



MEDIA RELEASE

1 August 2022

Aged care sector welcomes health recruitment service

Aged care providers are welcoming the Government's health recruitment service announcements as a positive move to help shore up workforce shortages across the health sector.

Simon Wallace, Chief Executive of the New Zealand Aged Care Association (NZACA) says especially welcome are the immigration related initiatives.

"It's fantastic to see the \$10,000 in financial support for internationally qualified nurses (IQNs) to complete their training and registration assessments in New Zealand.

"This has been a real barrier to overseas nurses coming to work in New Zealand and they are such a critical part of our sector, making up around half our total nursing workforce. So, easing the financial burden will be very helpful," says Mr Wallace.

"We're also very pleased to see a dedicated health immigration service being established, and if it works as intended will ease the compliance burden for our providers in dealing with Immigration New Zealand."

The sector also welcomes extending of the Return-to-Nursing scheme, which offers \$5000 to non-practising nurses to re-register, including ensuring it applies to part-time work.

"This scheme was piloted and well-subscribed in the aged residential care (ARC) sector, again easing the financial burden and barrier for people to return to nursing. As such we called for it to be extended and widened and so are very pleased to see that this has happened.

"Ultimately, any initiatives that grow the pool of nurses across the whole health sector are welcome. So, we congratulate the Health Minister Andrew Little and the Government on these announcements.

"They will help ease the workforce shortages in the short-term, but will not address the medium-to-longer term issue of pay disparity between nurses in aged care and public hospitals

"Minister Little has committed to addressing this but not provided timeframes. Until that is solved, we will continue to have challenges retaining our nurses."

ENDS

For more information contact Alice Taylor 021 02785648