

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



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MORE SUPPORT FOR OUR HARDWORKING HEALTHCARE WORKERS

The Victorian Government will recruit up to a thousand healthcare workers currently living overseas, including Australian healthcare workers wanting to return home, as part of a package designed to help ease the pressure on hard-working staff in the state's hospital system.

The Government will also establish a new allowance to better support nurses, paramedics and doctors working hard on the frontline to protect Victorians.

The Government is delivering a record \$255 million in support for our frontline healthcare staff as the state works to minimise COVID-19 hospital admissions and roll out *Victoria's Roadmap to Delivering the National Plan*.

The next few months will be incredibly hard on our healthcare workers in hospitals and ambulance services as they continue to care for record numbers of patients. These people are our health system's backbone, and we need to support them so that they can continue to deliver the very best care, when Victorians need it most.

The new 'Hospital Surge Support Allowance' will be paid to patient-facing healthcare workers, providing direct care in public hospital services and Ambulance Victoria, over the next four months.

Commencing this week, the allowance will help ensure we have highly skilled staff in the public hospital roles critical to caring for COVID patients, staffing our Emergency Departments, and delivering world class patient care within our health services. Workers in these roles will be eligible for up to \$60 per shift.

The Government is supporting Victorian health services to recruit up to 1,000 healthcare workers from overseas with a \$2.5 million investment to help fund their relocation and provide dedicated support so they can get to work in Victoria as soon as possible.

The group will include both returning Australian healthcare workers and international recruits. These professionals will be nurses, doctors, midwives and allied health professionals, recruited on the basis of service and system needs.

This announcement builds on the Government's recent work, having facilitated the arrival of more than 130 healthcare workers under the dedicated healthcare workforce pathways since August this year.

All recruited healthcare workers will have an occupation identified on the Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List. To be eligible, healthcare workers will need to have an existing employment contract with a Victorian health service, have active professional registration, and be ready to travel.

Priority for relocation assistance will be given to the first 1,000 healthcare workers who arrive and commence employment with a Victorian health service, noting the need to support our system as soon as possible.

The Government will continue to work with the Commonwealth to ensure that access to flights and quarantine for international or Australian healthcare workers does not disadvantage other Australians returning home.

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Quotes attributable to Martin Foley Minister for Health

“We understand there are many Australian healthcare workers overseas keen to return home and roll up their sleeves to help the local workforce at our most critical time.”

“This is about easing the pressure placed on our paramedics, nurses, midwives, doctors and other health professionals by helping more healthcare workers to seamlessly return to these crucial jobs that need to be done.”

“We’ve always respected the work of our skilled and hardworking health workforce. This allowance will support the incredible work that our health professionals are doing day-in day out to deliver Victorians safely to the other side of this pandemic.”