



# Emergency Medical Dispatch Support Officer (EMDSO)

## Frequently asked questions

The following provides you with all the information you require to apply for the position of EMDSO. The frequently asked questions are grouped into three specific sections including:

- Information about the role
- Eligibility and the selection process
- Offers and Acceptance

Please ensure you have read these questions prior to emailing us with a query.

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## About the Role

### 1. **What does an Emergency Dispatch Support Officer (EMDSO) do?**

An EMDSO responds to triple zero (000) calls across South Australia and assists vulnerable South Australians during times of high stress and anxiety. The EMDSO will assess a patient's situation (over the phone) based on the information provided using a computer based triage system, and then give step-by-step instructions so that management of the patient can begin immediately.

To achieve best outcomes for a patient, an EMDSO must be able to use assertive clear communication and problem-solving skills to help guide and determine the most appropriate pathway for the patient. The EMDSO will also receive calls via our non-emergency line from hospitals and care giving facilities to organise non-urgent transport for patients. SA Ambulance works closely with other emergency service agencies and the EMDSO will organise ambulance response to attend cases alongside these agencies.

### 2. **Am I a good fit for this role?**

A career as an EMDSO can be very rewarding however, it is important to note that this role requires high attention to detail in a highly stressful and unpredictable environment. An EMDSO must possess the ability to remain in control with empathy when dealing with distressed patients. They must have a high level of emotional intelligence and awareness in order to overcome challenging phone calls and move on to the next call without knowing the outcome of previous calls.

### 3. **Things to ask yourself before applying for this position:**

- Can I use a complex computer system with multiple screens for the duration of a 12 hour shift, (with scheduled breaks?)
- Can I type quickly and accurately whilst actively listening to information from the caller?



- Can I work in a highly supervised, structured and scripted environment?
- Could I take emergency calls one after the other, understanding I will not be able to find out the outcome of the patient?
- How would having to deal with serious trauma during every shift impact my emotional wellbeing?
- Can I multitask and remain calm in a high pressure environment?
- Can I work within a rotating roster of 12 hour shifts, (day or night), which can involve weekends and public holidays, understanding I may have to miss family/ social events?

It is important to discuss these conditions with your friends, family or someone who does or has worked shift work. We would encourage you to attend one of our information sessions and ensure you have read the role description carefully.

#### **4. *If I have worked in a call centre, would I be suitable?***

Some of your skills may be transferable (dealing with phone calls, solving problems, customer service over the phone, etc.) however, this is an emergency environment and can be very stressful. It is very different to a general call centre. The role requires you to use the skills learned in your training to immediately assist vulnerable people over the phone who are experiencing high levels of anxiety and stress, so you must be able to work in this type of environment.

#### **5. *If I am successful in gaining a position, what hours will I be expected to work?***

You will be required to work in accordance with the approved rotating shift roster. You are required to work **12 hour shifts; 2 day shifts and 2 night shifts – 4 days on and 4 days off**. Hours of work are based on a 76 hour fortnight and are usually 7am to 7pm and 7pm to 7am. **It is important that you have considered how this roster may fit in with your personal commitments.** If you have not worked shift work in the past, we would encourage you to speak to family and friends that do, to gain some insight into how you can better manage these arrangements.

#### **6. *Can I work part time?***

Part-time employment is available and can be negotiated should you receive an offer for employment, however you are required to work full time for the training period. This ensures that you can complete all required components of that training. After that time, you can revert to your agreed hours. Please note that from time to time, you may be asked to increase your hours, to complete any further parts of your training. Sufficient notice will be provided should you be required to do so.

#### **7. *What breaks do I get during my shift?***

You are entitled to two, 30 minute breaks during a 12 hour shift. In addition to these breaks, workload permitting, you will also have 15 minutes of 'off screen' time every two hours.

#### **8. *Where are the positions located?***

Currently, all EMDSO positions are based at 216 Greenhill Road, Eastwood.

#### **9. *Do I work as part of a team, or am I working alone?***

As an EMDSO (call taker), you do work autonomously, however you are part of a team. You do get the opportunity to speak to members of your team throughout the day, however the role does require you to be at your workstation to accept and deal with calls as they arise; as they are all considered an emergency prior to assessment.

## 10. **Can I make decisions about how patients are managed over the phone?**

You will be required to follow structured and agreed protocols when managing a call. This is part of your training and you are required to follow such processes. It is unlikely that you will ever need to deviate from these protocols as they are part of an approved system.

## 11. **Do I need a qualification before I start?**

It is not a requirement to have a qualification prior to commencement or when applying, however you will need to complete HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid (or equivalent). This is discussed in more detail in question 21 below.

## 12. **What is involved in the initial training?**

The first 6 weeks of your employment will involve you attending the Emergency Operations Centre at 216 Greenhill Road, Eastwood. **You will be required to work full time Monday to Friday during the training period**, and then undertake a 2 week mentoring program which will involve working 8 hour shifts between the hours of 7am and 10pm to ease you into shift work. Following successful completion of this component you will then transfer on to a team with a 24/7 roster.

## 13. **What is the structure of the course?**

You are required to complete a total of 446 hours, comprising of:

- Self-directed learning activities including reading relevant study guides and associated SAAS and SA Health policies and procedures and completing written assessments
- Face-to-face training and assessment
- On the job training and completion of assessments

## 14. **How long will the training take to complete?**

To complete all components of the course, including the assessments, this generally takes up to 25 weeks. This is subject to change. Please see a training schedule example below:

Assessment Period	Activity
Weeks 1 – 6	Classroom Work / Training (full-time)
Weeks 7 & 8	One on one mentoring - taking real time calls and working 8hr shifts between the hours 7am-10pm
Weeks 9 – 22	On the job with workbooks & journals with support from Supervisor
Week 22	Issued with SAAS Authority to Practice
Weeks 22-25	Complete required assessments

## 15. **Who pays for this training?**

SAAS will pay all course costs and you will complete your studies during paid work time.

## 16. **What qualification will I receive?**

The qualification you will receive is HLT31020 - Certificate III Ambulance Communications (Call Taking). This is a nationally accredited course.

## **17. I have done a similar course; can I apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?**

Applications for RPL will be reviewed by our Clinical Education Team. Although RPL may be recognised successful candidates will be required to undertake the training to gain an understanding of the operations specific to SAAS. It also serves as a valuable opportunity to network and develop relationships with new team members.

## **18. What happens if I need to take leave during this training period?**

You will be required to attend the full training program of up to 8 weeks to enable you to have the skills required to successfully integrate into the workplace. The training program is fast paced, and absences create significant gaps in your learning. If you have leave booked and holidays paid for, please advise the Selection Panel and it may be better for you to consider this role at another time. **Please remember** we cannot change our programs or structures, if you cannot attend then you will not complete the required training.

## **19. What happens if I cannot complete the training within the required time frames?**

There is plenty of time allocated during the training schedule to enable you to complete required elements of the study. If you do require extra time for legitimate reasons this can be negotiated with the Program Development Manager. However, the program is quite rigid to meet organisational training requirements and the availability of staff conducting the training.

## **20. What support is there for me during the training?**

We endorse a supportive adult learning environment during training, but it does rely on the student to take ownership of their learning. We have a weekly one on one meeting with the student during the initial 8 weeks to ensure we are aware of any issues and to discuss progress. The trainer will also discuss issues with the Program Development Manager to ensure extra support is provided if necessary. If extra support is required, we can tailor a learning program for the individual.

## **21. What certificates do I need?**

It is an essential requirement that you hold: HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid (or equivalent) or be willing to obtain this when required during the recruitment process. This certificate must have a minimum of 12 months before expiry leading up to your possible appointment. It is not essential to hold this prior to applying for this role; however, you must have this prior to a contract being issued. If required, the SAAS Recruitment Team will advise when you must action your enrolment.

## **22. I have a different first aid certificate, can this be accepted?**

No, you must hold; HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid (or equivalent). If you hold another nationally accredited training unit you may wish to approach your original training provider to see what options you may have for RPL or Credit Transfer – you must do this yourself.

## **23. Do I need any specific immunisations for this role?**

As a category C role no specific vaccinations are required. The [Health Care Worker immunisation screening requirements](#) outlines the Vaccination requirements and compliance for healthcare workers.

## **24. What will be my conditions of employment?**

You will be employed and paid in accordance with the current SAAS Enterprise Agreement and SAAS Award.

## **25. What sort of vacancies might be available?**

On most occasions we advertise for temporary, permanent and casual positions. If you are successful through the recruitment process you will be placed on a pool of recommended candidates and may be offered a position during the duration of the pool (12 months).

## **26. How long will my application be active for?**

Your application will remain active for a period of 12 months. You may be offered a position during this 12 month period; this position could be temporary, casual or permanent depending on vacancies available. Generally, SAAS will aim to fill a number of vacancies simultaneously as intensive training is required prior to you being operational. This training is best undertaken in a group environment.

## **27. Will there be an Information Session?**

Please check out our [EMDSO careers page](#) for more information regarding scheduled information sessions and how to register. Information sessions are designed to give you a better understanding of the role, as well as take you through the recruitment and selection process.

# **Eligibility and Selection Process**

## **28. How and when will the role be advertised?**

The position of Emergency Medical Dispatch Support Officer will appear on the [EMDSO careers page](#) as well as the South Australian Government's Careers Board - [IWORKFORSA](#). SAAS will fill vacancies as and when required however the recruitment process is ongoing and applicants are able to submit their application at any time throughout the year.

## **29. How do I apply?**

SA Ambulance Service uses PageUp as its Recruitment system. You will need to establish a username and password to access the system and apply for the role. You will need to complete a range of mandatory questions as well as upload any relevant documents. All instructions on how to apply will be included in the vacancy information (Job Pack).

**Please note:** all correspondence will be sent via your PageUp account, so please ensure your email address is correct and you check your emails regularly. Failure to check your emails or provide a correct email address may have an impact on your application.

## **30. I am of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, should I identify?**

The SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2017-2022 (the Framework) (under review) aims to increase the Aboriginal workforce across the public health sector in clinical, non-clinical and leadership roles. SAAS is therefore committed to identifying and promoting employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.

Applicants who are registered with the South Australian Office of the Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Register and who meet the selection requirements for this position will be given priority consideration for this role. Please go to the

Aboriginal Employment of the SA Government Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment and register. When applying, please ensure you tick that you are registered on the application form. Further information can be found at the Office for the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment [Aboriginal Employment Register](#).

### **31. How often can I apply?**

You can only be considered for the role once every 12 months as the results of any assessments you undertake are considered valid for this period. This includes:

- The CritiCall Pre-Employment Test
- Psychometric Assessment
- Pre-employment Medical Assessment

### **32. I am an overseas applicant, can I apply?**

Any candidate who meets the eligibility criteria is entitled to apply through this process – you must have full working rights to be eligible to be offered employment in this role.

### **33. What are the pre-employment and selection criteria for the role?**

You will need to undergo the following pre-employment checks and screening as part of the selection criteria for the role of EMDSO:

#### **A) Working with Children Check (WWCC) – Formerly DHS**

Formerly referred to as a DHS Child Related Screening Check, from 1 July 2019 this check is now referred to as a Working with Children Check (WWCC). As this role is a prescribed position, you will be required to hold a current WWCC which clears you to work with children or a DHS Child Related Screening Check issued within the last 5 years.

Should you need to apply for a WWCC, you will be issued with a Unique Identifier. This is to be provided to [Health.SAASRecruitment@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.SAASRecruitment@sa.gov.au) to allow the Recruitment Team to view the progress of your application and be advised when your clearance is available. Further information is available at the [Department of Human Services](#) website.

#### **B) National Police Clearance (NPC) – Employment/ Probity/ Licensing and Working Unsupervised with Vulnerable Groups**

An NPC provides a point in time summary of your Australian criminal history and includes national convictions and certain types of spent convictions. There are various sites that enable you to source your NPC Working with Unsupervised and Vulnerable Groups online. Please [click here](#) to select the accredited body you wish to use to submit your online NPC application. We encourage you to refer to the [SA Police](#) website for further information. The NPC must be valid from no less than 12 months from commencing an induction.

A DHS WWCC or an NPC may not be applicable to prospective workers who have not resided in Australia. Therefore prior to employment for any SA Health position, candidates from overseas must provide a satisfactory criminal history record from each of the overseas countries in which they have resided for more than one year within the last 10 years since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Overseas criminal history checks conducted by external provider 'Fit2Work' on behalf of AHPRA are accepted by SA Health for overseas applicants. Where only these checks are available, employment must be with the understanding that a satisfactory DHS WWCC or NPC will be provided to SA Health within a reasonable period of no more than 12 months of residence in Australia.

A prospective employee or an employee returning to SA Health who has worked or resided overseas for more than one year is required to provide a satisfactory criminal history check from each of the overseas country/countries where they have worked/ resided within the last 10 years prior to their employment or returning to duties in SA Health.

**C) CritiCall Pre-Employment Test and Psychometric Assessments**

You will be required to complete the CritiCall Pre-Employment Test and Psychometric Assessment as part of the pre-employment activities.

**D) Medical Assessment**

All Medical Testing is completed at Jobfit Health Group. Prior to you being offered a position you will need to successfully pass the medical assessment. This will be at your own cost.

### **34. How long will the online application process take?**

If you have all your documents ready and have completed your cover letter and Resume/CV, it should not take you too long to complete the online application. Once the job is advertised, please ensure you check all of the requirements contained in the vacancy information (Job Pack) before commencing your online application. Please upload NPC, WWCC and First Aid remember to have all your documents ready to upload. If you have applied for a role in SAAS or SA Health before you may already have a username and password. This will mean that some of your information will be saved on your profile on PageUp already.

### **35. Do I need to supply referees as part of my application?**

Yes, you will need to supply **three referees**, including their email and contact telephone numbers. All three referees may be contacted to discuss your suitability for the role. It is essential that you contact your referees prior to nominating them in your application to ensure they agree to be contacted. All referees must be **professional** referees and should not be someone that has a personal relationship with you. They must be able to comment on your performance and participation relating to tasks or activities and the application of your learnt skills and knowledge. Referees can be someone that you have a professional relationship with in paid or unpaid employment. We may contact referees at any time during the selection process.

This process is highly competitive and moves at a fast pace so if you do not provide the correct details for your referees and we are unable to get in contact with them it may impact on the progression of your application.

### **36. What documentation will I need to include in my application?**

The vacancy information (Job Pack) will provide you with a summary of the information and documents you will need to upload as part of your application. We would recommend that you start to organise your documentation as soon as practical. You will be required to include the following documentation:

- A cover letter of no more than two pages introducing yourself and outlining your skills and experience as outlined in the Personal Abilities/ Aptitudes/ Skills, Experience & Knowledge component of the role description
- Your updated resume
- Working with Children Check/ DHS Child Related Screening Check if available
- National Police Check to work *unsupervised* with *vulnerable* people valid from within 12 months of commencement in a role (if available)
- Evidence of HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid (or equivalent) if available

Should you be selected to participate in an interview, you will be required to provide the original of these documents to the panel for sighting.



### 37. **What do I do if I change my address or email details during the process?**

If you change your address or email details at any time following the submission of your application, you are required to visit the [Existing applicant login](#) to log in and select [Edit Profile](#), click on [Personal Details](#), update your details and then click [Save](#). This is a live system so you can go in and update personal details at any time.

### 38. **What do I do if I receive my Working with Children Check (WWCC) and National Police Clearance (NPC) Certificate after I have submitted my application?**

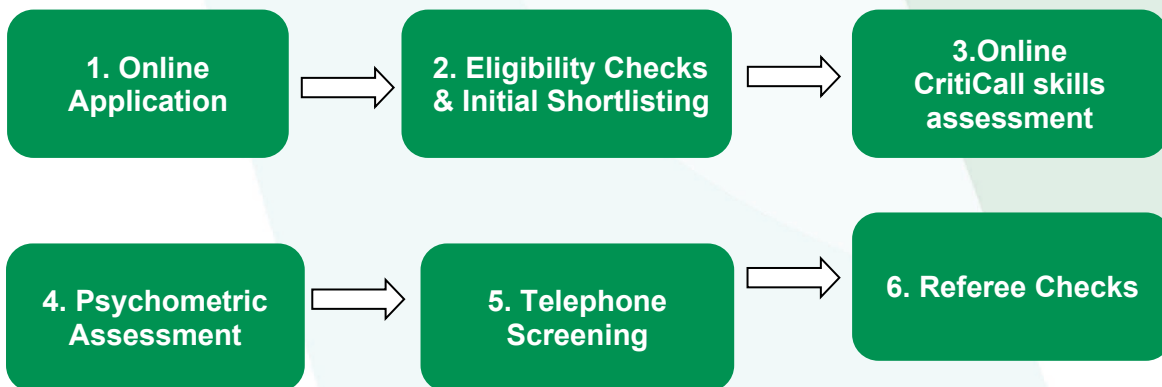
If you receive your WWCC and/ or NPC certificate after submission of your application, you are required to log in to your profile as per Q11 and Q12. You will need to click on [Update your application](#) and then click on [Criminal History Check and/or other Relevant History Assessment\(s\)](#). Once you select 'Yes' to having a WWCC or NPC you will be able to upload the files.

### 39. **What are the steps in the selection process?**

The below steps provide you with an indicative overview of the selection process. The sequence of the below activities and the time taken can vary from process to process. This may be dependent on the number of positions available, and the number of candidates who applied.

The process will be split in to two stages; the first stage of the process will include Steps 1 to 6. Steps 7 to 9 will only occur once vacancies have been determined and there is a requirement to facilitate an induction.

#### STAGE 1



#### STAGE 2



### 40. **How long might I have to wait between each stage of the process?**

There may be lengthy periods of time without correspondence from the SAAS Recruitment Team regarding your application. This means the selection process is still underway and you will be contacted as soon as a decision or any action is taken on your application.

It is important that you check your emails regularly as the process can move relatively quickly, and you may be required to book into various activities. Ensuring you check your emails regularly will provide you with a greater opportunity to schedule the activities at a time that best suits you. Activities will be based in Adelaide.

#### **41. *I haven't heard anything for a while does that mean I am unsuccessful?***

This does not mean you are unsuccessful, rather that your application remains active due to the selection process still being underway. It is important that you monitor your emails throughout the process as we will advise you via email once a decision or any action is taken on your application.

## **Offers and Acceptance**

#### **42. *When am I likely to receive an offer if I am successful?***

SAAS will establish a pool of candidates who have successfully completed the selection process and been recommended to be placed on a pool. Advice of the outcome of your application and offered a placement in the pool will occur once all selection activities are complete for all candidates. Progress reports or verbal advice of your selection will not be provided until the full process concludes. All candidates will be advised at the same time of the final outcome.

#### **43. *How will I receive my offer?***

All correspondence will be via email so please check your email on a regular basis. In the online application process, you can elect to receive SMS notification when an email is sent to you – you are encouraged to use this option to ensure you don't miss any emails.

#### **44. *What do I do if I want to decline my offer?***

SAAS needs to hear from you if you choose to decline an offer made. This ensures that your placement can be offered to another applicant. Clear instructions on how to accept or decline an offer will be included in any communication to successful candidates.

#### **45. *If I receive an offer but don't respond by the due date indicated in the email, will you accept a late response?***

No. If your response to offer is not received by the date indicated in the offer, SAAS will withdraw the offer of employment and the position will be offered to another applicant.

#### **46. *I have accepted an offer for employment however I will now be unavailable to commence, what do I do?***

Please notify the SAAS Recruitment Team at [Health.SAASRecruitment@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.SAASRecruitment@sa.gov.au) as soon as possible indicating you are withdrawing your application – this way another candidate can be offered a placement on the program.

#### **47. *What happens if I am unsuccessful in obtaining a position?***

If you are assessed as unsuccessful you will be advised via email that you will not be offered a position. If you are still interested in an EMDSO position and you meet the eligibility criteria you may wish to reapply, however please refer to Q.31 which outlines validity periods for the assessments and re-applying.

#### **48. *How long do I have to wait before I can re-apply for the role?***

Candidates who sat the psychological assessment are eligible to re-apply for the role 12 months from the date of the assessment. Candidates who didn't sit the psychological assessment are eligible to re-apply once the job is re-advertised at the end of each calendar year. We encourage you to establish a [Job Alert](#) to ensure you don't miss out on the position being re-advertised.

**49. Will I be able to obtain feedback on the outcome of the selection process?**

You will be advised on why your application was not successful, however due to the volume of applications received we will be unable to provide you with specific verbal feedback. Candidates who progress to interview and are unsuccessful will be provided with more detailed feedback should you request it.

**50. Still have more questions?**

When positions are available and advertised, a contact person will be identified. Should you need to clarify any information, please feel free to call or email the contact person or email the SAAS Recruitment Team at [Health.SAASRecruitment@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.SAASRecruitment@sa.gov.au).