

## Rural health services - support available

The Multi Purpose Services (MPS) program is a joint State and Commonwealth program which allows rural communities to deliver a broad and responsive range of services.

Under the MPS program, separate agencies join together as a single MPS agency. They can pool funds from an existing range of Commonwealth, State and joint - funded programs. The MPS can then allocate the available resources to meet identified local needs as agreed with the Commonwealth and State in the annual MPS service plan.

### Services to meet community needs

An MPS approach seeks to achieve:

- Improved targeting of services to meet community needs
- Improved access to appropriate services
- Increased coordination, flexibility and innovative service delivery
- More cost effective services
- Services tailored to the needs of the individual
- Culturally appropriate services.

### A Multi Purpose Service program has many benefits

The benefits of this method of funding include:

- A focus on rural and isolated areas.
- A wider variety of health services.
- Care can be better integrated - for example, on discharge from hospital, home support can be more easily accessed and tailored to individual needs.
- Existing smaller services can link together to obtain the benefits of a larger organisation and improve viability.
- By pooling resources, services can be expanded or changed to meet community needs.

### Services respond to community needs

Decisions about which services an MPS should provide are made after the development of a Needs Analysis and Service Plan which must involve community consultation. The service plan must be endorsed by the Department.

### A wide range of services are possible

Below is a list of some of the services that may be provided by an MPS:

- Audiology (hearing tests)
- Cardiac rehabilitation (care after heart surgery etc.)
- Community health centres
- Counselling services
- Day centres (for social support and respite care)
- Dental services
- Dietitian (healthy eating advice, special diets etc.)
- District nursing (nursing care at home)
- Drug and alcohol services (counselling, rehabilitation services etc.)
- Family planning (contraception, pregnancy choices etc.)
- Family violence services (support, counselling etc.)
- Food services (meals on wheels, community dining)
- Healthy lifestyle and public health (immunisations, food hygiene etc.)
- Home care (help with day-to-day living needs)
- Home maintenance (help to organise small repairs etc.)

- Hospital services
- Maternal and Child Health (support for parents of 0 to 6 year olds)
- Neighbourhood House (community activities)
- Occupational therapist (care and activities after accidents, illness etc.)
- Palliative care (care and support for people with a terminal illness and their families and carers)
- Physiotherapist (rehabilitation after injury, operations, illness)
- Podiatry (foot care)
- Residential care (nursing and personal care at home or in a residential care setting)
- Social support (help to meet others)
- Specific home care (support for disabled people, elderly)
- Speech pathology (help with communication problems)
- Youth worker (community support for young people).

### **Multi Purpose Services can be found across rural Victoria**

Existing Multi Purpose Services can be found in:

- Otway Health and Community Service (Apollo Bay)
- Upper Murray Health and Community Service (Corryong)
- Orbost Regional Health Service (Orbost)
- Alpine Health (Bright, Myrtleford and Mt Beauty)
- Mallee Track Health and Community Services (Patchewollock, Ouyen, Murrayville and Underbool)
- Timboon and District Healthcare Services (Timboon)
- Robinvale District Health Services (Robinvale, Euston, Wemen, Boundary Bend).

### **Where to get help**

- Your regional Department of Human Services office Tel. (03) 9096 0000.

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DHS - Rural Health

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