



Advocacy Policy Kit

Commonwealth Prac Payments

Updated 17 June 2026

Key Message

No student should be forced to drop out because they can't afford to complete mandatory placements. While we welcome support for teachers, nurses and social workers, expanding the Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) scheme to include medicine, allied health and veterinary students is an essential step to support students and strengthen regional Australia's critical health and veterinary workforce.

Regional students face significantly higher placement costs, including travel and accommodation.

Background

Practical placements are an essential requirement for professional accreditation and a key part of many university degrees, particularly in teaching, health, medicine and veterinary science. These placements are often full-time, unpaid, and can run for extended periods. At Charles Sturt University many students must travel long distances, relocate temporarily, and cover accommodation and living costs while on placement, often without income.

The Commonwealth Prac Payment scheme was introduced in 2025 to help reduce the financial burden of placements for some students. It provides approx. \$338.60 per week (2026). We are pleased to have CPP support offered to our nursing, midwifery, teaching and social work students and more than 1,700 of our students in these fields have already benefited from these payments.

But more assistance is urgently required, and we'll continue to work with the Government to make the CPP more widely available, more cost effective and better aligned to student needs.

Why it matters

The cost of placements is creating "placement poverty", where students struggle to afford to complete mandatory training. This is especially acute for regional students, who often face higher travel and accommodation costs, fewer local placement options and limited access to part-time work during placements.

As a result:

- Students are delaying or withdrawing from their studies
- Workforce shortages in critical sectors, like healthcare and veterinary services, are worsening
- Regional communities are missing out on locally trained professionals



What we need

Charles Sturt University strongly supports expanding the Commonwealth Prac Payment scheme to ensure fair and equitable access for all students undertaking mandatory placements.

We call on the Government to:

- Expand the CPP scheme to include medicine, allied health and veterinary science students
- Provide additional targeted support for regional students who have to travel away for placements

Quick Facts

- 45% of CSU undergraduate students report financial pressures could force them to withdraw before completing their degree (2025 figure)
- Placements are mandatory and unpaid in many health and veterinary courses
- Regional students face significantly higher placement costs, including travel and accommodation
- CSU is a leading provider of graduates in nursing, allied health and veterinary science, supplying critical regional workforces
- Supporting students through placements directly improves completion rates and workforce supply

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