



FAQS

AGED CARE WORKFORCE SUPPORT

03/07/2020

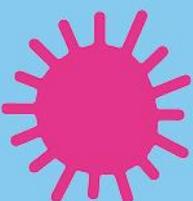
On 12 April 2020, the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, Senator The Hon Richard Colbeck, [announced](#) details about workforce surge support to ensure continuity of aged care during COVID-19.

The workforce surge support includes:

- Access to a **temporary surge workforce**, to help providers if they are unable to fill critical skills because of infection or staff having to quarantine or isolate.
- **Emergency response teams** which are on standby, through Aspen Medical, if there's a significant outbreak in a residential aged care facility.
- **Remote locums**, available through Aspen Medical, to support aged care providers in remote Australia if they are unable to source staff.

The Australian Government has funding arrangements in place for each of the workforce surge supports for eligible aged care providers. It will either pay the costs upfront or providers will be able to seek reimbursement of costs via the [COVID-19 Aged Care Support Grant Program](#).

Further detailed information on each activity is provided below.



Temporary surge workforce support

Eligibility	When	How
<p>Approved provider of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential aged care NATSIFACP Home Care Packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a COVID-19 outbreak Exhausted all other recruitment avenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your public health unit (PHU) Inform the Australian Government Department of Health by emailing agedcarecovidcases@health.gov.au A Departmental officer will be in contact with all providers directly impacted by COVID-19 and will assist with access to surge workforce

What is the temporary surge workforce support?

If you are experiencing a case or outbreak of COVID-19 you may be eligible for additional workforce support through one of the below channels:

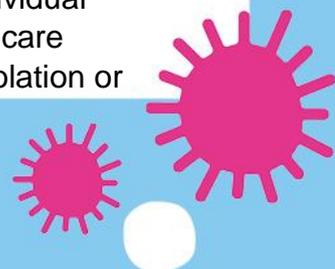
- Mable** – a workforce brokering platform that links providers to skilled workers across nursing, allied health, personal care, domestic assistance and social support services.
The Australian Government will pay the costs of staff deployed on behalf of eligible aged care providers engaged through Mable.
- The **Recruitment Consulting Staffing Association (RCSA)** – a dedicated 24/7 concierge service to find appropriately skilled staff to support their aged care service through healthcare recruitment agencies.
Email: healthworkforce@rcsa.com.au
Phone: 1800 943 115

Eligible aged care providers will be invoiced directly for staff costs and can then seek reimbursement of costs via the [COVID-19 Aged Care Support Grant Program](#).

- Healthcare Australia (HCA)** – a dedicated 24/7 concierge service to source and place appropriately skilled staff across nursing, allied health, personal care and domestic assistance.
Email: covid.agedcare@healthcareaustralia.com.au
Phone: 1300 749 333

Eligible aged care providers will be invoiced directly for staff costs and can then seek reimbursement of costs via the [COVID-19 Aged Care Support Grant Program](#).

These arrangements provide options and different approaches to meet individual provider needs. They are designed to fill an immediate gap while the aged care provider finds a longer-term solution, which includes staff returning from isolation or



quarantine due to COVID-19. Eligible approved aged care providers will be able to engage the required workforce for up to four (4) weeks initially.

Who is eligible?

The following Commonwealth funded approved aged care providers with one or more services directly impacted by COVID-19 are eligible:

- Residential aged care providers
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP)
- Home Care Package providers.

Directly impacted means services with one or more COVID-19 case.

Providers must have exhausted their existing resource recruitment channels before they are eligible to access funded workforce support.

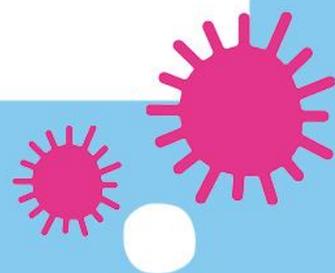
How do I access surge workforce support?

Eligible approved aged care providers experiencing a case or outbreak of COVID-19 must first let the Department of Health know by emailing agedcarecovidcases@health.gov.au

A departmental officer will assist providers to access surge workforce support.

Can I access workers from the workforce surge support providers if my service is not directly impacted by COVID-19?

Aged care providers can still access these and any other existing workforce supply channels if they are not directly impacted by COVID-19 however, they may not be eligible for Commonwealth funded support.



Emergency response teams (ERT)

Eligibility	When	How
Approved provider of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential aged care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significantly and directly impacted by COVID-19 No longer have capacity or capability to deliver quality care due to COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your public health unit (PHU) Inform the Department of Health of your COVID-19 case or outbreak by emailing agedcarecovidcases@health.gov.au A Departmental officer will be in contact with all providers directly impacted by COVID-19 and will deploy Aspen Medical ERT if assessed as needed

What is an emergency response team (ERT)?

Aspen Medical has been engaged by the Department to deploy ERTs. ERTs support an approved residential aged care provider to assess their level of preparedness, infection control protocols and workforce needs. A range of experts and personnel can be deployed to support providers.

Who is eligible?

Commonwealth funded approved residential aged care providers with one or more services significantly and directly impacted by COVID-19.

How do I access an ERT?

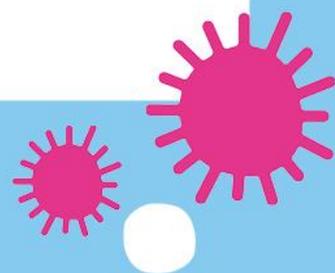
Let the Department of Health know that you have a case or outbreak of COVID-19 by emailing agedcarecovidcases@health.gov.au

A departmental officer will contact the residential aged care provider to discuss what support might be needed and offer to deploy a clinical first responder.

The clinical first responder will contact the residential aged care provider to provide advice and support immediately over the phone. They will then be on site within 24 hours (subject to travel time).

Once on site, the clinical first responder, with the provider, will assess the situation at the facility. They will determine workforce requirements and arrange for appropriate staff to be deployed for an initial period of 16 days. The clinical first responder is available to the provider throughout the duration of the outbreak.

This will allow the provider to continue delivering quality aged care services and to work on establishing longer-term strategies.



Remote Locum Workforce Support

Eligibility	When	How
<p>Approved providers of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential aged care NATSIFACP Home Care Packages <p>who operate in remote locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directly affected by COVID-19 Exhausted all other usual recruitment avenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform your public health unit (PHU) Inform the Department of Health of your COVID-19 case or outbreak by emailing agedcarecovidcases@health.gov.au Departmental officer will be in contact with all providers directly impacted by COVID-19 and will seek Aspen to deploy remote locums

What is remote locum workforce support?

Aspen Medical have been engaged by the Department to have pre-qualified and trained staff available for approved aged care providers in remote locations directly impacted by COVID-19. This will enable providers to access remote locum workforce support in the event that they are unable to find staff through their usual channels.

Who is eligible?

The following Commonwealth funded approved aged care providers operating in remote locations with one or more services directly impacted by COVID-19 are eligible:

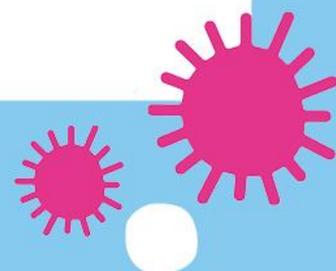
- Residential Aged Care
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP)
- Home Care Package providers.

Directly impacted means services with one or more COVID-19 infected, quarantined or isolated residents/clients/staff.

How do I access remote locum workforce support?

Let the Department of Health know that you are experiencing a case or outbreak of COVID-19 by emailing agedcarecovidcases@health.gov.au

A departmental officer will contact the provider to discuss what support is needed. If the Department assesses that the provider may need access to remote locums, they will contact Aspen to identify and deploy suitable locums.



COVID-19 Aged Care Support Program

Eligibility	When	How to access
Approved provider of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential aged care NATSIFACP Home Care Packages 	Reimbursement of expenses due to direct impact of COVID-19 once direct COVID-19 impacts are resolved	Application form available on GrantsConnect: www.grants.gov.au

What is the COVID-19 Aged Care Support Program?

The COVID-19 Aged Care Support Program is a grant program that will reimburse eligible aged care providers for eligible expenditure incurred for managing direct impacts of COVID-19. The program will run over two years from 2019-20 to 2020-21.

Who is eligible?

The following Commonwealth funded approved aged care providers with one or more services directly impacted by COVID-19 are eligible:

- Residential aged care
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP)
- Home Care Package providers.

Directly impacted means services with one or more COVID-19 infected, quarantined or isolated residents/clients/staff between 24 February 2020 and 31 May 2021.

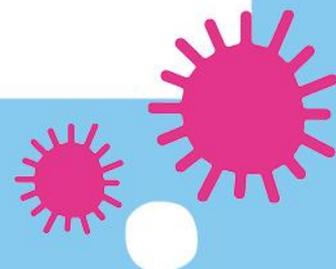
Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- An approved residential, NATSIFACP or Home Care Package provider who plans and prepares to manage COVID-19 but does not experience a direct impact.
- An approved residential, NATSIFACP, or Home Care Package provider with Business Interruption Insurance including COVID-19 coverage.
- An approved residential aged care provider that is not directly impacted but has experienced a decline in the rate of entry resulting in reduced occupancy rates and financial viability issues.

Other providers not eligible to apply are:

- A Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) service. Other assistance is available [for CHSP providers](#).
- A state government funded and/or operated approved residential, flexible or Home Care Package provider.
- A non-approved aged care service provider.



When can I apply?

You can apply for reimbursement of eligible expenditure between the Trigger Date (the date on which the first resident, client or staff member is tested for COVID-19) and the End Date (the date on which direct COVID-19 impacts are resolved i.e. there are no infected or isolated residents, clients or staff). This means an application must only be submitted after the end date, when the impact of COVID-19 is resolved.

The grant is open now and the application form can be accessed at GrantsConnect: <https://www.grants.gov.au>

