

Workforce Innovation in Action

Doing more with less

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Sharing what's working in Mackay



01

Biggest challenge

The regional staffing gap we faced in Mackay.

02

Initiatives implemented

How we attracted, welcomed and developed talent.

03

Outcomes & lessons

What worked well, and what we learned along the way.

01 • THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Finding qualified clinical staff in a regional area

Recruiting suitably qualified and experienced clinical staff in Mackay — a regional centre with a limited local talent pool.

- A regional location limits the pool of available candidates.
- Experienced clinical staff are especially hard to source locally.
- Local accommodation is limited and quite expensive.





02 • INITIATIVE ONE

Recruiting registered nurses from overseas

19

RNs recruited

3

partner agencies

3

homes provided

- Partnered with Global Talent Agency to recruit overseas RNs — 12 arrived from the Philippines and India (Dec 2024 – Jan 2025).
- Auspath and LCD Recruitment provided a further 7 registered nurses.
- Rented 3 houses to provide accommodation in a tight, expensive rental market.

Welcoming and developing our people

A warm arrival

Met at the airport and taken to their accommodation with a 'Welcome to Mackay' pack — transport, banking, tax file numbers, shops and local services.

Settled in with support

Thorough orientation and induction, with assigned buddies to help each new colleague find their feet.

Clinical leadership program

A tailored Clinical Leadership & Development program for all RNs, aligned to our policies and ways of working.



Engaged from day one

HR stayed in contact through visa sponsorship — including a personal welcome email direct from the CEO.

Building the support workforce (AINs)

With RN coverage looking great, the next challenge was sourcing suitably qualified Assistants in Nursing. We followed two complementary paths.

LOCAL & NATIONAL RECRUITMENT

16

AINs sourced through Randstad — both locally and from across Australia.

OVERSEAS SPONSORSHIP

18

AINs sponsored from overseas under our Labour Agreement, supported by Australian Migration & Recruitment Consulting.

03 · OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNED

What worked — and what we learned

A terrific addition. Sponsored staff have integrated really well and formed strong bonds with one another.

LESSON LEARNED

Locally sourced agency staff were not the same calibre, with high turnover — often relocating to Mackay, then leaving. Uphold the guarantee period.

Keep in mind: provide ongoing education and celebrate cultural days to support retention.



Lessons to take back

01 Look beyond the local pool

International recruitment and sponsorship can close persistent regional shortages.

02 Remove the barriers to arrival

Accommodation, transport, banking and a warm welcome help people stay and settle.

03 Invest in leadership & learning

Tailored development and ongoing education build capability and retention.

04 Protect quality and culture

Uphold agency guarantee periods and celebrate the cultures your people bring.

What could you adapt within your own organisation?