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Media release

Allianz Partners New Zealand brings Sonder's 24/7 health, safety and wellbeing support to international students

(AUCKLAND, 27 October 2026): Allianz Partners New Zealand today announced a new service partnership with health, safety and wellbeing platform Sonder, providing international students with round-the-clock safety, medical and mental health support.

Starting October 2026, Studentsafe Inbound Medical and Travel Insurance policyholders, and their family members aged 18 or older, will begin to have access to Sonder at no additional cost. The service provides confidential, 24/7 support via chat, phone or in-person response, helping students navigate the challenges of living and studying far from home.

International students face unique challenges, including cultural adjustment, social isolation, academic pressures and navigating unfamiliar health systems. Research highlights growing concern for international student mental wellbeing, with systematic reviews reporting rates of anxiety, depression and psychological distress ranging from approximately 30% to more than 50% across international student populations. These findings underscore the importance of accessible, culturally responsive, 24/7 support services that help students thrive both academically and personally.

New Zealand's Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 requires education providers to take all reasonable steps to support the wellbeing of international students. The Allianz Partners and Sonder partnership aims to further support our Studentsafe partnered institutions in meeting these obligations by providing students with complimentary support options that sit within their existing institutional support framework and provide further 24/7 access to qualified health and safety wellbeing professionals.

Importantly, students can access support at any time, including during after-hours periods when institutional services may be unavailable and students can feel most vulnerable. Support is available across more than 300 languages, helping students access assistance in the language they are most comfortable using when they need it most.

Through the Sonder app, students will have access to:

- **24/7 confidential support** from registered nurses and mental health professionals via chat or phone
- **Personalised safety and travel alerts** based on their location
- **Share my journey** with real-time journey monitoring including when travelling alone or at night
- **Check on me** with timed safety checks for situations such meeting someone new
- **Help alert** with immediate escalation for urgent situations requiring additional support
- **Wellbeing resources** with a comprehensive library covering nutrition, sleep, mindfulness, and physical activity

Kevin Blyth, Allianz Partners New Zealand Managing Director, said: "We know that international students face unique pressures when they arrive in New Zealand from navigating a new healthcare system to managing the emotional challenges of being far from family and friends. Our partnership with Sonder means our students now have immediate, 24/7 access to qualified professionals who can support them through whatever they're facing. This is about more than insurance, it's about ensuring every student who chooses New Zealand feels safe, supported, and able to thrive."

Craig Cowdrey, Sonder CEO and Co-founder, said: "Studying in a new country is exciting, but it can also mean navigating unfamiliar systems, being far from family and not always knowing where to turn when something goes wrong.

"We've worked with Allianz Partners in Australia for eight years, and we're proud to now extend that support to international students in New Zealand. With 24/7 access to care and in-app translation across more than 300 languages, students can reach out in the language they're most comfortable with and get support early, before a small issue becomes something bigger.

"That's what this partnership is about: making it easier for students to get the right care at the right time, so they can feel safe and supported, and focus on their studies."

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About Allianz Partners New Zealand

Allianz Partners New Zealand is part of Allianz Partners, a world leader in B2B2C insurance and assistance, operating in 73 markets with 22,200 employees speaking 70 languages. The company handles more than 89 million cases per year.

About Sonder

Sonder is a health, safety and wellbeing platform that provides 24/7 access to health professionals, mental health resources, and personal safety support services. Founded in 2016 and headquartered in Sydney, Australia, Sonder delivers care through multidisciplinary Support Centres in Auckland, London, and Sydney, staffed by support coordinators, nurses, counsellors, social workers, emergency responders, and mental health clinicians.

Sonder's evidence-based approach helps organisations support the health, wellbeing, and safety of their people anytime and anywhere. In New Zealand, Sonder is accredited by the International Organisation for Standardisation ISO/IEC 27001:2022, the Nursing Council of New Zealand, and the Medical Council of New Zealand. Sonder's model of care is endorsed by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP).

Media Contact

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Notes to Editor

Source: Research data related to international student mental health, prepared by the International Education Association Aotearoa (ISANA NZ) CEO Chris Beard for Education New Zealand Manapou ki te Ao, 2026