

# FAQ: HSPBA \$400k Professional Development Fund

**As a member of HSA covered by the HSPBA/HEABC Provincial Agreement, when will I be able to apply for funding to support my education/training?**

You may apply now. Applications will be accepted until March 31, 2024 or when the funds are fully exhausted, whichever comes first.

**Will the fund cover expenses related to education/training already underway?**

The fund is designed to cover education/training that commences during the time “window” **between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024.**

**How are applications prioritized? Is it first-come, first-served?**

Applications will be processed in the order they are received, and any application that is approved will have satisfied the eligibility criteria and funding guidelines. A successful applicant must submit satisfactory expense receipts, in accordance with instructions contained in the application approval letter, in order to receive reimbursement of approved expenses.

**The application form states that the funding is to be allocated to training and upgrading skills for HSPBA members working in professions experiencing shortages or rural and remote locations, as well as to ongoing required professional development for all HSPBA members. Should I submit an application even if I can't say for certain that one of these criteria would be satisfied with my application?**

Yes. Do your best to answer how you think your application will serve the particular criterion.

**What types of education/training are considered as professional development?**

Professional development includes a range of events/instruction, such as workshops, seminars, conferences, courses, or programs. It might require in-person attendance, distance learning, or clinical placement. It might be of relatively short duration or a lengthier pursuit of credentials such as a diploma, advanced certification, or degree.

**What type of actual costs are considered for reimbursement?**

Tuition fees, registration fees, the cost of required books/materials, and other reasonable education/training-related expenses are considered, to a **maximum cap of \$1,000.**

"Other reasonable education/training-related expenses" includes reasonable costs of travel and accommodation if the applicant must travel or temporarily relocate to attend education/training or related clinical placement a that is not offered locally or virtually to a maximum of \$250 of the \$1,000 cap.

Costs that are NOT eligible for reimbursement include:

- Criminal records check
- Professional association or regulatory college fees
- Immunizations or immunization reports
- Technology costs such as software, hardware and any mandatory technology fees
- Materials such as yoga mats or needles
- Any optional school/student fees
- Meals or per diem
- Gas
- Travel outside of Canada or USA

**Can members apply to have wages paid from the fund?**

**No.** In order to support professional development for as many members as possible, the fund will not pay for wage replacement associated with an application.

**Can I receive funding for temporary residence?**

**Yes.** If a member is required to temporarily relocate during the training period (eg clinical placement, course/training longer duration not offered locally) they may submit accommodation expenses for consideration. However, there must be a minimum distance of 25km between the applicant's residence and the training location to be eligible and will only receive up to the allowable cap of \$250.

**Can my application be transferred to another fund?**

**No.** Each fund has a separate and distinct application, submission and consideration/approval process according to the criteria specified to that funding window. Each new funding time window requires a record that the member submitted an application specific to that fund. As such applications to one fund will not be "held" by HSA and submitted on the member's behalf to another fund. Each member must apply to each fund separately and meet the eligibility and timeline guidelines specific to that fund.

**Is this fund a substitute for any collective agreement provisions?**

**No.** The professional development fund is over and above the collective agreement.

All provisions of the HSPBA/HEABC Provincial Agreement continue to apply, including Education Leave as per Article 17.01 and Unpaid leave as per Article 22.