

NRHN

National Rural
Health Network



harnessing good intent

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS
WISHING TO ATTEND
CONFERENCES OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

AVAILABLE TO ALL RURAL HEALTH CLUB MEMBERS

Background

In 2007, the NRHN received a continuation of its conference funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, to allow medical, allied health, nursing, pharmacy and dentistry students who are members of their university's Rural Health Club to attend Conferences of National Significance (CoNS). These conferences need to have a rural and or remote focus and can be discipline-specific or have a general health focus. As there is a limited amount of funding available, applications will need to be submitted to the NRHN for selection by the CoNS committee.¹

The NRHN will distribute the funding in a manner aimed at ensuring that the maximum number of students will be able to attend the maximum number of conferences and that the funding is spread evenly across all clubs by making sure that equal representation from each club is apparent throughout each financial year.

Process for Applying for Attendance at a Conference

Applications must be received at least 6 weeks prior to the start date of the conference; otherwise it is at the discretion of the CoNS committee as to whether this application will be reviewed.

1. Completing and Submitting Application

tick boxes to make sure your application is complete

- i. 6 weeks prior to conference start date
- ii. Fill out CoNS application proforma.
- iii. Attach copy of conference program (if not available give web address).
- iv. Attach copy of registration form (or the URL for online application form).
- v. Email of support from Rural Health Club's executive

You will need the full support of your Rural Health Club Executive for your applications are to be accepted. This must be evidenced by a written communication (email) to the NRHN from the Club's NRHN senior representative.

Email these to the NRHN Project Officer (kerryn@nrhn.org.au) and to your RHCs Senior Representative, President or Administrator.

All sections must be completed on the proforma as well as the conference program and registration form. If this is not received then the application will not be assessed.

¹ This committee will include the current EO or PO, the Allied Health Portfolio Holder, the Nursing Portfolio Holder and the Medical Portfolio Holder.

2. Application Review

Your application will then be forwarded on to the CoNS Committee who will review the application and provide a response to the NRHN Project Officer (PO) within 2 weeks of the date that they receive the application for review.

3. Application Notification

You will receive notification as whether their application has been successful or not through an email and a phone call. The RHCs Senior Representative will be included in this email.

If successful...

4. Organising Registration, Travel and Accommodation

You will receive a phone call to advise you of the committee's decision and an email with the next steps that need to be taken for the process of booking and paying for registration, accommodation and travel.

The NRHN will book and pay for all accommodation, registration and travel costs. It is the student's responsibility to find appropriate accommodation and mode of transport (complete Travel Proforma provided to them in 'application notification' email) and provide details to the NRHN PO to book for them. Full registration details, including registration form or URL for online registration must also be provided to the NRHN PO by the student to enable them to register and pay for the student.

Once all of the above has been booked the NRHN PO will forward details of each booking for the applicant to look over and check to ensure that everything is correct.

5. Conference Report

You will be required to provide the NRHN with a conference and financial report within one month upon return from the conference. This report must be emailed to the NRHN PO (kerryn@nrhn.org.au) and the RHCs NRHN Senior Representative.

Individuals selected to attend conferences must disseminate information arising from the conference to the other members of their own rural health club.

What the funding includes

Ultimately, this is at the discretion of the CoNS Committee, however will usually include registration, travel and accommodation up to \$70 per night.

1. Registration

The NRHN will cover your registration fees including the conference dinner if this is requested. The NRHN believes that conference dinners are a good opportunity for networking and gaining information outside of the usual conference setting.

The NRHN encourages members to approach the conference conveners regarding the possibility of part or full sponsorship for conference attendance (e.g. to reduce or waive registration fees). This can often occur if the student offers to volunteer during the conference.

2. Accommodation

CoNS funding will cover accommodation to the amount of \$70 per night. If accommodation is above this amount the applicant will have to cover the extra costs. It is recognised that due to travel constraints some students may need to arrive the day before the conference and as a result accommodation for this night will be granted.

3. Travel

Flights, train and bus tickets are covered under CoNS funding. Taxis to and from the airport or airport parking will be reimbursed to the applicant upon receiving receipts for these items.

Presenting at Conference of National Significance

Members attending conferences are encouraged to present papers on the NRHN and its activities, their rural health club or other relevant topics - this will be looked on favourably by the CoNS committee. However, it is mandatory that students who do present at conferences on behalf of the NRHN should present a copy of the abstract and full paper to the NRHN Executive prior to the conference for feedback. This is to ensure accurate and efficient representation of the Network and its activities.

These papers will then be kept on record, be displayed on the NRHN Website, and remain part property of the NRHN.

Alternate funding

The CoNS committee looks favourably on applications where members seek alternative funding from their Rural Health Club, their university's student union or external sources to assist in subsidising the total cost of conference attendance. A description of the amount of support secured should be included in the application.

Failure to attend conference

Failure to attend a conference without sufficient reason will result in applications from the absent individual's RHC not being considered until a written explanation is received by the NRHN Executive. If the reason is not satisfactory the matter may have to be taken further and may result in the club not being able to send further club members to conferences in that financial year, or costs associated with the conference being paid by the rural health club.

Making changes

If you need to make changes to registration, accommodation or travel details that have already been booked then this is the responsibility of the student to make the changes as well as cover these costs.

APPENDIX

The **Conference Report** must contain the following information:

- A *personal reflection* on the conference, including mention of:
 - The student's general impressions of the conference
 - The sessions/presentations/speakers during the conference that made the biggest impact on the student
 - How the student feels the conference has contributed to their knowledge of rural health issues and enthusiasm for rural practice
 - How the student feels that attending the conference has benefited their Rural Health Club and the NRHN
- A brief discussion of any meetings between the NRHN student representative and conference delegates representing other rural health key-stakeholder organisations, and the outcomes thereof
- A copy of any presentations made at the conference
- A Financial Report

The **Financial Report** must contain the following information:

- A breakdown of the costs subsidised by the NRHN – e.g. registration costs and travel
- The relevant receipts/invoices
- A breakdown of the other costs incurred by the student as a result of attending the conference – e.g. travel and living expenses

The NRHN reserves the right not to accept reports if they do not satisfy the aforementioned criteria.