**Title:**

‘Health Services Initiatives Program’ and process for request and approval of Consortium funds assigned under this Program.

**Purpose:**

This briefing note was prepared in response to the discussions occurring at the May 2021 Consortium Management Group regarding use of unallocated funds for the 2021/2022 Financial Year.

It describes the context behind the agreement to assign a portion of unallocated Consortium funds for 2021/2022 and process to support the allocation and disbursement of funds under the ‘Health Services Initiatives Program’ for 2021/2022 Financial Year.

**Context:**

* The Department of Health advised all Consortia in March 2021 by email that funding grants to Consortia will continue until June 2022:

*“We are conscious that many of you have staff contracted to 30 June 2020 to coincide with FY budget allocations. Given the proximity to the end of the financial year we intend to maintain the grant line for 2021-22.*

*However, a reduced form of the review will progress to inform:*

* *Role and scope of palliative care consortia*
* *Governance, accountability and reporting requirements of palliative care consortia*
* *Alignment of palliative care consortia within department organisational structure*
* *Alignment of effort to reduce duplication while balancing the need for local customisation.*

*We are mindful of the departments considerable reform and system improvement agenda post the Machinery of Government changes. The detail of this is still in development and we suspect will impact how we potentially position elements of the palliative care program such as Palliative Care Consortia, clinical engagement and system improvement. Some of this detail may require us to make changes to the role and scope of Palliative Care Consortia before June 2022.”*

* Given the information contained in the email from the Department, the Agenda of the May 2021 Consortium Management Meeting included discussion to explore and agree the strategic direction for the Consortium for the coming 12 months to June 2022 and how estimated unallocated funds would be directed and/or allocated. (Attached - document considered by the Consortium at that meeting) 
* Members were advised that the projected estimated unallocated funds for the Consortium at the end of the 2021/2022 financial year was $263K.
* Members were asked to provide the Consortium Manager with direction on how unallocated funds should be allocated/utilised.
* Those present discussed and agreed that a portion of unallocated 2021/2022 Financial Year funds would be allocated to ‘Health Service Initiatives’. These were described as local member based projects/ initiatives (individual or partnering with other member agencies/agencies) to support outcomes consistent with the guiding principles, goals and priorities of the Victorian’s Governments end of life and palliative care framework - <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/end-of-life-care/palliative-care/end-of-life-and-palliative-care-framework>
* The funds to be allocated to ‘Health Service Initiatives’ was agreed by members to be $150K for the 2021/2022 Financial Year.
* It was agreed by the members that:
  + there be a cap on the amount of funds for each submission of $20K.
  + projects/initiatives could be undertaken by an individual member agency or in collaboration with other member agencies.
  + as far possible, every effort will be made to support an equitable sharing of funds recognising this will in part be dependent on the spread of submissions from across Consortium members.
  + member agencies were encouraged to forward submissions as soon as possible to the Consortium Manager so they can be considered at the Consortium Management Group meeting scheduled for 3 June 2021 (Note: agenda will be finalised and distributed by 27 May 2021).

**Key actions:**

* Consortium Manager to prepare this briefing note for member agencies so they are aware of the process and have the opportunity to provide feedback to improve and/strengthen the process.
* Consortium Manager to circulate the ‘Request for Consortium Funds’ proforma to all member agencies (Sent 6 May 2021). 
* Member agencies are encouraged to forward completed ‘Request for Consortium Funds’ submissions by 27 May 2021 so they can be attached to the June 2021 Agenda. Where agreed by the member agency/agencies submitting the request for funds, that the ‘request’ be forwarded prior to that time, the Consortium Manager will action same.
* Each member agency/agencies granted funds from the Health Services Initiatives Program will sign a Letter of Agreement detailing but not limited to the scope of the initiative, outcomes to be achieved and responsibilities of parties to the agreement.
* Member agencies granted funds from the ‘Health Service Initiatives Program’ will prepare and present interim and ‘end of project’ Reports to the Consortium Management Group. These requirements will be detailed in the Letter of Agreement with each agency.
* The Consortium Manager will provide a monthly update on the total amount of funds allocated and remaining in the ‘Health Services Initiatives Program’ to the Consortium Management Group.
* The Consortium Management Group will discuss and decide how any funds unallocated and remaining in the Health Services Initiatives Program following the ‘first round’ of submissions will be assigned going forward.