

30 March 2020

## **Media release — Let migrant health professionals help us**

The Multicultural Council of Tasmania (MCOT) today called for urgent reform to allow contributions from health professionals who gained their qualifications overseas.

“Our State and Federal Governments have empowered self-serving industry peak bodies to prevent overseas-trained nurses and doctors from caring for Australian patients,” said Mr Waqas Durrani, Chair of the Multicultural Council of Tasmania.

“These industry peak bodies consist of Australian born and bred doctors and nurses. Their restriction of overseas-trained entrants drives up the wages of doctors and nurses like them.

“With COVID-19 requiring us to lift our health system’s capacity – to ‘lift the line’ while we ‘flatten the curve’ – it is critical that we immediately break the strangle-hold these industry peak bodies maintain over our future.

### **Nurses**

“The [Nursing and Midwifery Board](#) currently tells nurses from 63 other countries (including Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, Israel and Taiwan) that their qualifications are [‘unlikely’](#) to be good enough.

### **Doctors**

“The [Australian Medical Council](#) and [Medical Board of Australia](#) impose a series of duplicative barriers to overseas-trained doctors.

“First, they only consider doctors who graduated from a medical school they approve of.

“Doctors trained in the UK, Canada, US or Ireland then have to pay hundreds of dollars in fees, secure an employment offer and undergo a year of additional supervision.

“Doctors trained in other countries face these barriers and also have to sit additional examinations, paying thousands of dollars for the privilege. What is worse, these [examinations have now been cancelled due to COVID-19](#), so we are effectively banning overseas-trained doctors because of COVID-19!

Multicultural Council of Tasmania contact: Mr Waqas Durrani, Chair      0469 299 076

Media enquiries for all national boards:      03 8708 9200