



THE HON GREG HUNT MP
Minister for Health

THE HON DAN TEHAN MP
Minister for Education

MEDIA RELEASE

1 May 2020

Medical students to join the fight against COVID-19

Medical students will be deployed to hospitals across the nation to support the fight against COVID-19.

The Australian Government has worked with the health sector and higher education sector to develop a set of national principles to guide clinical education during the pandemic.

This will ensure medical students can gain the work experience necessary to graduate while also supporting the health sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A new, paid medical assistant role will also be created to employ some of the 3,600 final-year medical students in health care roles.

Minister for Health Greg Hunt said patient care remained the priority with the new role helping to train our future doctors.

"The final-year medical students who will be participating in this initiative are ready, willing and able to provide routine care that will free up senior doctors and nurses to treat COVID-19 cases," Mr Hunt said.

"We are exploring the potential for this new, paid medical assistant role with Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand and all states and territories to support the health care workforce during this health emergency."

Minister for Education Dan Tehan said it was essential that Australia's medical students continued to gain practical training as part of their education despite restrictions because of COVID-19.

"We want to encourage student placements to continue where it is safe and possible to do so," Mr Tehan said.

"It is testament to our health and education sectors that we have developed national principles to ensure health student placements continue."

The National Principles for Clinical Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic that sets out eight high-level principles to guide the continuation of health student placements is online at <https://www.dese.gov.au/covid-19/higher-education/national-principles-for-clinical-education>.

The principles are a collaborative effort between the Commonwealth Department of Health, the Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and National Boards and the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum.

ENDS

Media contact:

Tehan: Byron Vale 02 6277 7350 | minister.tehan.media@dese.gov.au