. Applicants must be enrolled in or applying for admission to full-time candidature for the degree of PhD or Masters by Research at a WA University.
4. Applicants may be recipients of a Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship or equivalent but cannot currently hold another supplementary scholarship.

Project Eligibility Criteria

1. Projects must relate to the provision of mental health services to Aboriginal people in a hospital or community setting, preferably within EMHS.
2. Projects must have the potential to be of value to EMHS and the broader WA health system and to be translated into meaningful and enduring improvements to mental health for Aboriginal consumers.

Objectives and Potential Topics

The EMHS Aboriginal Mental Health Research Scholarship aims to support a research project designed to improve the effectiveness of mental health services provided to Aboriginal people.

EMHS has identified broad areas of clinical need. While the project is not required to fall within one of these areas, they may guide applicants to match their academic interests to an identified area of clinical need within EMHS:

1. Improving service delivery models, clinical pathways and care transition
 - How can we integrate culturally informed and evidence-based diagnosis and treatment into our mental health services for Aboriginal people?
 - How can we bridge the gap between culturally sensitive community programs and culturally non-specific clinical services?
 - How can we involve Aboriginal patients and their families in care planning to improve discharge and prevent re-admission, especially for patients with chronic mental illnesses?
 - How can we better understand the patient journey and opportunities to improve this?
 - How can we strengthen mental health models of service delivery, especially focussing on service provision to Aboriginal people in the community?
 - How can we better support our Aboriginal staff and ensure their wellbeing?

2. Improving our understanding of the causes, prevention and treatment of mental illness
 - What early intervention or health promotion programs are effective in reducing the burden of mental illness in Aboriginal people?
 - How can suicide risk be better assessed and mitigated, especially in younger Aboriginal people?
 - Can a better understanding of the social determinants of mental illness improve prevention and treatment of mental ill health in Aboriginal people?
 - How can we improve the physical health of Aboriginal patients with mental illness?
 - How can we improve maternity services, including post-natal support and care, for Aboriginal women?
 - How can we upskill Aboriginal communities and families to help manage and prevent mental illness, such as with the provision of Mental Health First Aid?

Obligations of the Scholarship Recipient

1. The Scholarship will be awarded for one year in the first instance and may be renewed annually (for up to two years in total for masters candidates or three years in total for PhD candidates) subject to the recipient performing satisfactorily in their research and remaining enrolled in the Masters or PhD program.
2. The funds may be used for any purpose decided by the recipient and their university, including to supplement an existing stipend, for travel expenses for relevant conference or seminar attendance or for project expenses.

3. Copies of the recipient's approved program of study and annual progress reports must be provided to the EMHS Research Hub by the university's standard reporting dates.
4. A final report from the scholarship recipient must be submitted to the EMHS Research Hub within 3 months of the conclusion of the scholarship period.
5. The recipient may be required to attend and present at functions or meetings at the request of EMHS.
6. It is the responsibility of the candidate to assess the tax liability of the scholarship.

About EMHS Mental Health Services

EMHS is one of the largest providers of both inpatient and community mental health services in Western Australia.

- The Wungen Kartup Specialist Aboriginal Mental Health Service supports both Aboriginal consumers and carers in accessing mainstream mental health services, and in better meeting the needs of Aboriginal people.
- EMHS hospitals offer a range of inpatient mental health services. In the Eastern corridor, Armadale Health Service provides 33 adult inpatient beds (Moodjar and Karri wards) and a high dependency unit (Yorgum). Bentley Hospital has an extensive range of adult and older adult inpatient mental health services and a dedicated youth mental health ward, called the East Metropolitan Youth Unit (EMyU). This unit is a 12-bed inpatient service that provides 24/7 mental health inpatient care for young people aged 16 to 24 presenting with complex and acute mental health issues, with a focus on early episode interventions.
- Mental health services at Royal Perth Hospital (RPH) currently consist of a 20-bed adult open unit (Ward 2K) that provides care for voluntary acute patients aged 18 to 65 and the RPH Addiction, Psychiatry, Intervention and Discharge (RAPID) Service is a 24/7 service that provides psychiatric assessment within the RPH Emergency Department (ED). A dedicated Urgent Care Clinic (Toxicology) within the RPH ED provides specialist treatment to drug and alcohol affected patients; while the Mental Health Emergency Centre (MHEC) provides eight treatment spaces for short stay voluntary patients.
- St John of God Midland Public Hospital's 56-bed Mental Health Unit provides a multidisciplinary service to people who need mental health care.
- EMHS community mental health services provide a range of outpatient services including treatment, urgent assessment and intervention. The City East and Midland Community Mental Health Services provide access to adult outpatient mental health services including treatment, urgent assessment and intervention. Their multi-disciplinary team includes psychiatrists, nurses and allied health staff who provide triage, assessment and short-term care and treatment options for patients.

- EMHS also operates a Mobile Clinical Outreach Team (MCOT) that provides a coordinated model of care for those sleeping rough and the 24/7 Mental Health Emergency Response Line (MHERL) that provides assessment, specialist intervention and support for people experiencing a mental health emergency.

Further information about **EMHS Mental Health Services** is available at:

<https://emhs.health.wa.gov.au/Hospitals-and-Services/Mental-Health>

About EMHS Aboriginal Health Services

EMHS is committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to support access to healthcare by providing a culturally safe environment, creating employment opportunities and developing partnerships. This work aims to close the gap on health inequities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the broader community.

Our Aboriginal Community Health teams work to improve the health of Aboriginal people by improving their access to culturally appropriate health care. Teams are based across the metropolitan region, which covers all three health services in the north, south and east.

Our Aboriginal Community Health programs are planned, implemented and evaluated in consultation and collaboration with the Aboriginal community.

Further information about **EMHS Aboriginal Health Services** is available at:

<https://emhs.health.wa.gov.au/Hospitals-and-Services/Aboriginal-Health>

For further information please contact:

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How to Apply

Applications are due by: **4 pm Monday 21 February 2022**

Applications can be made using the **Application Form** available at:

www.emhs.health.wa.gov.au/research

How applications will be reviewed

Applications will be assessed by a Selection Panel that will determine if the proposed project has merit, is feasible and is aligned with the objectives, particularly with respect to the potential impact and translation into improved services for Aboriginal patients and communities.

The Selection Panel may seek further information from applicants and/or request a meeting with applicants before making a final decision.