

Let's dive into... WORKFORCE

Friday 22 October 2021 | Chiton Rocks SLSC, Lot 440 Hindmarsh Esplanade, Hayborough, Victor Harbor 5211

A combined regions collaborative THINK TANK to explore workforce solutions for the home and community aged care sector

DISCOVER activity

ATTRACT | FIT | SKILL | RETAIN

Top priorities identified by participants at the Forum

ATTRACT

Q1 – How do we make working in aged care enticing?

- Changing the culture and perception of the sector (for example rebranding), promote the positives, focus on values and relationships.
- Testimonials and myth busting.
- Market it as a profession not just a vocation.
- Identifying the different pathways and making it flexible.
- Showcase the professionalism of the sector, including higher skilled roles.
- Develop and promote career pathways and progression.
- Speciality courses for nurses.
- More support for staff personally, and staffing ratios.

Q2 – What potential opportunities, resources, partners can we tap into to attract new workers?

- More intergenerational programs (involving primary, middle, and high school students).
- Partner with Girl Guides or Scouts as volunteers to allay negative perceptions of working with “old people”, and gain skills or credit toward qualifications through this process or ‘Duke of Edinburgh’s awards’.
- Paid work experience, similar to PATH Model for all ages.
- International exchanges.
- Attracting spouses of skilled migrants (pre-work before move to Australia).
- Upskilling of unpaid carers.
- Concierge of aged care services available, a portal to direct/guide.

FIT

Q1 – What makes someone the right fit for working within the aged care sector?

- Alignment of values and goals.
- Genuine desire, authenticity and integrity are innate, skills can be taught. When people are engaged you can teach all else.
- Focus on qualities and characteristics of employee first - values based. Connection, support and meeting specific needs of organisation/worker/customer.
- Client focussed.
- The ability to enable self-determination that supports consumers to achieve goals and maintain professional boundaries.
- Matching to unique opportunity: using the expertise and strengths of individuals (worker and the person), the right match between worker and client.
- Innovation and ideas of doing things well.
- Seeking lifelong learners who can feel safe to grow.

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Q2 – How do you promote and share what is the 'right fit' for your organisation?

- Knowing our brand, selling our brand, reinforcing our brand. Attract the breadth of capacity to meet diverse needs.
- Lead by visible examples in action. Images and language are powerful. Focus on values, dignity and respect.
- Share culture of organisation and quality led practices, including known and trusted qualifications.
- Actively promoting and role modelling positive culture.
- Engage in a range of places for recruitment. Go beyond 'old grooves'. Real life visibility.
- Focus groups with staff and customers.
- Continuous improvement practices including education, evaluation, recognition and acknowledgement of staff.

SKILL

Q1 – Is skilling for the sector pitched at the right levels? At entry levels, do we require full Certificate III qualifications, or could there be other qualification options relevant for specific roles?

- There is room for flexibility within the training system.
- Qualifications can be addressed. Mentoring and good leadership is important.
- Minimum Certificate III, in addition to tailored options.
- Base level, then develop, specific for the service provided. But there is room for 'unskilled' companion.
- Role specific with options, entry level micro credentialing (not all roles need full Certificate III qualification).
- Require benchmarking of some sort and soft skills (value based).
- It is a regulated industry, so we need to ensure staff are being appropriately trained. Therefore, formal credentialing is required. Staff need skills relevant to the role they perform, but there is space to employ 'non-skilled' people.

Q2 – What professional development and training opportunities does your organisation provide to ensure existing staff are appropriately skilled for their roles? Do you partner with any other organisations for this or is this all in-house?

- People are our biggest asset, we need to invest in them in meaningful ways.
- Knowing our staff and recognising their lived experiences and use it in training offerings.
- Mentor training, suitable and appropriate for all areas (HCP/CHSP and residential) – for example: train initial workplace 'buddies', keeps staff passionate and working in the sector, clients also involved ("will you help us develop new staff?")
- Combination of internal and external and tailored training for individual need.
- Manual handling, bullying and harassment training etc done internally.
- Mandatory training done internally, developmental training done externally, regular development for nurses.
- Partnering and sharing costs of training with other organisations on a bartering basis – for example: "we can do X, if you do Y, let's swap and work together".
- Partners include different RTOs depending on skill area; TAFE SA, HITsa, Dementia Australia, Parkinson's Australia.

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RETAIN

Q1 – What strategies are proving successful for your organisation to retain valued staff members?

- Reward and recognition.
- Flexibility with work hours to suit individual worker needs, ensuring staff get the work hours they require, support reduction of work hours for ageing workforce where requested.
- Job security.
- Conversion to permanent contracts.
- Upskilling and career development opportunities.
- Developing positive work environment and culture.

Q2 – What innovative ideas could be explored to retain staff within the home care sector?

- Appropriate conditions and remuneration, “living wage” for casuals.
- Workplace incentives (work vehicle available for all staff, wellbeing options Tai Chi/meditation/gym).
- Career pathway support.
- Formal rewards and recognition, reward years of service/expertise/work well done.
- Removal of red tape, better look at compliance, better application of quality.
- New model of care.
- Choice of task and staff directed rostering.
- Chains 😊