

Removal of federal support from refugees medically transferred to Australia

The Federal government is currently in the process of removing up to 500 refugees and asylum seekers, defined as transitory persons, from community detention into the community. This sounds like a positive move, but it is quite the opposite.

These people were detained by our government in PNG or Nauru and transferred to Australia, prior to Medevac legislation, to receive medical treatment. Many of them are still unwell. They have been receiving accommodation and some minimal financial assistance through SRSS (Status Resolution Support Service). They have now been given three weeks' notice to find alternative accommodation and other means of financial support.

While they will now be allowed to work, in reality many of them will find this extremely difficult in the midst of a pandemic induced recession.

Currently this situation affects 276 people in Queensland, NSW, SA and WA but we fear that 162 people in Victoria will be placed in a similar situation in the near future as Covid restrictions ease. They have been placed on final departure bridging E visas - some are stateless, some are from countries that will not accept them back.

They are now expected to support themselves.

WHAT, AS GRANDMOTHERS, CAN WE DO?

Consistent with our stated purpose, Grandmothers for Refugees will concentrate on advocacy work. We will focus particularly, but not solely, on the families and children involved.

Our objective is to:

- **Alert all politicians to the issue, possibilities, and their responsibilities - including policy review.**
- **Alert the general population to the situation so they can join action.**
- **Encourage our communities to provide financial and practical support to organisations providing direct care until government provides adequate support.**

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

Educate ourselves about the situation of the refugees and the campaign so that we can speak confidently.

[Read](#) *"People seeking asylum evicted by Home Affairs without support"* – Asylum Seekers Centre

[Read](#) *"War on refugees moves to final phase onshore"* – The Saturday Paper

[Read](#) *"We are waiting. We are always waiting."* written by Jean Ker Walsh – Inside Story

- **Write letters to Federal and State parliamentarians to ensure that they are alert to the situation. We suggest you contact your local MP in particular. Go to [Resources](#) for addresses.**
- **Write to the Acting Minister for Immigration, the Hon Alan Tudge, expressing your concern about this situation which is a policy-created problem.**

"It's been longstanding policy since July 2013, now going on to seven years and some additional months, that persons who arrived by boat over that time period – and I'm paraphrasing, so I won't quote it exactly – will never settle here. It's been accepted over that period of seven years that, because of the different standards of medical treatment and medical amenity that are available in Australia, persons can come to Australia for temporary medical treatment.

Mike Pezzulo, Secretary, Department of Home Affairs, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation

Committee

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The minister has the power to intervene.

- **Write to your local State MP to alert them to the fact that the Commonwealth is shifting their responsibilities to the State.**
- **Talk to your friends and contacts and use social media.**

>>> IMPORTANT MEDIA STATEMENT

STEP OUT OF LOCKDOWN IS BAD NEWS FOR SOME by Sr Brigid Arthur and Pamela Curr. [Read it here.](#)