



Australian College of Nursing

**Mental Health Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship Program
Evaluation**

Information bulletin

CONTEXT

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) has engaged Healthcare Management Advisors (HMA) to evaluate the Mental Health Nursing (MHN) and Allied Health (AH) Scholarship Program (the Program).

In October 2021, the then Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Greg Hunt, announced that the Australian Government had established a \$5.15 million MHN and AH Scholarship Program. The Program aimed to grow and upskill the mental health and suicide prevention workforce to ensure that all Australians have access to high-quality, affordable, person-centred care. The Program was established in recognition of the sector being stretched, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a total of 278 scholarships, the Program aimed to strengthen the mental health workforce by attracting new mental health nurses and AH practitioners (including psychologists) to the field, while also providing upskilling opportunities for existing mental health practitioners.

The Program had two distinct categories of scholarships:

- 126 postgraduate nursing scholarships for courses related to mental health and suicide prevention, and
- 152 scholarships for AH practitioners (including psychologists) working in mental health and suicide prevention for related tertiary, vocational and continuing professional development courses and clinical placements.

The ACN administered the Program on behalf of the Department of Health and Aged Care. The ACN is an experienced manager and administrator of scholarships and trust funds.

Program activities commenced in February 2021, with the first scholarships awarded in Semester 1, 2022.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The evaluation will review the appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Program to:

- understand if each category of scholarships effectively achieved its purpose
- understand gaps and potential opportunities for improvement in future scholarship programs
- inform the design and administration of future scholarship programs.

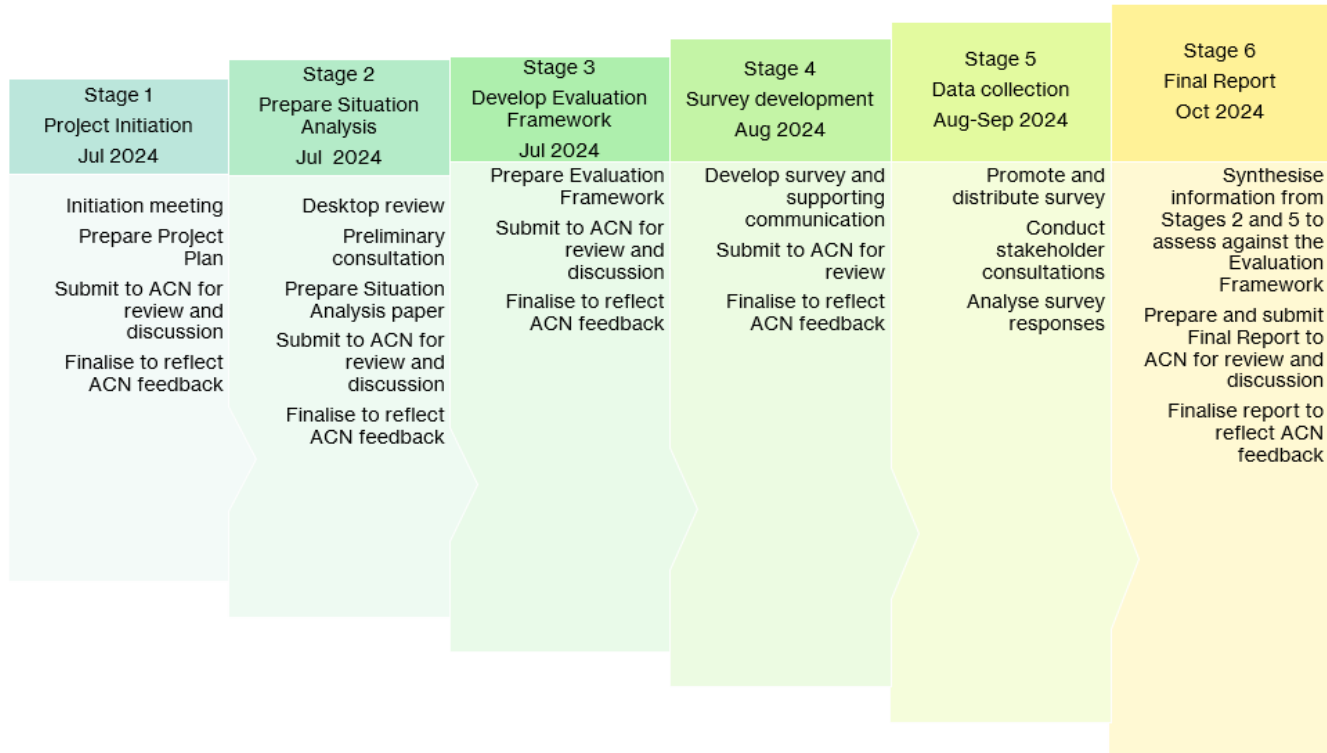
PROJECT METHOD AND TIMING

The project will be undertaken from July to October 2024. HMA will take a staged approach to executing the project including a Situation Analysis and survey of scholarship recipients.

The surveys will be distributed to scholarship recipients in August and be open for four weeks. Consultations will also be undertaken with internal ACN stakeholders to understand the scholarship recipient selection process.

Figure 1 presents a high-level overview of the project approach by stage and activities.

Figure 1: Project approach



CONTACT INFORMATION

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