



2020 – New Applicant Information

From 1 January 2020, the Bonded Medical Program (Program) new arrangement came into effect. All new students will enter the Program under the new arrangement.

The Bonded Medical Program, established in 2001, provides students with a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) in a medical course at an Australian university, in return for a commitment to work in eligible regional, rural or remote areas for a specified period after completion of their medical course.

This commitment is referred to as a Return of Service Obligation (RoSO).

The Program provides:

- a standard 3 year RoSO to be completed over an 18 year period
- a more flexible approach in undertaking RoSO, where RoSO can be on a non-continuous basis, full-time or part-time work, and fly in/fly out work in eligible locations
- clear and consistent processes to assist participants in managing their obligations using an online web portal to facilitate easier self-management of RoSO

The Bonded Return of Service System

To support the new arrangement, the Department of Health online web portal, the Bonded Return of Service System (BRoSS), will allow bonded students and doctors to self-manage their RoSO and identify eligible locations where they can work.

Functions of BRoSS will be released throughout 2020. Further information will be communicated to all participants as features become available.

How to apply

Students need to apply for a bonded medical place through an Australian university. Entrance requirements are the same for all students applying for a medical place as specified by the university.

The Program is available to eligible students who have been accepted into a medical course by an Australian university. After you submit your application to study medicine, the selection process for a bonded CSP is determined by the participating university. If you require further information on the application processes used by the universities, contact the relevant university directly.

Accept a place in the Program

When universities have finalised their firm offer lists in BRoSS, the department will provide these students with log in details to access BRoSS.

Students need to log in to BRoSS to review their details and agree to participate in the Program. Once this is complete, the student has entered the Program.

Students must agree to participate in the Program via BRoSS to maintain enrolment in a first year bonded CSP in a medical course. Registration into the Program commences a participant's bonded student phase of the Program.

Participant obligations

Participants of the Program agree to complete their medical course within the requirements of the university and to undertake 3 years of RoSO in eligible regional, rural or remote areas within 18 years of completing their medical course.

While BRoSS is being progressively released throughout 2020, your reporting obligations as specified in the *Health Insurance (Bonded Medical Program) Rule 2020* are delayed.

The timelines set by the *Health Insurance (Bonded Medical Program) Rule 2020 (Cth)* that require the participant to provide information and evidence under sections 15 and 16 will be delayed until a future date nominated by the department.

The department has implemented a transition period where the participant's obligations to provide information and upload evidence will be delayed until BRoSS is fully functional.

The Rule has been amended to formally establish this transition period, which means current participants of the Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship (MRBS) and Bonded Medical Places (BMP) schemes who have opted in to the Program cannot be liable for any administrative penalty arising out of not complying with time frames set out in the Rule. The amendment, *Health Insurance (Bonded Medical Program) Amendment Rule 2020*, is available at Federal Register of Legislative Instruments for your information.

The department will advise you when BRoSS is fully functional and will nominate a date from which all the time frames for providing information and evidence will commence.

Should you wish to keep your Program reporting obligations up to date, please email to BRoSS@health.gov.au

Key features of the new arrangement

RoSO

Eligible locations for bonded participants are classified using any of the following:

- Modified Monash Model (MMM) 2-7
- Distribution Priority areas (DPA) for General Practitioners
- Outer Metropolitan District of Workforce Shortage for all other specialties fellowship

Time frames

- 3 year RoSO completed within 18 years of finishing the medical course
- 18 months RoSO can be worked pre-fellowship and 18 months post-fellowship
- Fellowship (medical specialisation) is not essential to complete your RoSO
- if fellowship is not attained by the end of the 12th year after completion of the medical course, all RoSO must be completed within the remaining 6 years of the 18-year time frame

Administration

- clear processes for consideration of exceptional circumstance to extend the time frame to complete RoSO for medical reasons
- clear consistent management of withdrawals
- breach is triggered by a failure to:
 - complete the medical course within university requirements and time frame
 - complete all RoSO obligations within 18 years of completing the medical course

Support

Rural Workforce Agencies in each State and the Northern Territory will provide support to participants throughout each phase of the Program.

Further information

Department of Health website: health.gov.au/new-arrangements-bonded-medical-program

Contact the Department of Health

- Telephone: 1800 987 104 (Monday – Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm AEST)
- Email: BRoSS@health.gov.au