

Australia boosts nursing services to strengthen pandemic response

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The Australian Government's early action to rapidly increase the number of skilled Registered Nurses (RN) to treat COVID-19 patients, has significantly strengthened its ability to respond to the pandemic.

The Government provided \$6.6 million for the delivery of two nurse training programs in response to COVID-19 – one to refresh clinical skills, and the other to provide training in critical and high dependency care in response to the pandemic.

Minister for Health Greg Hunt said more than 2,700 RNs completed the refresher training, and almost 16,500 completed critical care and/or high dependency care training to upskill to meet the forecasted need during the pandemic.

"The training programs — separately developed and delivered by the Australian College of Nursing (ACN) and Medcast – significantly built up the skills and knowledge of Australian nurses and gave them greater confidence to redeploy to roles in response to COVID-19," Minister Hunt said.

"Training outcomes showed the online delivery mechanisms used were cost efficient, supported rapid access, and provided consistent education across multiple health networks and hospitals nationwide.

Minister for Regional Health Mark Coulton said "nurses continued to play an essential role in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in regional, rural and remote communities. This Nurse Practitioner Week, I thank every nurse across Australia"

The Australian Government has committed more than \$16 billion to the emergency health response to the pandemic.