Grant Guidelines

General Practice After Hours Grants Program 2026

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Western NSW Primary Health Network

Grant Guidelines

Acknowledgement of Country

Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN) respectfully acknowledges First Nations people as the Traditional Custodians of the nations and countries on which we work, and commit to building relationships, respect and opportunities with all First Nations Peoples in our region. We pay respect to Elders past and present and extend recognition to all First Nations people reading this message. We respectfully acknowledge the following nations:

Wiradjuri
Gamilaraay / Gamilaroi / Kamilaroi
Wailwun
Wongaibon
Ngemba / Nyemba / Ngiyampaa
Murrawarri
Barkindji
Barindji
Barundji
Nyirrpa
Karenggapa
Wadigali
Wilyakali / Wiljali
Wandjiwalgu
Danggali
Muthi-Muthi
Kureinji
Gunu
Barranbinya
Bandjigali
Malyangaba
Dadi Dadi

We acknowledge Elders who are the knowledge holders, teachers and pioneers, the youth who are the hope for a brighter future and who will be the future leaders. We acknowledge and pay our respect to First Nations people who have gone before us and recognise their contribution to First Nations people and community.

WNSW PHN's Commitment to Reconciliation

WNSW PHN is committed to reconciliation and demonstrates its commitment by building meaningful, sustainable initiatives in partnership with First Nations communities that close the gap and achieve equitable health outcomes First Nations people. WNSW PHN is committed to leading this journey through its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which is built on respect, relationships and opportunities. This reconciliation journey is grounded in truth telling, listening, learning, and partnering with First Nations communities.

You can find out more about WNSW PHN's commitment to reconciliation in its Innovate RAP **HERE**.

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Grant Guidelines

1. About the Western NSW Primary Health Network

The **Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN),** is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia, established to support frontline health services and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care. Our focus is people who are at risk of poor health outcomes and working to improve the coordination of their care, so they receive the right care in the right place at the right time. We work closely with key stakeholders including general practice, other health care providers, Local Health Districts, hospitals and the broader community to align services with the health needs of the region.

WNSW PHN is a not-for-profit organisation primarily funded by the Australian Government.

WNSW PHN covers both Far West and Western NSW Local Health Districts across a total area of 433,379 square kilometres, making it the largest PHN in NSW (at 53.5%). The total population is estimated to be over 312,000 people, with 20.3% over the age of 65 years. Approximately 11.36% of people in the WNSW PHN region identify as First Nations (ABS, 2021).

The geographic region covered by WNSW PHN is captured in Figure 1 below. You can also check to see if you fall within the WNSW PHN region, using the PHN Location Map found **HERE.**

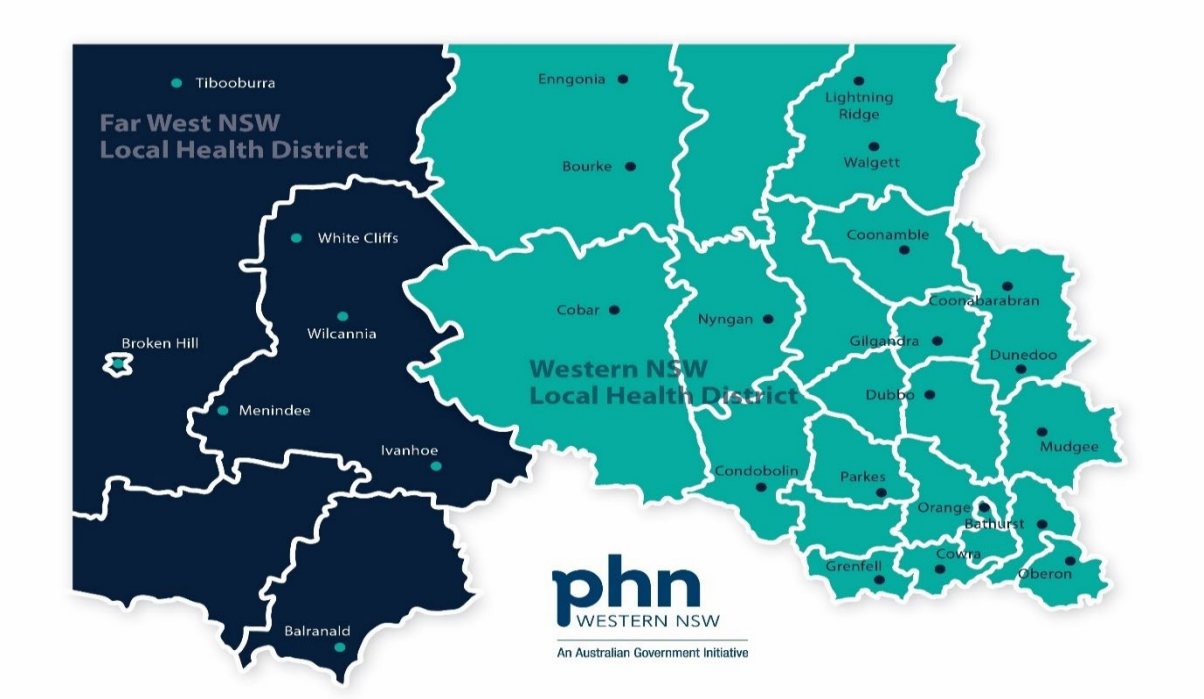


Figure 1 – WNSW PHN Geographical Footprint

2. Background – General Practice After Hours Grants Program

WNSW PHN plays a key role in supporting local primary health care services to better meet the health needs of the community. An important element to this support includes enabling equitable access to primary care services in the after-hours period.

For the purposes of this grant opportunity, after-hours primary health care is defined as accessible and effective care for people requiring either urgent or non-urgent treatment that cannot be provided during regular primary health care service hours. It should not be a substitute for primary health care that could otherwise occur during regular business hours, usually given as between 8.00am-6.00pm on weekdays and 8.00am-12.00pm on Saturdays.

WNSW PHN is offering funding through the General Practice After Hours Grant Program 2026 to further enable local General Practices, Aboriginal Medical Services, enhance access to primary health care in the after-hours setting in smaller towns (populations less than 20,000 people).

- Support the development of regional responses to address the after-hours primary health care needs of local communities, whilst supporting the after-hours primary health care workforce.
- Promote coordination between services at a local level and support after hours service providers to integrate care with a patient's usual primary care provider.
- Address gaps in availability of after-hours primary health care services.
- Reduce non-urgent attendances at hospital emergency departments in the after-hours period.

WNSW PHN invites applications from eligible organisations for the Grant Program. Relevant information for application is provided below.

3. Key Grants Details

Grant funding is available for General Practices in small towns with population less than 20,000 people.

Applicants may apply for funding in one of the streams below:

a) Extended **After-Hours Service Delivery** – Funding to support the extension or establishment of primary care services delivered in the after-hours period, including GP, Nurse led, outreach or collaborative service models.

b) **After Hours Service Support and Sustainability-** Funding to strengthen existing after-hours services or support providers to improve workforce capacity, service coordination, patient flow referral pathways and longer-term sustainability.

c) **Enabling Access, Technology and Community Awareness** – Funding for practical supports that improve access to after-hours primary care including digital health infrastructure, equipment, community awareness, health literacy, transport coordination and activities that support patient to access the right care in the right place.

Potential activities that would be considered appropriate include, but are not limited to, the following examples under each funding stream:

- **Stream 1: Extended After-Hours Service Delivery**
    - Extension of existing services into the after-hours period, including evenings, weekends or shared roster models.
    - Outreach clinics or services delivered in the after-hours period to priority populations.
    - Nurse-led clinics in the after-hours period, with GP access available when required.
    - Projects that increase capacity for delivery of primary care to Residential Aged Care residents in the after-hours period.

- **Stream 2: After-Hours Service Support and Sustainability**
    - Targeted training and CPD sessions for staff involved in after-hours service delivery.
    - Activities that support local workforce capacity and sustainability of after-hours services such as training, rostering support or backfill staff.
    - Improvements to patient flow, referral pathways, handover processes or coordination with a patient's usual general practice or Aboriginal Medical Service.

- **Stream 3: Enabling Access, Technology and Community Awareness**
    - Equipment to enable the expansion or safe delivery of services in the after-hours period, subject to funding conditions and asset limits.
    - Digital health infrastructure and supports to be utilised in the after-hours period, including secure messaging, telehealth or related access supports.
    - Health literacy and community engagement activities to increase awareness of after-hours services and appropriate use.
    - Improvements to access, such as transport coordination or facilitation to support access to an after-hours clinic.

4. Service scope

Where funding supports direct after-hours service delivery, proposed services must align with the following service scope:

- Services must be accessible and available to all patients with no out-of-pocket costs.
- Service must be urgent i.e. the patient needs to be seen within the next 12 to 24 hours and non-life threatening.
- Patient consultation notes must be provided to the patient's usual GP or practice to support continuity of care and follow-up where required.
- Services may include care for minor injuries, pain management, wound care, fractures, lacerations, minor burns, abdominal pain, and skin and soft-tissue infections.

General practices and Aboriginal Medical Services may apply individually or as a collaboration within a town or across several towns.

Applicants will need to include:

- Description of current after-hours services delivered if applicable.
- Proposed extended opening hours/ service model.
- Demonstrate how the service/ model will increase capacity, access to primary care in after-hours period.
- Staffing required (GPs, nurses, administration) and confirmation of workforce availability and capacity to deliver as outlined.
- Indicative budget; and
- Simple sustainability plan to demonstrate capability of continuing the service beyond the funding period (this should include proposed revenue and business support systems).

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- *Proposed services must be delivered in the after-hours period.*

- *Applicants are encouraged to review carefully the guidelines and ensure consideration of options that best support local after-hours access and community needs. The funding aims to be flexible and supportive of innovative approaches, recognising workforce availability and community needs vary across the region.*

- *WNSW PHN welcomes early discussions prior to submission to clarify expectations and ensure alignment to the objectives of the grant.*

5. Grant Funding Details

Funding amounts will vary depending on the proposed activity, demonstrated need, expected deliverables and value for money. Indicative funding amounts by stream are outlined below:

- Extended After-Hours Service Delivery (Stream 1): up to $80,000 excluding GST
- After-Hours Service Support and Sustainability (Stream 2): up to $50,000 excluding GST
- Enabling Access, Technology and Community Awareness (Stream 3): up to $10,000 excluding GST

WNSW PHN reserves the right to award all, part, or none of the requested funding amount. Applicants must provide a clear budget that demonstrates how the requested funding is reasonable, necessary and directly linked to after-hours service outcomes.

Funds can be used for

- Direct costs of delivering the proposed activity (i.e. staff wages).
- Purchase of resources to support the proposed activity.

Funds cannot be used for

- Delivering service activities outside the after-hours period i.e. activities in normal business hours (8.00am-6.00pm on weekdays and 8.00am-12.00pm on Saturdays) that would reduce the after-hours burden).
- Delivering routine care that can be conducted in business hours.
- Duplicating existing after-hours services already funded in the community such as: Healthdirect nurse triage service or Commonwealth Urgent Care Clinics.
- Operational costs that do not relate specifically to this activity.
- Similar or existing services that are already funded within the community.
- The purchase of large value assets such as vehicles or buildings.
- Purchase of assets over $10,000
- Administrative costs such as auditing costs above 10% of funding provided.
- The preparation of grant application.
- Retrospective items and activities.

Funds need to be expended by 30 June 2028.

6. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for funding, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Must be a General Practice, Aboriginal Medical Services operating within the WNSW PHN region.
- Must be located in a small town ie populations under 20000.
- All General Practice applicants must be registered for, and consent to share information via the Lumos Program (or prepared to participate) - more information **HERE**
- Applicants must be registered with, and publish information via Provider Connect Australia – more information* **HERE**
- Must meet all four digital health* foundations, which include:
    - Actively using My Health Record
    - General Practitioners are capable of electronically prescribing.
    - Actively using secure messaging
    - Have access to a video call platform for telehealth consultations that meets security and safety standards.
- Must hold relevant insurances, including.
    - Public Liability Insurance (minimum coverage $10 million).
    - Professional Indemnity Insurance.

** The WNSW PHN Digital Health team is available to support applicants that require assistance to meet the digital health requirements, please contact the team at digitalhealth.team@wnswphn.org.au prior to submission.*

7. KPI/Deliverables:

Successful applicants will be required to report on the deliverables and performance measures relevant to their funded activity and funding stream. Reporting requirements, frequency and due dates will be confirmed in the Grant Agreement. WNSWPHN will provide reporting and data collection templates.

Delivery of the funded activity, services and agreed outputs in accordance with the grant agreement.

- Evidence of appropriate insurance coverage.
- Delivery of the funded activity, services and agreed outputs in accordance with the grant agreement.
- Progress reports using the WNSWPHN reporting template, including the following measure where relevant to the funded activity:

    - Number of after-hours occasions of service delivered during the reporting period.
    - Total number of clinics delivered under funding if applicable.
    - De-identified patient demographic information collected through the reporting template, where relevant and available.
    - Number and proportion of patients who reported that they would otherwise have presented to an emergency department.
    - Patient reported experience results collected using the survey provided by WNSWPHN.
    - Where the patient would have presented if not able to access your clinic
    - Reasons for presentation.
    - Goods news story or case study.

- Unaudited financial expenditure report showing expenditure against the approved budget for funded service delivery, Medicare billings attributable to the funded service.
- Final report including an evaluation of the service

8. Grant Conditions

- WNSW PHN will only consider one application per eligible organisation.
- WNSW PHN reserves the right to award all, part, or none of the Grant
- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement with WNSW PHN
- Applicants must disclose potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Breaches of terms may result in Grant recovery.
- Successful Grants may be publicly listed on the WNSW PHN website.
- Applicant must ensure compliance with working with children checks
- Applicant must acknowledge WNSW PHN in promotions
- Applicant must submit reports and Medicare revenue as per agreement schedule.

9. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Submission of fully completed application.
- Meeting the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 6.
- Evaluation Criteria below:

Enhanced After Hours Supports and/or extended After-Hours delivery

No.	Evaluation: Criteria	Evaluation Weight
1.	**Alignment with grant objectives and selected stream:** Does the application clearly align with the objectives of the General Practice After Hours Grants Program, the selected funding stream, and the intended outcome of improving access to after-hours primary care?	20%
2.	**Demonstrated community need:** Does the application provide evidence of local after-hours access gaps, small-town need, priority population needs, limited service availability, emergency department pressure, or community demand?	20%
3.	**Service model, feasibility and workforce capacity:** Does the application demonstrate a practical and deliverable model, appropriate workforce capacity, clear implementation arrangements, and alignment with the service scope where direct after-hours service delivery is proposed?	25%
4.	**Partnerships, coordination and continuity of care:** Does the application demonstrate appropriate collaboration with general practices, Aboriginal Medical Services, Local Health District services, community organisations or other partners, including referral, handover and communication with the patient's usual GP or practice?	15%
5.	**Value for money and sustainability:** Is the proposed budget reasonable, proportionate to the selected stream, directly linked to proposed deliverables, and supported by a realistic approach to sustainability beyond the WNSW PHN funding period?	20%

10. Grant Timelines

Grant Guidelines Open:	5 November 2026 – 19 November 2026
Applications open:	20 November 2026
Grant Applications Close:	04 December 2026
Grants Awarded:	18 December 2026
Activity Completion:	30 June 2028

11. Grant Application

To apply for Grant funding:

- Review and accept all Grant conditions.
- Complete the Application Form.

12. Further Information

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