

What is an Area of Need?

An Area of Need (AoN) is a classification determined by the Western Australian Department of Health to support the distribution of the medical workforce where there's a shortage of general and specialist medical services.

The AoN determination assists public and private health service providers to recruit suitably qualified international medical graduates (IMGs) to vacant positions if it is not possible to fill the position with an Australian-qualified medical practitioner.

Working in an Area of Need

IMGs may be granted limited registration requiring them to work in an AoN with supervision, whilst they undertake training towards an Australian generalist or specialist qualification.

The Western Australian Department of Health maintains the [database of AoN locations](#).

Bonded doctors and IMGs on provisional registration are not eligible to apply for a limited registration for an AoN. Instead, they should refer to the [Distribution Priority Area \(DPA\) requirements](#) controlled by the Australian Government Department of Health.

Applying for an Area of Need classification

Health service providers and stakeholders, including shires or city councils, can apply to the Western Australian Department of Health for an AoN classification. The AoN may be determined by service, suburb, shire area, health service region or site.

Applications must include supporting documentation, such as evidence of need, a position description and labour market testing to demonstrate that the position could not be filled by an Australian-qualified medical practitioner.

Area of Need application or renewal process

The AoN application or renewal process can take up to six or eight weeks. Determination of the application should be confirmed before recruiting an IMG.

An AoN may be granted for between one and three years. It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit an application to renew an AoN prior to it expiring.

Further information

To find out more about the Area of Need (AoN) program, visit the links below:

- [What is an Area of Need](#)
- [Database of AoN locations](#)
- [Area of Need application guidelines](#)
- [Area of Need application form](#)

Please note: The Area of Need program is currently under review. For more information, contact the Medical Workforce Branch of the Western Australian Department of Health by calling 08 9222 2476 or emailing areaofneed@health.wa.gov.au

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.

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