

Hard work of disability advocates rewarded with VISA policy changes

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) welcomes the Federal Government's decision to make changes to the way permanent residency visa applications are assessed for migrants with permanent medical conditions or disabilities.

FECCA understands that part of these changes includes the threshold for an acceptable perceived economic cost of care for applicants with permanent medical conditions or disabilities has been increased from \$40,000 to \$49,000.

The Government will now also only calculate the care cost over a ten-year period, rather than the lifetime of the applicant as was previously the case, meaning many more people with permanent medical conditions or disabilities will potentially fall below the new threshold.

FECCA Chairperson Ms Mary Patetsos said that FECCA and the National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA) have been strong advocates for reform in the area.

"NEDA has been advocating hard for changes to the strict visa application requirements for migrants living with permanent medical conditions or disabilities for many years," she said.

"The strict rules around hypothetical cost of care has meant many families who have wanted to work hard and contribute to Australian society have faced deportation because of the medical circumstances of one family member.

"In each of these cases, NEDA and FECCA have fought tirelessly for the affected families, and these changes are a testament to the work both organisations have done for our communities."

FECCA is the peak, national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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