



**The Hon Alan Tudge, MP**

Minister for Population, Cities and Urban Infrastructure  
Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs

**Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck**

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians  
Minister for Youth and Sport

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**International students ready to fill critical staff shortages in aged care**

Aged care providers will temporarily be able to offer more hours to international students to ensure the care of senior and vulnerable Australians, as part of the campaign to combat the impact of coronavirus.

Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs Alan Tudge said international students would help fill critical staff shortages emerging in the sector.

“As more workers take leave to quarantine or because of health concerns, we need to make sure there are enough staff to look after our older Australians who are particularly vulnerable to coronavirus,” Mr Tudge said.

“Many international students already work in the aged care sector but are restricted to 40 hours a fortnight. We’re relaxing those limits to help fill the temporary staff shortages.

“This follows similar concessions to major supermarkets to keep shelves stocked with essential items.

“We will continue to listen to businesses as the coronavirus situation develops and may consider expanding these measures to assist other sectors if and when required. We will also consider providing flexibility with other temporary visas should the need arise.”

The measures will be administered by the Department of Home Affairs and are available to approved providers of Commonwealth-funded aged care services, only for existing employees.

Providers can register with the Department if they believe the changes will assist them.

Employers are still required to abide by all relevant Australian workplace laws. Students have the same rights under Australian workplace law as all other employees.

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians Senator Richard Colbeck said COVID-19 affects older Australians more than others and this is putting a huge strain on many aged care providers and workers.

“Residential aged care providers are limiting visits to help prevent and control the spread of COVID-19,” he said.

“Further restrictions are being considered – but it’s critical we plan for a scenario where a large part of the aged care workforce is unable to come to work.

“Today’s announcement expands existing temporary arrangements relaxing visa work conditions to the aged care sector, applying to both residential and home care.

“Aged Care providers have told me that a relaxation of student visa work conditions would support their workforce continuity in the face of COVID-19 challenges.

“These are temporary measures and are solely designed to address staff shortages.

“The Government will continue to work closely with the sector to ensure we have strongest possible workforce in place as we deal with this extraordinary health challenge,” he said.

More information is available on the Department of Home Affairs website or the Global Service Centre on 131 881.