



The RRIPM Collaborative:

Funding Prospectus

*working together to strengthen the palliative medicine
rural workforce*



RRIPM is a program of ANZSPM

anzspm

Australia New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine

Invitation

Werte, from beautiful Arrernte country in Central Australia!

In May 2024, the Beyond the Burbs scoping review was published by the Rural and Remote Institute of Palliative Medicine [RRIPM] describing the concerning state of palliative medicine workforce and training in rural Australia. It identified many barriers to progressing rural training, and some huge challenges, but it also made clear that none of these were insurmountable.

RRIPM proposes a practical response to the challenges facing our services. It has grown in part out of a real and urgent need for a sustainable rural workforce pipeline. **We need to be able to train more rural specialists to work in the amazing services we have helped build.** And we need to train them right here, in the places where they will work, not in the city.

RRIPM is a group of rural palliative care services from all Australian jurisdictions, working together to support rural workforce development through the establishment of a rural palliative medicine training pathway. We are seeking your support through funding to help nurture the development of this important initiative.

The RRIPM Roadmap 2025-2028 outlines the approach. We invite you to contribute to this important work because together we can truly make a difference.



Dr Christine Sanderson

Clinical Lead, RRIPM project

Specialist in Palliative Medicine

Territory Palliative Care – Central Australia / Alice Springs Hospital

30th July 2024.

Acknowledgement of Country

ANZSPM acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia on which our members live and work, and to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

The RRIPM Collaborative

The Rural and Remote Institute of Palliative Medicine (RRIPM) is a virtual collaboration of rural palliative care services, supported by the Australia New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine (ANZSPM) with the specific purpose of strengthening rural workforce through creating access to, and support for, palliative medicine training in rural and remote communities within Australia. www.rripm.org.au

RRIPM is currently grant funded through the Department of Health and Aged Care *Flexible Approach to Training in Expanded Settings* [FATES] initiative through until June 2025. Ongoing funding of \$1.9 million for the period 2025-2028 is sought.

Why is it needed?

The cycle of rural disadvantage in healthcare, particularly in palliative medicine, is a critical issue that needs urgent attention. Around 7 million Australians (28% of the population) live in rural or remote areas. (AIHW, 2023) However, only 16% of specialists work in rural areas so there are significant disparities in the kind of palliative care that is available to people in different geographic locations across Australia as they near the end of life. This significant inequity in available care and the palliative medicine workforce maldistribution can be addressed. RRIPM has a plan.

How will it work?

The RRIPM collaborative builds system capability by helping rural health services grow their own workforce. We assist services to achieve Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) site accreditation for training. We link supervisors and trainees across the network to share education, experience and provide peer support in sometimes isolated settings. Clinicians united with a shared purpose strengthen the rural training pipeline, resulting in more rural trainees, and over time reducing dependency on locums, vacancies and workforce service disruptions. RRIPM has the potential to **double** the number of palliative medicine fellows working in rural areas by 2035.

By funding this initiative, support is provided for a sustainable rural palliative medicine workforce.

Positions for trainees, and the specialists supporting them, continue to be funded through the local health service. As health service employees, they remain accountable to the terms of employment within their system. RRIPM is not an employer and the relationship with the RRIPM collaborative is supportive, operating within the existing policies and procedures of the participating services.

RRIPM Roadmap 2025-2028

The roadmap document charts the way forward, providing a clear analysis of and justification for ongoing program funding. Over the past twelve months, RRIPM has generated an enthusiastic groundswell of support from many rural health services seeking to join the collaboration. Over the same period, RRIPM has garnered support from the broader health sector, importantly engaging with both GP colleges, researchers and national peak bodies. The practical approach proposed to address rural workforce challenges clearly resonates with others working in the field, now aligned in their support, and willing to work together to achieve the sensible RRIPM aims. With secure operational funding there is opportunity to work together and make a real difference.

The RRIPM roadmap 2025-2028 has been endorsed by:

- Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine [ACRRM]
- Australian Indigenous Doctor’s Association [AIDA]
- Cancer Australia
- National Rural Health Alliance [NRHA]
- Palliative Care Australia [PCA]
- Research Centre for Palliative Care, Death and Dying, [RePaDD] Flinders University
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners [RACGP]

The RRIPM Roadmap 2025-2028 document is available [here](#), or at www.rripm.org.au

Funding RRIPM will deliver Value

- **Addressing Healthcare Access Disparities**
Training and supporting palliative care specialists for rural areas, to work in rural services, will improve workforce distribution and equity of access.
- **Cost-Effectiveness**
Effective place-based palliative care can reduce hospital bed days, minimise Emergency department presentations, patient retrievals, and avoidable travel and cut fly in fly out service costs.
- **Building Workforce capacity**
The RRIPM program builds workforce capacity by training local clinicians and developing local resources.
- **Supporting Rural Workforce**
Feeling connected and supported with access to active peer networks is a protective factor for rural employees, contributing to workforce resilience and sustainability.
- **Value for Patients and their Community**
Care closer to home
Care locally reduces costs and burdens to families and patients
People can die in the place of their choosing with the people who love them

Funding Request

Funding will support the operational activities required to support, coordinate and drive the RRIPM agenda. The Rural and Remote Institute of Palliative Medicine requires total funding of \$1.9 million over the period 2025-2028. Detailed costings are available upon request

Year	FY 2025-26	FY2026-27	FY 2027-28
Budget per annum	539,190.47	652,167.44	709,670.96
TOTAL funding			\$1,901,028.87

Contact

The project team is available to discuss this dynamic initiative. Please contact:

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