



Media release

15 March 2021

Border exemption for critical health workers extended indefinitely

The New Zealand Rural General Practice Network are delighted to receive the announcement from Minister of Immigration Kris Faafoi that the border exemption for critical health workers has been extended indefinitely.

This will enable international trained health professionals to enter New Zealand beyond 31 March 2021 to provide vital support for the health sector.

New Zealand Rural General Practice Network Chief Executive Dr Grant Davidson met Minister Faafoi recently to explain these issues. He welcomes this fast response at a time when rural practices continue to face a critical workforce shortage.

“Many of our rural practices rely on international doctors being able to enter the country to support their communities.”

“About one-third of practices in rural areas have long-term vacancies and there aren’t enough doctors in New Zealand to fill these spots.”

“Our short-term solution is to bring international doctors into the country to relieve the pressure on the rural health workforce.”

“Border restrictions have been disrupting our placement of essential health workers in jobs beyond March 2021. We are pleased this barrier has been removed.”

“There are still many overseas doctors who are interested in moving to New Zealand and this news means our NZLocums team can continue to recruit and place them throughout the year.”

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