

MEDIA RELEASE

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Skilled migration reform provides hope for nursing workforce crisis

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) has welcomed the commitment by the Federal Government to address ongoing workforce shortages across Australia, including nursing, outlined in the *Review of the Migration Systems Final Report*.

“Yesterday’s announcement is welcome news for the health and wellbeing of all Australians. It is pleasing the Government has a clear strategy to target industries most in need of workforce support, including the nursing profession,” ACN CEO Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN said.

“ACN has spent countless hours developing solutions to the workforce crisis facing our industry flagging skilled migration as a timely and effective way we can attract nurses, so I was delighted to see so many ACN recommendations detailed in the Review.

“To know that the Government is listening to our solutions to this very real crisis provides a beacon of hope for our exhausted but dedicated nurses across Australia.

“We have a world-class health system which attracts the best and brightest minds. Removing bureaucratic obstacles means those skilled nurses who want to come to Australia will stop looking elsewhere. It is important to the Australian College of Nursing that these nurses are treated ethically and with the respect they deserve and we welcome the opportunity to work with the government to get this right and ensure sustainability for our health system today and into the future.

“The Labour Market Update released in February of this year confirmed that Registered Nurses remain the most in demand occupation in Australia with 8,377 jobs advertised at the time of the report. With more than 2000 advertisements between nursing and the next highest occupation it shines a light on just how dire the workforce shortages have become.

“Home Affairs Minister Clare O’Neil touched on the issues surrounding recognition of overseas qualifications in her Press Club address today. I would encourage those involved with the reform to read [ACN’s Pre-Budget Submission](#) which outlines ways we can improve this system for nurses and also provide support to them on arrival while they adjust to life in a new country.

“I would like to stress the need to extend the provision for current providers of the approved Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) Bridging Course for internationally qualified nurses to continue beyond 2023.

“The current provision of ANMAC Bridging pathways will cease at the end of the year following legislation that has resulted in the Outcome-Based Assessment (OBA) being the only option for obtaining registration after this year.

“Extending this pathway is a logical solution to preventing backlogs in qualification recognition and would prevent unnecessary backlogs created by funnelling all international nurses through the OBA.

“I have said it before, but I’ll say it again, when we invest in nurses we invest in the health of all Australians.

“Migration reform to support skilled nurses coming to Australia will help us strengthen our health care system and allow nurses to focus on doing what we do best which is providing high-quality care for our patients and communities,” said Adjunct Professor Ward.

For more information:

Alex Woods 0432 044 966

Email: acn.media@acn.edu.au

Notes to Editors:

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) is the national professional organisation for all nurses and its aim is to ensure that the Australian community receives quality nursing care now and in the future. ACN is a membership organisation with members in all states and territories, health care settings and nursing specialties. ACN is also the Australian member of the International Council of Nurses headquartered in Geneva in collaboration with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF). An organisation not afraid to challenge industry issues affecting the nursing profession or Australia's health care, ACN is a well-connected and educated national body that drives change with people of influence to enhance the delivery of health services to the Australian community. ACN's membership includes nurses in roles of influence, including senior nurses, organisational leaders, academics, and researchers.

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CEO - Adjunct Professor Kylie Ward FACN - Bio



Kylie Ward. Policy Reformer. Nurse. For-Purpose Leader. Equality Warrior. Adjunct Professor. Transformation Specialist.

Kylie is the CEO of Australian College of Nursing. She has led a program of transformation at ACN, which has now become Australia’s beacon for Nurse Leadership.

She is a major policy influencer, advocate for women, children and equality.