

27 April 2026

Semi-skilled migration pilot to boost health workforce

The healthcare workforce in the Central Eyre Peninsula town of Cleve is getting a boost through a semi-skilled Occupational Recognition Service migration pilot that is attracting future nurses to settle in the town.

The South Australian Skills Commission (the Commission) has partnered with the Eyre and Far North Local Health Network (EFNLHN), the District Council of Cleve, and TAFE SA for the pilot, with the aim of attracting overseas healthcare workers and their families to Cleve to work for EFNLHN.

The pilot has targeted trained nurses from the Philippines, who will be employed as Assistants in Nursing at Cleve District Hospital and Crestview Hostel, and will undertake a traineeship through TAFE SA to become Enrolled Nurses.

Five nurses have been recruited. Two arrived in Cleve in mid-April, and another three will arrive before July.

Housing and community support is being provided through the District Council of Cleve.

The project was spearheaded by the Commission, following Commissioner Cameron Baker's participation in a South Australian education delegation visit to the Philippines in May 2025, enabling TAFE SA to assess the training standards for nurses and their alignment to the Enrolled Nursing Traineeship Pathway.

The Commission also coordinated discussions between the EFNLHN, SA Health, TAFE SA, migration agents, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, the Federal regulator, and the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs to establish this pilot.

This pilot highlights the effectiveness of combining migration, training and industry partnerships to address workforce shortages in regional South Australia. The Commission will continue to build on this approach, working with partners to scale similar initiatives across priority sectors and regions.

Quotes attributable to South Australian Skills Commissioner, Cameron Baker

South Australia is leading the nation in innovative workforce strategies, connecting skilled migrants with real job opportunities in industries that need them most.

Through the State's Occupational Recognition Service, we are recognising existing skills and helping semi-skilled migrants transition into apprenticeships and traineeships, ensuring they can contribute quickly and safely to the workforce. Combined with industry designed and validated assessment processes, this approach is helping address shortages in critical sectors, including nursing.

We are continuing to expand this model to support workforce needs across construction, automotive and the care economy.

Quotes attributable to EFNLHN Chief Executive Officer, Julie Marron

We are delighted to welcome five new trainee ENs to Cleve and the Eyre and Far North Local Health Network.

Initiatives like this help us strengthen our skilled workforce, supporting safe, high-quality care close to home.

This project complements other recruitment strategies we have implemented including a focus on 'growing our own' workforce by creating opportunities for local people to pursue health careers without leaving their communities.

Quotes attributable to District Council of Cleve, Mayor Phil Cameron

Ensuring our district is somewhere people choose to live, work and raise their families is a key priority for the District Council of Cleve, and initiatives like this semi-skilled migration pilot are an important part of that long-term vision.

This project reflects Council's commitment to working with our industry and training partners to strengthen the local workforce while also growing our population.

Attracting workers is about more than jobs; it's about creating welcoming communities. We're focused on supporting these families to build connections, access local services, and become part of community life from day one.