

# ACCHO Fact Sheet

## Program Overview

NACCHO is working with ACCHOs, ACCHRTOs and Affiliates to deliver the First Nations Health Worker Traineeship Program.

This program will grow the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Health Practitioners through 500 available trainee placements until December 2027.

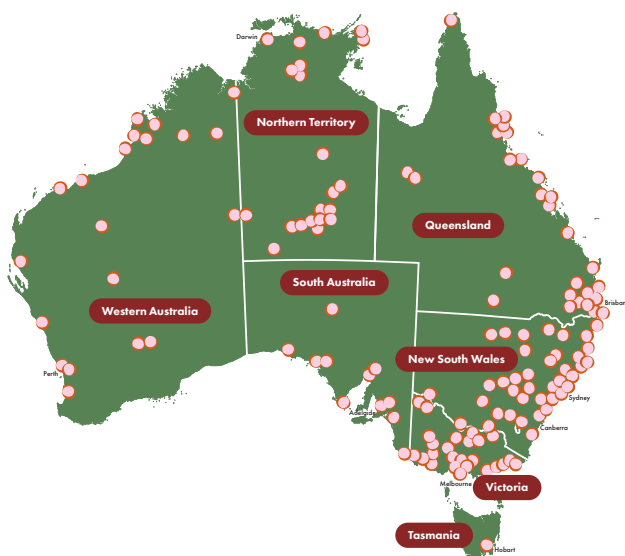
As you know, Health Workers and Health Practitioners are the very heart of the ACCHO workforce. They are central to clinical practice, illness prevention and health promotion and provide critical continuity of care for clients.

This program is about creating opportunities for your existing workforce and building pathways for local community members to become health workers.

This program provides ACCHOs support funding for trainees undertaking the following qualifications:

- ▶ Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (12-month completion)
- ▶ Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (24-month completion)
- ▶ Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) (24-month completion)

**Image 1** NACCHO Member Service Location Map



## ACCHO Program Requirements

As the ACCHO, your requirements under the program are to:

- ▶ recruit trainees in collaboration with your chosen RTO;
- ▶ provide induction, orientation, supervision and structured clinical placements for trainees;
- ▶ release the trainee clinical supervisor to engage in onboarding training if being delivered by an ACCHRTO;
- ▶ sign a Trainee Partnership Agreement with the trainee and the RTO;
- ▶ work with the RTO to develop an individual learning plan;
- ▶ ensure trainees are supported to complete training and structured clinical placements.

It is strongly encouraged that ACCHOs use this program to build their AHW and AHP workforce.

## ACCHO Funding Allocation

Qualification	per student	
	12 month delivery	24 month delivery
Certificate III – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care	\$25,000	N/A
Certificate IV – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care	N/A	\$50,000
Certificate IV – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice	N/A	\$50,000

## How can ACCHOs use the funding?

The funding can be used flexibly to assist you to host the trainee during their training. This may include:

- ▶ backfilling trainees whilst on block training
- ▶ mentoring and support within the workplace
- ▶ ensuring placement supervision requirements are undertaken
- ▶ partially subsidising the wages of the trainee

## Jurisdictional Traineeship Coordinator

Affiliates are funded to employ a Jurisdictional Traineeship Coordinator (JTC). The JTC will support trainees, your ACCHO and RTOs in your jurisdiction to facilitate the commencement, progress and completion of the program. This role also includes program promotion and facilitating ACCHO and RTO access to additional federal/jurisdictional funding and support services that may be available. This role will also undertake advocacy work with jurisdictional skills and training departments.

## Frequently asked questions

### How many positions can our ACCHO apply for?

There is no ACCHO or jurisdictional allocation of trainee places. However, we encourage you to consider your organisational capacity to supervise trainees and employ graduate AHPs and AHWs following completion of the program.

### What funding do the ACCHRTOs receive per trainee?

Qualification	per student	
	12 month delivery	24 month delivery
Certificate III – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care	\$40,000	N/A
Certificate IV – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care	N/A	\$64,000
Certificate IV – Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice)	\$52,000	\$64,000

**Note** This funding is only provided to ACCHRTOs and won't be provided to mainstream providers.

### What can we expect from the ACCHRTO?

The funding will cover wrap around services to the trainees and ACCHO including: mentoring, tutoring, subsidising away from base funding for the trainee, and working in partnership with ACCHOs and their supervisors to ensure work ready graduates.

### If this program doesn't offer a full wage subsidy, how can I afford to bring on a trainee?

Consider if you have existing employees who are interested in upskilling into clinical roles, or vacant positions that you can fill with AHWs and AHPs. For example, if you have a vacant GP or nurse position, you may wish to restructure your workforce model to engage more AHW and AHP trainees as future workers.

### Can we participate if our ACCHO currently supports a student studying one of these qualifications?

Yes! Please let us know if you have students currently studying one of these qualifications who are working in your ACCHO. They can be transitioned into the program immediately.

### What if we don't have an ACCHRTO in our state or territory? Can we receive funding to provide the wrap around support that an ACCHRTO would have offered?

You can still participate in the program if there is no ACCHRTO in your state.

We have examples of ACCHOs who are working in partnership with other ACCHOs in their region and are being funded to support a cohort of students through their qualification that are being delivered by a TAFE or mainstream RTO.

Please speak to NACCHO's Workforce and Training team to see if you meet the criteria for this model.

### What's the difference between this program and a formal traineeship?

This program uses the principles of a traineeship – it combines accredited training with structured work placements to support trainees to complete their training and be work-ready upon graduating. Trainees don't need to be registered as formal 'traineeships' in your jurisdiction, but you're welcome to do this if it is beneficial. A formalised traineeship may entitle the trainee, your ACCHO and the ACCHRTO to additional funding, but could also come with additional restrictions and reporting requirements. Your JTC will be able to provide you with advice on this to you to decide if it's worth considering.



### Where can I get more information?

Please contact the Workforce and Training team via [traineeship@naccho.org.au](mailto:traineeship@naccho.org.au).

## ACCHO Steps to onboarding a Trainee

The following table outlines the basic process to recruiting a trainee, noting that every trainee's journey and pathways may be different and that your organisation may need to tailor your approach depending on individual circumstances.

### Steps to becoming a trainee

#### Consideration

- Consider how a trainee can benefit your workforce and organisation.
- Consider the responsibilities and requirements as an organisation.
- Investigate other organisations working to support the trainee (e.g. AASNs, ACCHRTOs, Affiliate)
- Consider what role you require (e.g. Health Worker or Health Practitioner)

#### Recruitment

- Sources of potential candidates – friends, family, community, upskilling or re-skilling previous/current staff, job boards, ACCHRTOs, Employment Services Providers
- Ensure you're across the obligations your organisation has when hiring, including award wages/salary, traineeship duration, available support and incentives.
- Consider interview/screening of potential trainees. This way you can make an assessment of whether the candidate will be the right fit for your organisation.

#### Agreement

- Ensure you have completed the contract to sign your organisation and trainee up to the NACCHO First Nations Health Worker Traineeship Program. The Jurisdictional Traineeship Coordinator is available to assist in this process.
- Work with your chosen ACCHRTO to start a training plan and schedule to ensure that the trainee is aware of their requirements for formal training and your obligations to provide work experience as an employer.

#### Support

- Ensure you have dedicated staff available to supervise, mentor and support the trainee throughout their traineeship. These staff must be appropriately qualified and experienced.
- Work with the traineeship coordinator and RTO to ensure that you're meeting all of your contractual agreements for the traineeship.
- A trainee community of practice will be established, so trainees participating in the program can get support from fellow trainees.

# Establishing the relationship with the ACCHRTO/External RTO

When you find a training provider you want to work with, take time to agree on your expectations and training outcomes. A Checklist for establishing the ACCHO relationship with a training provider is provided in Appendix I (p59) and can help you to work through the points below.

There are 11 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Registered Training Organisations (ACCHRTOs) with varying capacity to deliver the full scope of Certificate III and Certificate IV qualifications for AHWs and AHPs.

Consequently, at the initial stages of this program, sufficient national coverage is not yet available which means that some ACCHOs may need to engage mainstream RTOs. This framework provides information and tools for ACCHOs to ensure they can make informed decisions when selecting the best RTO to meet their needs.

## Outcomes and details of training

Talk about what the training will achieve and how it will be delivered. Questions to ask include:

- ▶ What skills and knowledge will participants gain?
- ▶ Can we have a detailed timeline for training delivery and reporting, including what units of competency are being delivered and when?
- ▶ What costs and charges will we have to pay and when?

## Roles and responsibilities

Discuss the commitment you'll each make to the training, including your respective roles and responsibilities.

Clarify the commitment of the training provider and trainers, such as:

- ▶ How often will trainers visit trainees in their workplace?
- ▶ What does the training provider/trainer expect of the trainees and how will they communicate this to them?
- ▶ How often will the provider communicate with your trainees? What method will they use?
- ▶ What support does the training provider/trainer give to trainees who are struggling?

Identify your roles and responsibilities as the employer/manager, such as:

- ▶ How much time off will you give trainees for training and study?
- ▶ What kinds of work experiences will you provide to support their training and how will you sequence this to align with the ACCHRTO delivery schedule?

- ▶ How will you supervise and mentor trainees in the workplace?
- ▶ Who will be the workplace supervisor, and do they need training to do this?
- ▶ How will you ensure trainees understand what's expected of them for the training?
- ▶ What support will you give to help trainees if needed?

## Communication and conflict resolution

You'll get the best training outcomes if you communicate regularly and effectively with the training provider. You could agree on some communication ground rules. For example:

- ▶ Establish how and how often you'll communicate with the RTO. You might like to set up regular meeting times or agree that the training provider will send regular email updates on trainee progress.
- ▶ Clarify what kinds of issues you'd like to be told about, and how.
- ▶ Set up clear communication channels and appoint a single point of contact for your organisation and the training provider.

## Formalising an agreement

- ▶ You will find it helpful to have a formal agreement with the training provider, such as a memorandum of understanding. This gives a document to come back to if things go wrong. It can also be helpful when there's a turnover of staff. Make sure you both sign the agreement and keep a copy on file.
- ▶ You'll find a Training Partnership Agreement template which you could use in Appendix H.

## Getting involved

Investing in your relationship with a training provider will give you opportunities to influence the training your current or future employees receive. The more you engage, the more influence you can have over training outcomes.

Good training providers will be keen to hear your feedback on the training and assessment they provide. Your views on the coverage, effectiveness and relevance of training will help them to continually improve the quality of their training and assessment. They can then pass that feedback on to the bodies responsible for developing accredited training products and ensure that they are meeting the needs of industry. You can also help to raise the profile of your industry sector and your organisation by taking up opportunities to speak to groups of students. Some employers have also found this a useful way to attract new staff.

# Work Placements

## What are work placements?

Work placements are more than work experience. They involve structured learning in the workplace, which links to students' coursework. They help link theory with practice.

Work placements are a mandatory part of many vocational qualifications such as the Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) qualification for Health Practitioners. In other qualifications, the assessment requirements for particular units of competency will provide explicit or implicit guidance about the expected amount of work placement a trainee should have. It may specify a number of shifts or hours (explicit) or require certain tasks to be completed in a workplace under specific conditions on a nominated number of occasions (implicit).

## How can work placements help?

Work placements give trainees valuable work experience in their chosen field and help them to gain their qualification and employment.

For employers, they offer the opportunity to see students operating in a workplace setting. Many employers take on trainees or work placement students as part of their recruitment strategy and offer them employment on graduation.

## What do work placements require of ACCHOs?

To take a trainee on a placement you must supervise them and contribute to their learning. You will liaise with the training provider about what the student needs to do during their time with you and be asked to verify that the student has developed the required skills.

Ideally you, the trainee and the training provider will sign an agreement that sets out the requirements of each party.

Providing trainees with a positive and meaningful work placement experience helps build a pool of skilled and motivated workers. Students can lose interest in a field because of poor placement experiences.

Work placements provided by RTOs and employers with a track record of strong outcomes and high-quality experiences for students share a number of common features:

- 1 Strong collaboration
- 2 Clear roles, responsibilities and expectations
- 3 Effective support for students

ACCHOs need to select appropriate workplace supervisors for trainee placements.

Workplace supervisors provide guidance and support to trainees during their work placement and sign off on the completion of tasks specified in the learning plan, which is verified by the RTO. Every trainee needs to be assigned a workplace supervisor. Some ACCHOs may also assign the trainee a buddy to provide practical daily support for the trainee.

Depending on the size and the type of service delivery, these roles may be undertaken by the same person, or by a combination of a formal supervisor and an informal supervisor or buddy. It is important that trainees have continuity in these arrangements across the duration of their placement. Some larger ACCHOs may establish additional roles to support work placements, such as administrative and liaison roles.

ACCHOs will need to select staff who hold relevant qualifications, are experienced and well-suited to the role, and are positive advocates for the ACCHO and the industry. The RTO should tell you about any requirements for workplace supervisors' qualifications or experience in your initial discussions. You should also discuss your internal support arrangements with the RTO to ensure there is clarity about these roles and responsibilities.

ACCHOs need to consider how to support their workplace supervisors and buddies to undertake their roles.

Consider how you will:

- ▶ ensure the roles, responsibilities and expectations for the roles are clearly documented
- ▶ ensure workplace supervisors and buddies understand the trainee's work placement plan, including the learning objective of the placement and have contact with the RTO trainer/assessor as needed
- ▶ consider the impact of undertaking these roles on other work responsibilities and outputs
- ▶ provide training to support these roles. This may take the form of training provided by the RTO on workplace supervisor roles, their processes to collect evidence, and expectations of supervisor feedback and judgements
- ▶ recognise and reward staff undertaking these roles.



The role of workplace supervisors is to:

- ▶ discuss the work placement learning plan with the trainee and the RTO assessor to ensure there are appropriate learning opportunities available to meet the objective of the placement
- ▶ ensure the trainee is provided with an appropriate orientation and/or induction to the work environment, including key policies and procedures such as Workplace Health and Safety
- ▶ ensure there is a clear understanding of the training the trainee has received and that work tasks do not exceed the trainee's scope of practice
- ▶ sign off on the trainee's attendance and completion of tasks specified in the workplace learning plan and monitor the trainee in the workplace and provide regular feedback to them
- ▶ schedule mutually acceptable time(s) for the RTO assessor to visit the workplace during the placement to observe and assess the trainee in the workplace performing daily tasks
- ▶ participate in scheduled meetings at agreed points or complete forms in a timely manner to provide formal feedback on student performance in the workplace. This feedback will be used by the RTO as part of the trainee's assessment evidence for the course.

Where a workplace buddy has been assigned, their role is to:

- ▶ identify learning opportunities relevant to their training programs
- ▶ provide instruction to trainees before and during tasks and informal feedback after
- ▶ share knowledge while demonstrating tasks
- ▶ act as a point of contact and role model for good practice
- ▶ provide advice and information to trainees and clarify trainee concerns or queries.

### Legislative requirements

There are a range of legal requirements, such as insurance, pre-employment checks and vaccinations, that will need to be discussed and documented prior to the work placements to ensure there is clarity about which party is responsible for these matters and to mitigate risk for all parties.

### Documenting agreements

Once you have come to an agreement about the roles and responsibilities of each party, these should be documented in a Work Placement Agreement. This should be signed by the RTO, service provider and the trainee before the work placement starts.

## ACCHO commitment – work placement

### Induction

The ACCHO takes on a level of responsibility for the trainee once they are on-site and needs to exercise its own due diligence in ensuring the trainee is properly prepared to interact safely with clients.

By providing the trainee with a full induction and an orientation to the site and the organisation, the ACCHO gets the opportunity to observe the trainee's confidence in the workplace and help them to settle into the workplace culture and rhythms.

### Supervision

During the placement, the ACCHO needs to ensure the trainee is subject to an appropriate level of supervision at all times.

Supervision can be direct or indirect depending on the activities the trainee is performing and the level of risk to clients, staff and/or the ACCHO.

- ▶ Direct supervision is when the supervisor is physically present to observe, guide and direct the trainee undertaking an activity.
- ▶ Indirect supervision is when the supervisor works in the same facility as the trainee but is not constantly physically observing the trainee undertaking the activities. The supervisor should be available for reasonable access which will depend on the activities the trainee is undertaking.

Realistically, a trainee should expect a combination of both forms of supervision during a placement. ACCHOs will need to ensure these arrangements are appropriate and encourage trainees to seek support as required.

Use of a workplace buddy can help ensure day-to-day issues can be resolved quickly and ensure trainees receive the support they need. Trainees may also need support to strike the right balance between showing initiative by enthusiastically taking on additional tasks and not exceeding their developing capabilities.

### Feedback

Workplace supervisors will be required to provide a level of managerial oversight for trainees, including providing formal and informal feedback as part of a trainee's learning plan. It is important to give trainees both positive feedback and constructive feedback on areas where they need to improve.

Ensure that the feedback is document as required as well as:

- ▶ aligned with the trainee's learning goals
- ▶ focused on observed behaviours
- ▶ positive and encouraging and based on facts and specific (not generalised).

Allow the trainee to reflect on the feedback and discuss strategies for addressing performance issues, which can then be revisited at a later time.



## Roles and responsibilities of RTOs for work placements

### RTOs are responsible for assessing trainees' readiness for work placement opportunities and ensuring they are prepared for placement.

While trainees are not expected to be fully capable, they are expected to have received sufficient training to safely undertake the placement and to work safely with vulnerable clients.

Properly preparing trainees for placement helps alleviate any anxiety they may feel about entering a workplace or doing placement in a different role in their usual workplace.

### RTOs must inform prospective students about work placement requirements before they enrol.

As part of the enrolment process, RTOs have a responsibility to inform prospective trainees of specific requirements they need to meet to successfully complete the program. For example, students may have to successfully undergo pre-employment checks (such as a police check) in order to undertake a work placement in disability or aged care service and may need to meet proof of vaccination requirements.

Students who enrol when they do not meet these requirements may be unable to complete the required work placement and unable to gain the qualification.

### RTOs need to match their students to suitable placements.

Employers will want to know about the trainees being recommended for placement and may wish to be involved in the trainee selection, including interviewing potential candidates. RTOs should discuss selection of trainees with the ACCHO when establishing work placement arrangements.

### RTOs need to understand workplace assessment requirements.

It is the RTO's role to understand and comply with the formal assessment requirements for units requiring work placements and to ensure that workplace supervisors are clear about their role in assessment. The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) provides guidance on assessment of competency using supplementary evidence provided by another party. In the case of work placements, the other party is the workplace supervisor. ASQA explains:

*"Assessment of evidence, and judgement about competency, must be undertaken by a person who meets the specific requirements for an assessor in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015."*

VET regulators in Victoria (VRQA) and Western Australia (TACWA) provide similar guidance.

In some cases, an assessor cannot directly gather all the required evidence that supports a competency judgement. In these cases, the evidence may be gathered or reported by other people. This type of evidence is categorised as supplementary evidence.

### RTOs are responsible for assessing a student's competency. This cannot be outsourced to work placement hosts.

ACCHOs inform the RTO's assessment by collecting supplementary evidence during the work placement. RTO assessors use this supplementary evidence in combination with other information to form a valid judgement about competency against the requirements of the unit. Competency is not a judgement for a workplace supervisor – this is a judgement for the RTO assessor.

The role of the workplace supervisor is to observe and record that the student can complete a set of tasks satisfactorily to industry standard. Workplace supervisors do not have the full range of information available to make valid assessment about student competence.

### RTOs need to develop a workplace learning plan for each trainee

The learning plan:

- ▶ documents the learning objective of the placement.
- ▶ specifies the units of competency from the qualification that need to be covered in the work placement.
- ▶ translates the VET competency statements into workplace tasks that are easily understood by workplace supervisor.
- ▶ specifies requirements for access to types of clients, the use of specialist equipment and access to provider and client documentation.
- ▶ is supported by a logbook and other supporting templates that a trainee must complete.
- ▶ sets out clearly the role of the supervisor to sign off trainee logbooks and the framework for evidence collection and supervisor judgements.
- ▶ establishes a mutually acceptable time(s) for the RTO assessor to visit the workplace, to observe and assess the trainee in the workplace performing daily tasks.

The RTO and ACCHO should discuss the workplace learning plan to ensure the trainee learning needs can be met during the placement.

The tips below can help RTOs with developing learning plans.

**RTOs need to ensure workplace supervisors understand their role and are supported to record evidence of trainee practice.**

The RTO should provide support, and where necessary, training, to workplace supervisors to ensure they understand the requirements of the trainee's learning plan, the RTO's assessment processes and the workplace supervisor's role in the assessment process.

The RTO should also make clear any specific requirements for workplace supervisors in terms of relevant qualifications and/or length of service.

As much as possible the RTO should seek to reduce the administrative burden for workplace supervisors by streamlining and simplifying processes for reporting feedback and supplementary evidence.

**RTOs need to ensure that trainees understand the supervisor's role in the placement.**

It is important that trainees understand that their competency in the workplace will be independently assessed. The belief that their workplace supervisor will determine their competency may cause anxiety for a range of reasons. Trainees should clearly understand the supervisor's role in the placement.

**RTO commitment – Work Placement**

The start of the work placement does not signal or imply that the RTO is handing over responsibility for the trainee to the ACCHO. RTOs should be careful not to convey this message unintentionally. The best way to avoid this is by active participation throughout the placement. For example:

- ▶ The RTO trainer/assessor attend the trainee's orientation and induction program
- ▶ The RTO schedules weekly check-ins with the trainee and their workplace supervisor (preferably on-site if possible) to make sure the placement is going as intended and to resolve any issues as they arise.

As the co-ordinator of the placement, the RTO is best placed to mediate any issues that may arise between the trainee and the ACCHO. They can intervene if there are issues with the trainee's performance, problems with the service provider, or if a student's learning needs are not being met.

The RTO also has a responsibility to identify and raise any issues in relation to a trainee's fitness for duty immediately with the ACCHO, for the protection of the ACCHO's clients, staff and the trainee.

It is also essential that RTO trainers/assessors can be easily and readily contacted throughout the placement by both trainees and workplace supervisors.

