

Pacific Labour Scheme

Emma Gleeson, Assistant Secretary

Aged Care Workforce Branch, Department of Health Wednesday 15 December 2021

In this presentation

1. Department of Health

Aged care workforce initiatives to grow a skilled workforce

Contents

2. Department of Home Affairs

Overview of the Pacific Labour Scheme and Visas

3. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Introductory remarks on the Pacific Labour Scheme

4. Pacific Labour Facility

The Pacific Labour Scheme - How does it work?

5. Bolton Clarke

An aged care employer's perspective

6. Q&A session

Emma Gleeson

Assistant Secretary, Aged Care Workforce Branch

Department of Health

Aged Care Workforce Pillar

Over the next **three years** will support the **growth, training and upskilling** of the aged care workforce.











Home Care \$91.8 million

Financial support for Registered Nurses \$135.6 million Dementia and palliative care training \$49.4 million

Scholarships \$27.2 million

Additional 33,800 training places

Workforce Advisory Service

https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workforce-advisory-service

Supporting aged care providers with best practice guidance

- free, independent and confidential business advice.
- local strategies to recruit, retain and grow the skills of workers
- coordinated approaches to workforce skills and training.

Financial Support for Registered Nurses

Payments for eligible Registered Nurses working in aged care

- Same aged care provider over 12-months = **\$3,700 per year**
- Commenced 1 Nov 2021 with first payments in Nov 2022.
- Additional payment of **up to \$2,300 per year** for:
 - rural and remote areas (MMM5-7);
 - post-graduate qualification;
 - > additional training responsibilities.

Rural Locum Assistance Program (RLAP) https://www.rurallap.com.au/

Ensuring rural and remote aged care consumers experience continuity of clinical care and strong clinical leadership.

- \$25.1 million over three years
- Temporary surge workforce high staff turnover or sudden departures
- Incentive scheme for permanent placements
- First locum placements early 2022.

Michelle Tuchin

VIC/TAS Business, Industry and Regional Outreach Officer

Skilled Visa Branch, Department of Home Affairs

Anna McNicol

Director, Pacific Labour Policy & Programming

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Alison Boundy

Industry Engagement Manager, Aged Care and Social Sector

Pacific Labour Facility



PALM Scheme

Providing reliable workers to fill labour gaps in Australia

Alison Boundy Industry Engagement Manager - Aged Care and Social Sector, Pacific Labour Facility

















The Pacific Labour Facility

Who are we?

The **Pacific Labour Scheme** (PLS) has been the name of the program connecting Australian employers with **low-skilled and semi-skilled** workers from 9 Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste when local labour is not available, on 1 to 3 year visas.

The Pacific Labour Facility (PLF) is contracted to administer the scheme on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Through the PLF, **approved employers** have been supported to source qualified workers from the Pacific into semi-skilled roles in aged care and disability.



Key Industries





Hospitality e.g. wait staff, management, baristas, kitchen staff



Aged care e.g. personal carers, kitchen staff, cleaning

Tourism e.g. front of house, reception, call centres



Maintenance and trades e.g. builders, gardeners, forklift drivers



Fisheries e.g. workers for Great Barrier Reef Tuna (Cairns)



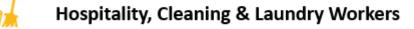
Agriculture, horticulture, meat-processing, forestry e.g. farm work, fruit picking and packing, processing

Suitable Roles in Aged Care





Personal Care Workers





Allied Health Assistants



Maintenance and groundskeepers

Business benefits



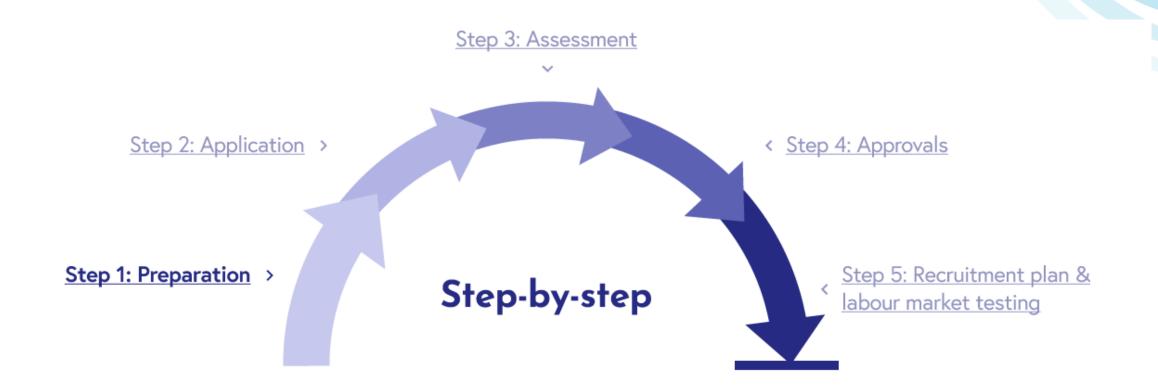
Recruitment costs minimised

• Staff turnover

• Qualified, engagement workers

Consistency of Care

Approved employer process



https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/

Approved employer costs

Activity	Cost to Employer	Further Information
Approved Employer Application	\$0	There is no fee for becoming an approved employer.
Employer Site Visit	\$0	As part of the Application process, your Industry Coordinator will visit the proposed location of the workers at our cost.
Temporary Activities Sponsorship Fee	\$420	This is a one-time only cost, payable to the Dept. of Home Affairs, via your Immi-Account.
In-country recruitment	Dependent on location	Prior to COVID employers were encouraged to undertake in-country recruitment trip to develop employer/sending country links; establish direct relationships between Labour Sending Units & employer; create merit lists for future recruitment; and increase cultural understanding between Pacific and Australia.
Worker Visa	\$315 per person – recouped from worker	403 Visa Period – 12 months to 3 years. The PLS is not a vehicle to permanent residency. Visa cost can be legally deducted from employee's pay over 3-month period from commencement of employment.
International Airfare	Range - \$500-\$1500 – recouped from worker	Aim is to book as early as possible to keep the airfare as low as possible for the worker. The airfare cost can be legally deducted from employee's pay over 3-month period after commencement of employment.
Travel to site	Dependent on location	Employer to pay for domestic transfer to work site. We encourage this to be the cheapest, most common way for travel to location (ie. Bus or Train to Central Qld).
Accommodation	Dependent on location	Employer to assist workers in finding suitable, reasonably priced local accommodation. Some Approved Employers have temporary onsite accommodation which workers use while they save up for bond/ rent in advance; others support them to get a rental property at commencement. This is very much dependent on local housing situation and is worked through with our team.
Health Insurance	\$18 per week (approx.)	403 Visa holders must have and maintain health insurance while in Australia. We ask employers to set up this cover (with our assistance) and deduct from employee wages.
Miscellaneous clothing and footwear	Dependent on your requirements	Some Approved Employers offer workers a small advance to cover non-uniform (PPE related) clothing and footwear required at commencement. This can be legally deducted from the employee's pay over 3 months period after commencement of employment.

The role of Labour Sending Units (LSUs)

Participating countries

Each country has their own processes and systems for managing recruitment and mobilisation.



Tonga

Solomon Islands

20

Labour Sending Units (LSUs)

Labour Sending Units (LSU) are key partners in Labour Mobility.

• As sovereign nations, our partner countries' LSU have their own LM policies, process and systems.

LSUs are responsible for:

- Recruitment and preparation of workers through the work ready pool (WRP), registration, interviews, fitness test, Pre Departure Briefings, Team leader training etc.
- Engage with key in-country stakeholders on LM priorities: Training and TVET providers, Panel doctors, Immigration, Police etc
- Organise reintegration activities to support workers when they return in-country.

LSUs role in recruitment and mobilisation

- LSUs have many local stakeholders
- We work together on a 10 week timeframe
- They help with managing worker expectations
- COVID19 has had impacts on LSU budgets
- LSUs also work with families



In-country recruitment process



Registration

Complete the two-page registration form to join the work ready pool.



Work-Ready Pool We check the candidate's English, motivation and attitude about working in Australia.



Police Check All candidates must pass a police check.



Interview

When recruitment plans have been approved, the in-

country team organises interviews between

candidates and employers



Medical Tests

X-ray, blood tests, HIV and pregnancy tests are undertaken at an approved clinic and candidates receive a Medical Approval Certificate.



Fitness Test

Candidates are tested for physical fitness, strength and endurance.



Job Offer and Visa

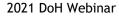
If selected then workers will recieve a contract, and once signed, visas are able to be applied for



Pre-departure

Includes topics such as contracts, Australian law,

employer/workers roles and responsibilities and working in Australia.



Worker recruitment and mobilisation

Recruitment is currently occurring via video, but we do encourage in-country recruitment.

Once letters of offer are signed, then the visa processes can commence.

Employers apply for worker visas via their IMMI Account. You may also choose to use a migration agent.

Worker welfare takes a 'community of care' approach

- Setting the scene settled workers are productive workers
- Accessing local services, churches and sport
- Healthy relationships here & at home
- Safe driving, alcohol and substances
- Appropriate communication
- Understanding shared cultural norms
- Developing cultural competencies together
- Accessing other available resources

Net skill gains for returning workers and Pacific nations

Technical skills further developed

- Dementia specific care •
- Stroke management •
- Chronic heart conditions •
- Diabetes & amputation management •
- Managing difficult behaviours .
- Nutrition for older people •
- Swallowing disorders management •
- Food safety •
- Oral hygiene
- Skin care
- Case management ٠
- Correct lifting techniques •
- Infection control and management •
- Assist with medication
- Palliative care •

Quality care mindset

- Facilitation of consumer dignity and choice
- Person-centred care •
- Reablement and empowerment •
- Elder abuse identification and understanding
- Family liaison and partnerships in care •
- Observation of changes ongoing assessment and planning •



Standard 1 - Consumer dignity and choice

Standard 3 - Personal care and clinical care



Standard 4 - Services & supports for daily living



Elizabeth Mandelkow Talent Acquisition Manager Bolton Clarke



Pacific Labour Scheme: An Employer's Perspective

December 2021



Who is Bolton Clarke?



- Customer-led not-for-profit organisation specialising in providing aged care services
- Largest non-faith based aged care provider in Australia
- We offer
 - Support at home
 - Retirement living
 - Residential aged care

Why the PLS for Bolton Clarke?



- Increased demand for aged care services due to an aging population
- National shortages of skilled and qualified nurses and personal care workers
- The PLS was an ideal program for Bolton Clarke to invest in as it:
 - Supported our talent needs for Personal Care Workers, and
 - Gives back to Pacific Island communities through training, education, career and financial opportunities

Our journey



- 2018 first PLS workers joined Bolton Clarke in Longreach after in-country recruitment
- 2020- through COVID impacting hospitality in Qld a small number of PLS workers transferred to Bolton Clarke increasing our numbers to 17 workers between the sites of Longreach and Bowen
- 2021 23 PLS workers joined Bolton Clarke between the sites of Longreach, Bowen and Emu Park.

2021 Process – pre-uplift



- Highly compressed timeframe of 6 weeks
- Emu Park not an accredited site
- Labour Market Testing
- Interviews completed by MS Teams
- Pre-departure briefing

Arrival and transfers



- Quarantine 14 days @ Grantham
- Domestic transfers to Longreach, Bowen and Emu Park
- Local managers organised transport from the local airport to arranged accommodation.
- Most workers started within 4 days of arrival
- All have settled in well

Learnings



- Managing time differences for interviews
- In-country interviews more beneficial
- Different document exchange platforms
- Ensuring all required documentation was provided to support the visa application
- Tight deadlines and needing immediate financial payments from Accounts Payable and international flight approvals by the CEO
- Flu vaccinations and appropriate clothing
- Sites need to manage opening bank accounts etc

Arrival snap at the airport



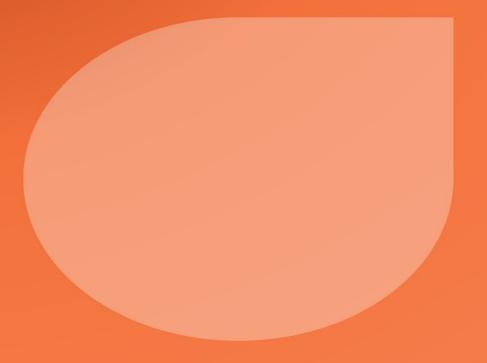


Starting off



Emu Park





Questions

Q & A Session

Ageing and Aged Care



Thank you

For more information, please contact the Department of Health.

AgedCareWorkforceReform@Health.gov.au

health.gov.au/aged-care-reforms