

19 June 2014

Migration Solutions calls for alternatives to scrapped Carer visa

The government's abrupt closure of the Subclass 116 and 836 Carer visa categories from the Australian migration program, and failure to provide a replacement visa option, is being described as a "regretful decision" by South Australian migration consultancy firm, Migration Solutions.

Consequently, the business is calling for the immediate introduction of an alternative temporary visa option for the Carer visa, which was repealed on May 30.

Since 2011, Migration Solutions has partnered with the Cancer Council to offer free or subsidised immigration advice to clients and their families living with a serious illness as part of their pro-bono program.

Many of these cases have involved helping secure a Carer visa for the relative of a seriously ill Australian citizen or permanent resident, who are then able to reside in Australia and care for them for the duration of their illness.

According to Migration Solutions Managing Director, Mark Glazbrook, the abruptness of the repeal and absence of an alternative option has left a number of seriously ill migrants in an extremely vulnerable position.

"The people affected by this closure are those who are already dealing with incredibly personal hardship in the suffering of a serious disease," he said.

"The decision affects not just them but their families as well, who are now unable to come over and provide support and care during this incredibly difficult time," he said.

Mr Glazbrook says statistically the Carer visa accounts for an [extremely small proportion](#) of Australia's Migration program, with just 910 Carer visas granted during the 2012-13 financial year.

The figure represents a meagre 0.5% of the 190 000 visa places offered under the national program.

"We understand that the Government wants to grow the Skilled Stream of the Australian Migration program as they continue to seek greater economic contribution from migrants," he said.

"However the closure of the Carer visa category will ultimately make minimal difference to Australia's national economy, whilst having a serious impact on those people suffering from a serious illness and with nobody available locally to help look after them."

Mr Glazbrook says that given the absence of any permanent carer visa options, a temporary visa program is needed in order to provide those in need with access to adequate care where there is none available locally.

“A temporary visa option would not only allow for quicker processing times than was previously available under the permanent visa program, which could take up to 4 years to be processed,” he said.

“Such an arrangement would also allow for more relaxed policy and guidelines regarding eligibility, and as temporary visas are not capped, would provide greater opportunity for more of these visas to be granted.”

Mr Glazbrook has expressed his recommendation in writing to the Federal Minister for Immigration’s office, including his recommendation. He is yet to receive a response.

For further information regarding this matter, including requests for quotes, images or interviews, please see the contact details listed below.

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