

# Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022–2025

Growing a skilled workforce to deliver  
high quality care for senior Australians

March 2022







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# 1. Ministers' Foreword

The Australian Government is committed to developing a world class aged care workforce that delivers high quality care which puts senior Australians first.

We believe every older Australian who needs support has the right to dignity and respect, as well as the best possible physical and social care.

Workforce is one of the five key pillars of the once-in-a-generation reform program the Australian Government is implementing in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

We have delivered the first year of the \$351.6 million workforce program, with more than 48,800 training places, wages bonuses to reward and encourage staff to be part of the aged care community and investing in improved training.

In addition, the Government is continuing to support the implementation of A Matter of Care: Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy.

The next stage of this workforce reform is being delivered now.

Our Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022–2025, released as part of the 2022–23 Budget, provides the decisive action needed to cultivate a world class aged care workforce that puts our senior Australians first. It sits alongside the National Care and Support Workforce Strategy.

The focus is on bringing more people into the workforce through new approaches such as the Cooperative Mutual Enterprise Program, delivering additional free or low-fee training places and improved career pathways with additional incentives and opportunities for training in aged care.

Its initiatives are diverse and cannot be implemented by the Government alone. They will require collective action from everyone involved in aged care—the aged care workforce, consumers, providers, peak bodies, education and training providers, and state and territory governments.

Working together is the key to ensuring that this action plan is implemented smoothly and outcomes focused.

The Government also thanks and acknowledges the commitment of the many thousands of nurses, personal care workers and other aged care workers, who have continued providing care to the senior Australians relying on them through the pandemic.

Lockdowns and the need to isolate staff who tested positive or were close contacts, left staff in many facilities working even longer and harder than ever before. In recognition, the Government has provided more than \$600 million in additional wages bonuses.

We thank them for continuing to provide this important service. This Aged Care Workforce Action Plan has the programs, training and incentives to encourage others to join them in this important workforce.

As Australia's population ages, the demand for aged care workers, in both residential care and at home will continue to grow. The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the workforce is available, trained and provides the care that senior Australians and their families expect and deserve.



**THE HON GREG HUNT MP**



**SENATOR RICHARD COLBECK**

# 2. Introduction

The Australian Government is taking action across five pillars of reform to deliver respect, care and dignity to senior Australians. These pillars include; Home Care, Residential aged care services and sustainability, Residential aged care quality and safety, Workforce and Governance. Government investment in the aged care workforce through the Health Portfolio since the 2020–21 Budget is \$1.4 billion.

The Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022–2025 outlines the Government’s actions across 3 goals: to grow, skill and enable an aged care workforce that delivers safe, high quality care that puts senior Australians first.

<p><b>Grow:</b> Promote approaches that attract and retain workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care.</p>	<p><b>Skill:</b> Support a continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.</p>	<p><b>Enable:</b> Support aged care providers to develop sustainable and coordinated approaches for growing a skilled workforce, with an emphasis on thin markets and meeting the needs of diverse communities.</p>
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**Figure 1: Timeline of key milestones**

2018	2019	2020
Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety announced	Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Interim Report	
Aged Services Industry Reference Committee announced		
A Matter of Care: Australia’s Aged Care Workforce Strategy released		
Aged Care Workforce Industry Council announced		Budget 20-21: Enhancing nursing skills and leadership
	A Matter of Care: Australia’s	

This Action Plan is underpinned by the Government’s response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (Royal Commission) and supports the coordinated implementation of the Workforce Pillar, which is fundamental to the success of the reform. It also aligns with:

- A Matter of Care: Australia’s Aged Care Workforce Strategy (A Matter of Care)
- National Care and Support Workforce Strategy
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) National Workforce Plan: 2021-2025.

The Government will continue to support the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (the Council) and other partners to implement the 14 strategic actions from A Matter of Care, Australia’s Aged Care Workforce Strategy. Further details on the strategic actions are on page 8.

The Government is also developing a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Workforce Plan. This will support and prioritise the leadership role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations. It will also promote the growth and skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Final Report</b>					
<b>National Aged Care Advisory Council established</b>					
<b>Aged Care Centre for Growth and Translational Research established</b>					
<b>Budget 21-22: Growing a skilled workforce</b>		<b>Budget 22-23: Care and Support Workforce</b>			
<b>Aged Care Workforce Strategy implementation</b>					
			<b>Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022-2025</b>		
			<b>National Care and Support Workforce Strategy</b>		
<b>COVID-19 Aged Care Workforce Support</b>					

# 3. Australia's aged care workforce

To ensure senior Australians receive quality care now and into the future, it is critical to understand existing and future workforce requirements.

## Aged care workers and the services they deliver

Aged care services are delivered by a range of workforce roles. This Action Plan focuses on workers delivering direct care to senior Australians. The Australian Government also acknowledges the important role medical practitioners and ancillary roles, including gardeners, cleaners, transport drivers and volunteers, provide to ensure senior Australians have a high quality of life.

### The 3 direct care groups in aged care

#### Nurses

- Include Enrolled Nurses, Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners.
- Provide a critical leadership role for care teams, especially in residential care.
- Responsible for clinical oversight and the supervision for personal care workers who deliver day-to-day care and support to senior Australians.

#### Personal care workers

- Make up the majority of the aged care workforce.
- Provide day-to-day care and support to ensure the health and wellbeing needs of senior Australians are met.

#### Allied health practitioners and assistants

- Provide support to senior Australians to optimise function and independence through a range of services.
- Include disciplines such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology and diversional therapists.

## Workforce characteristics

Australia's aged care workforce continues to be predominantly female. The 2020 Aged Care Workforce Census reports the proportion of female workers was:

- 86 per cent of personal care workers
- 90 per cent of enrolled nurses
- 86 per cent of registered nurses, and
- 78 per cent of allied health professionals working in residential aged care facilities (RACFs).



The proportions of female direct care workers were similar in the Home Care Packages Program (HCPP) and the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP).

Around a third (35 per cent) of direct care staff in RACFs were from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, with lower levels in HCPP (21 per cent) and CHSP (16 per cent).<sup>1</sup> This data aligns with the National Skills Commission care and support workforce analysis where around 40 per cent of care and support workers were born overseas.<sup>2</sup>

For RACFs with more than 3.3 per cent Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents, the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nurses increases from 1.5 per cent to 2.3 per cent. There was a similar trend for personal care workers and allied health workers.<sup>3</sup>

Sixty-six per cent of personal care workers in 2020 and similar in 2016, held a Certificate III level qualification or higher. Additionally, 56 per cent of all RACFs have managers with a bachelor's degree in nursing qualifications and 39 per cent had managers with postgraduate nursing qualifications.<sup>4</sup>

## Numbers of workers

The 2020 Aged Care Workforce Census estimated there were 208,903 direct care workers in RACFs, 64,019 in the HCPP and 59,029 in the CHSP.

Personal care workers are the largest group of workers across these 3 aged care service types:

- 70 per cent of RACF workforce
- 88 per cent of HCPP workforce
- 80 per cent of CHSP workforce

There is considerable staff duplication across aged care service sectors. Some staff work multiple jobs across residential and home care programs for the same or different providers. The Department of Health has estimated that the net aged care workforce number is over 370,000 as at August 2021. This includes nurses, personal care workers, allied health professionals, and administrative and ancillary staff.<sup>5</sup>

The Government is releasing substantially more home care packages over the next few years and increasing resources to meet Royal Commission recommendations. The personal care workforce will need to increase significantly to meet these demands. This is at a time when there is considerable competition for staff from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1 Department of Health, *2020 Aged Care Workforce Census Report*, Department of Health, Australian Government, 2021

2 National Skills Commission, *Care Workforce Labour Market Study*, National Skills Commission, Australian Government, 2022

3 Department of Health, *2020 Aged Care Workforce Census Report*, Department of Health, Australian Government, 2021

4 Department of Health, *2020 Aged Care Workforce Census Report*, Department of Health, Australian Government, 2021

5 Department of Health, *2020–21 Report on the Operation of the Aged Care Act 1997*, Department of Health, Australian Government, 2021

# 4. Challenges for the aged care workforce

A Matter of Care was released in 2018. The strategic actions in the strategy remain critical to address core workforce challenges. These include, but are not limited to:

- shifting attitudes to caring
- attracting and retaining a skilled workforce
- boosting capability, and
- improving quality of life for senior Australians.

## **Achievements against A Matter of Care: Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy**

The Australian Government and Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (the Council) have delivered on a number of actions from the strategy. These support the growth of a skilled aged care workforce to deliver safe and high quality aged care services that puts senior Australians first.

- Strategic Action 1: Creation of a Social Change Campaign.
  - Launched in March 2021, the Council's 'Bring Your Thing' campaign promotes the diversity of careers available in aged care. It is aimed at younger people and those whose employment was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Strategic Action 2: Voluntary Industry Code of Practice (Industry Code of Practice).
  - The Council launched the Industry Code of Practice in February 2021. It was designed in consultation with providers, peak bodies, workers and consumer representatives. The Code of Practice encourages providers to set the bar higher each day so they can provide better services to senior Australians.
- Strategic Action 3: Reframing the qualification and skills framework, addressing current and future competencies.
  - Established in March 2018, the Aged Services Industry Reference Committee has led a review of the Certificate III in Individual Support and Certificate IV in Ageing Support. This will ensure these qualifications deliver the skills and knowledge required by the aged care workforce.
  - As agreed by Skills Ministers, new Industry Clusters are being established to strengthen employer leadership and engagement in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. Their responsibilities will include developing training products on emerging industry needs, supporting quality training delivery and promoting career pathways.

- Strategic Action 4: Defining new career pathways, including how the workforce is accredited.
  - The Council and sector are designing the future structure of the aged care workforce. This includes the job roles and job families required to deliver models of holistic care addressing the physical, social and emotional needs of senior Australians. This work will inform updates to qualifications to ensure industry needs are met.
  - The Government has committed to funding the implementation of a Care and Support Worker Code of Conduct and a nationally consistent screening process for workers.
- Strategic Action 5: Developing cultures of feedback and continuous improvement.
  - In October 2020, the Council launched the Aged Care Census Database developed by BPA Analytics. It provides aged care organisations with an evidence-based snapshot of issues raised by their workforce. On 27 October 2021, the Council published its first Workforce Narrative and 12 insights report based on the database.<sup>6</sup>
- Strategic Action 6: Establishing a new standard approach to workforce planning and skills mix modelling.
  - The Council is developing a free interactive workforce planning tool. It will be available for providers on the Council's website. The tool will be practical and interactive to support aged care providers to better understand and manage their workforce needs. This includes anticipating changes and enhancing business outcomes.
- Strategic Action 7: Implementing new attraction and retention strategies for the workforce.
  - The Government is implementing many initiatives to support the attraction and retention of workers in aged care. This includes initiatives in response to the final report of the Royal Commission and through this Action Plan. Some initiatives include the Home Care Workforce Support Program, the Workforce Advisory Service and the Aged Care Transition to Practice Program.
- Strategic Actions 8 and 13: Developing a revised workforce relations framework to better reflect the changing nature of work, and current and future funding considerations including staff remuneration.
  - The Council facilitated discussions between organisations that represented the aged care workforce, aged care providers and consumers (senior Australians, their families and carers) to develop a consensus statement for the Fair Work Commission (FWC) regarding aged care work value cases.
  - On 17 December 2021, stakeholders from the aged care sector submitted the consensus statement to the FWC for consideration.

6 Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (ACWIC), *Workforce Narrative*, ACWIC, 2021

- Strategic Action 9: Strengthening the interface between aged care and primary/acute care.
  - The ‘Improving access to primary care and other health services’ 2021–22 Budget measure provides \$365.7 million over four years for measures to address issues at the interface between the health and aged care systems. This includes:
    - Dedicated funding to Primary Health Networks to:
      - support RACFs with telehealth capability and after-hours planning
      - develop dementia and aged care referral pathways for GPs
      - commission early intervention and monitoring activities to support senior Australians living in the community, and
      - expand the Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care initiative to all 31 Primary Health Networks.
    - Increasing face-to-face servicing by GPs within RACFs through the Practice Incentives Program GP Aged Care Access Incentive payment.
    - Improved medication management in residential aged care and better support for transition of aged care residents across care settings.
    - Data and evidence to conduct workforce and other planning to meet the needs of senior Australians.
- Strategic Action 10: Improved training and recruitment practices for the Government’s aged care workforce.
  - The Department of Health is reviewing competencies and training arrangements for the My Aged Care workforce, assessors and care finders.
- Strategic Action 11: Establishing an Aged Care Workforce Remote Accord.
  - The Government provided \$1.5 million over three years from 2019–20 to Uniting Care Australia to establish an industry-led Remote Accord.
  - The Remote Accord engages with remote and very remote service providers.
- Strategic Action 12: Establishing a Centre for Growth and Translational Research.
  - On 15 December 2021, the Government announced that Flinders University was awarded the tender to establish the Centre. The Centre is supporting aged care research and support the workforce in translating research into best practice. The Council has worked with the Department of Health to inform the design of the Centre.
  - The first round of research grants opened in March 2022.
- Strategic Action 14: Establishing the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council.
  - The Council was established in May 2019. Funding of over \$10.3 million will support implementation of A Matter of Care until June 2023.

## Key workforce challenges

Since the release of A Matter of Care, there have been significant changes to both the type and severity of challenges faced in aged care. While workforce challenges are being experienced across the whole care and support sector, these are particularly acute in aged care as:

- Service demands continue to increase to meet the needs of an ageing population who are living longer with increasing prevalence of complex chronic diseases.
- There are poor perceptions of career opportunities and working in the aged care sector.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has presented additional challenges for the aged care workforce, particularly outbreaks in RACFs. Workers have experienced burnout, fatigue and stress at unprecedented rates.
- Border closures have made accessing skilled overseas and interstate staff to fill local labour shortages difficult. Many providers have had to rely on surge workforce responses.



## COVID-19 Pandemic – Aged care workforce actions

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on Australians' way of life. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government has spent over \$40 billion on the health response. Our most vulnerable citizens, including those in aged care, have been the focus. This is where COVID-19 has had the greatest impact here and around the world.

The aged care workforce has been supported through several initiatives:

- \$600 million for more than 265,000 workers across 4 COVID-19 bonus payments. These payments to aged care workers recognise their dedication in continuing to care for vulnerable Australians during these difficult times.
- Release of the Infection Prevention and Control Training Module to support health and aged care workers in this crucial training.
- \$147 million to support COVID-19 Surge Workforce measures for residential aged care providers experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks. These measures are available through arrangements with Government-contracted suppliers. Critical surge workforce cover supports providers unable to find staff through their usual recruitment channels.
  - As at 10 March 2022, workforce surge staff have filled approximately 85,570 shifts in aged care services impacted by COVID-19. This includes GPs, nurses, care workers, allied health workers, executive and ancillary staff. 392 surge staff are currently deployed at active RACF outbreak sites.
  - Nurses are being placed from the 2021 Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency pandemic sub-register into aged care positions. As at 10 March 2022, 571 nurses have expressed an interest in being matched with an aged care provider in need of staff.
- The \$128.5 million Aged Care Workers in COVID-19 grant opportunity opened 4 August 2020. The grant reimburses eligible aged care providers for eligible out of pocket costs incurred from implementing single site workforce arrangements.
  - As at 3 March 2022, 288 applications have been received requesting total funding of \$77.9 million. Of these, 111 applications have been approved for total funding of \$32.9 million.

## Workforce demand and supply

The National Skills Commission (NSC) Care Workforce Labour Market Study estimated the total required care and support workforce (including aged, disability and veterans' care) will reach around 721,800 workers (headcount) by 2049–50 (up from 364,100 in 2019–20). These are predominantly direct care workers including managers. Workforce demand is expected to exceed workforce supply with the workforce gap continuing to grow over the next 30 years. The gap is estimated to be approximately 285,800 workers (headcount) by 2049–50.<sup>7</sup>

## Workforce attrition

There is also the need to address replacement as workers leave. The 2020 Aged Care Workforce Census found that residential aged care providers reported 29 per cent of direct care staff working in November 2019 had left by November 2020. This figure was 34 per cent for providers of HCPP and 26 per cent for providers of CHSP. Some of these workers are likely to be working in aged care, but have moved between employers.

These workforce attrition figures are consistent with other research. The Committee for Economic Development of Australia released the *Duty of Care: Meeting the Aged Care Workforce Challenge* report in August 2021. It stated that attrition rates vary between 15 and 30 per cent. The Aged Care Workforce Industry Council's *Workforce Narrative* notes a turnover of staff of around 25 per cent over the last decade.<sup>8</sup> Barriers to strong workforce retention include poor working conditions, lack of career paths and professional development opportunities, and low rates of remuneration.<sup>9</sup>

Despite the reported attrition rates, weekly data collected through the My Aged Care vaccination portal shows steady workforce numbers for residential and home care between September 2021 and March 2022. For example, the residential aged care workforce is consistently around 260,000, as reported regularly by providers. CHSP staff numbers have also remained stable since December 2021. This data captures ancillary, direct care workers and volunteers.

## Skilling the workforce

Aged care service delivery is becoming more complex as people live longer with more chronic and complex conditions. Providers need to employ a larger workforce with more specialised skills and knowledge to deliver care that meets the diverse needs of senior Australians.

The Royal Commission final report found inadequate staffing levels, skill mix and training were principal causes of substandard care in aged care. Many providers reported challenges in providing worker training and supervision due to time and resource shortages.

<sup>7</sup> National Skills Commission, *Care Workforce Labour Market Study*, National Skills Commission, Australian Government, 2022

<sup>8</sup> Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (ACWIC), *Workforce Narrative*, ACWIC, 2021

<sup>9</sup> Senate Community Affairs References Committee, *Future of Australia's aged care sector workforce*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2017

## Cultural safety

There is strong evidence that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples do not access aged care at their level of need and often do not have access to culturally safe care.

The Royal Commission found many factors create barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to aged care. These arise from social and economic disadvantage, a lack of culturally safe care, and the ongoing impacts of colonisation and discrimination. To feel secure and obtain culturally safe services, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prefer to receive services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are not enough Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and other people with high levels of cultural competency, employed across the aged care system.

## Impacts from the reform of the sector

The Government's aged care reform measures include several policies requiring growth of the workforce. For example, from 1 October 2023, residential aged care providers must meet a mandatory care time standard. This equates to a casemix-adjusted average of 200 minutes for each resident each day, including an average of 40 minutes of a registered nurse's time. A registered nurse must also be on site for a minimum of 16 hours per day.

The Government is also investing in 80,000 new home care packages. This means there will be 275,600 home care packages available by June 2023.





# 5. Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022–2025

This Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022–2025 outlines the Australian Government’s targeted and coordinated action to address aged care workforce challenges.

The Action Plan is underpinned by the Government’s vision and goals for the aged care workforce. It builds on the Government’s significant investments, including support for implementing A Matter of Care.

A skilled, responsive and adequate workforce is critical for the success of the significant aged care reforms the Government is progressing.

## Vision

To grow a skilled, diverse and valued aged care workforce with the knowledge and compassion to deliver safe, high quality care that puts senior Australians first.

## Goals

The Government has 3 goals to meet the vision:

<p><b>Grow:</b> Promote approaches that attract and retain workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care.</p>	<p><b>Skill:</b> Support a continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.</p>	<p><b>Enable:</b> Support aged care providers to develop sustainable and coordinated approaches for growing a skilled workforce, with an emphasis on thin markets and meeting the needs of diverse communities.</p>
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The Government will achieve these goals through the delivery of workforce initiatives. Successful delivery of each initiative will contribute to achieving one or more of the Government’s goals to grow, skill and enable the aged care workforce.

## Benefits

The initiatives in this Action Plan will benefit:

- **Senior Australians:** improved quality of care, improved access to care, greater choice of supports, and diversity and continuity of services.
- **Aged care workers:** improved career pathways, higher adoption and completion of training, enhanced workplace support and improved job satisfaction.
- **Aged care providers:** increased capacity to meet workforce needs, increased adoption of innovative service models, increased efficiencies, better care delivery, increased consumer satisfaction, greater visibility of opportunities in the market, increased capacity to meet demand especially in thin markets.
- **The economy:** through job creation, and increases in the number of business opportunities across Australia, including regional, rural and remote areas.

### Implementing the Aged Care Workforce Action Plan: 2022–2025

Initiatives underway include:

- Aged Care Transition to Practice Program
- Aged Care Workforce Advisory Service
- 'A Life Changing Life' Campaign
- 33,800 additional training places for new or existing aged care workers through the Vocational Education and Training system, and
- 115 aged care scholarships awarded for graduate level studies.

In 2022 and beyond, these initiatives will be delivered:

- first Aged Care Registered Nurses' Payment paid to eligible registered nurses
- commencement of the Home Care Workforce Support Program
- expansion of the Aged Care Transition to Practice Program with additional places across more locations
- Aged Care Nurse and Allied Health Dementia Care Scholarships opened for applications
- establishment of the free, online training system for aged care workers
- 15,000 additional dedicated JobTrainer places for aged care workers
- more Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- clinical placements for nurses in the care and support sector, and
- more support for locum practitioners in rural areas to relieve workforce shortages.

## Growing the workforce

The Government is investing in aged care workforce initiatives that attract and retain a diverse range of workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care. Initiatives include place-based approaches targeting local workers and national projects.

Initiatives include:

- **Local Jobs Program** – brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level through the Local Recovery Fund. The program has a focus on region specific employment pathways identified in the region's Local Jobs Plan. Care Sector Employer Liaison Officers work with industry to help employers with their recruitment needs and workforce solutions.
- **Launch into Work Program** – supports employers to design and deliver preemployment projects to prepare job seekers for entry level roles in their organisation.
- **Workforce Specialists** – co-design projects to meet the workforce needs of identified industries and occupations, and connects them to eligible job seekers.
- **Home Care Workforce Support Program** – supports home care providers across all jurisdictions and in remote areas to attract and support 13,000 new workers to be skilled to provide home care services. This program responds to a number of recommendations from the Royal Commission, including recommendations 39, 78, 83 and 114.
- **Aged Care Registered Nurses' Payment** – provides financial incentives to encourage registered nurses to join the sector and/or continue working for the same aged care provider. This payment responds to recommendation 83 from the Royal Commission.
- **'A Life Changing Life' Campaign** – aims to raise awareness of the varied and rewarding job opportunities that exist across the care and support sector (aged care, disability support and veterans' care). This campaign responds to recommendation 76 from the Royal Commission.

Finding meaningful employment for Australians is the first priority. Migration pathways are also important in the supply of aged care workers in some areas and in diverse communities where local recruitment strategies are unable to attract the right workers.

The Government is using various migration pathways with industry, including:

- **Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme** – assists aged care providers struggling to fill vacancies locally with access to Pacific and Timor-Leste aged care workers.
- **Labour Agreements** – streamlines and provides flexibility in sourcing overseas aged care workers where providers experiencing critical staffing shortages that cannot be met by local workers.
- Temporary relaxing of work restrictions for **Student visa holders** – allows students to work unlimited hours in the aged care sector before course commencement and while their course is in session. This provides short-term relief to workforce shortages due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Priority Migration Skilled Occupation Lists (PMSOL) includes Nurse (Aged Care)** – employer sponsored nominations and visa applications on the PMSOL are given priority processing.

**Grow: Promote approaches that attract and retain workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care.**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>
Home Care Workforce Support Program	\$91.8 million	Grants provided to organisations or consortia. They will collaborate with stakeholders to attract, train and support the retention of 13,000 new personal care workers for the home care sector. <b>Commencement: First quarter 2022</b> <b>End date: June 2023</b>	Increase the number of workers available to deliver home care packages to senior Australians.
Aged Care Registered Nurses' Payment	\$148.7 million	A payment of up to \$3,700 per year for registered nurses who work with the same aged care provider over the eligibility period. Extra payments of up to \$2,300 for nurses who work in rural and remote areas, hold post-graduate qualifications or take on additional training responsibilities. <b>Commencement: November 2022</b> <b>End date: June 2024</b>	Encourage registered nurses to work in aged care or continue working for the same aged care provider.
Care and Support Workforce Campaign	\$23.1 million	'A Life Changing Life' campaign shines a light on the rewarding, varied and sustainable job opportunities available in aged care, disability support and veterans' care. The campaign website contains resources to help jobseekers find a role that suits their skills. This includes nursing, allied health and personal care work. <b>Commencement: August 2021</b> <b>End date: June 2023</b>	Encourage Australians with the right skills and qualities to consider a career in the care and support workforce.
Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme	N/A	A program run by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Pacific Labour Facility. It assists aged care providers to become approved employers for recruiting Pacific and Timorese aged care workers through the PALM scheme for one to 4 years. <b>Commencement: Ongoing</b>	Reduce workforce shortages in regional and remote areas by supporting aged care providers to employ Pacific and Timorese aged care workers.

## Grow: Promote approaches that attract and retain workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care.

Initiative	Investment	What is it?	What will it achieve
Labour Agreements	N/A	The Department of Home Affairs and the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council will assist aged care providers to use Labour Agreements to employ skilled (including lower-skilled) workers. These Agreements set the conditions for recruiting overseas workers and ensures that regulatory worker protections are maintained. It includes the level of qualification and experience required and appropriate English language standards. <b>Commencement: Ongoing</b>	Reduce workforce shortages by increasing the pool of aged care workers available through flexible visa concessions.
Temporary relaxation of work restrictions for student visa holders	N/A	The temporary relaxing of work restrictions for student visa holders allows them to work unlimited hours in the aged care sector before course commencement and while their course is in session. <b>Commencement: 2020</b> <b>End date: Subject to ongoing review</b>	Reduce workforce shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic by enabling aged care providers to offer more shifts to student visa holders while they are studying.
Priority processing of visa applications for the occupation of Nurse (Aged Care)	N/A	Priority processing of visa applications for registered nurses sponsored by an aged care service provider. This is one of 44 occupations listed as critical to supporting economic recovery. <b>Commencement: 2 September 2020</b> <b>End date: Subject to ongoing review</b>	Reduce workforce shortages caused by the COVID-19 pandemic by allowing employer-sponsored aged care nurses to travel to Australia and fill urgent skills gaps.
Job Fairs	\$8 million	The Department of Education, Skills and Employment holds regular Job Fairs across Australia to connect local job seekers with employment opportunities. Aged care organisations are invited to exhibit at these Jobs Fairs. <b>End date: June 2022</b>	Provide local solutions to grow the aged care workforce by linking job seekers with employers.

**Grow: Promote approaches that attract and retain workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care.**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>
Local Jobs Program	\$273.6 million	Brings together local expertise, resources and funding for region specific employment pathways. A component of the program includes \$50 million from 2021 to 2025 under the National Priority Fund. This is for innovative local solutions to address barriers to employment for job seekers. Local Employment Facilitators can advise and support aged care providers across 51 employment regions. <b>Commencement: 1 September 2020</b> <b>End date: 20 June 2025</b>	Support local solutions and projects to help job seekers find work.
Launch into Work Program	N/A	Supports employers to design and deliver pre-employment projects that prepare job seekers for entry level roles in their organisation. The program enables employers to select job seekers who have the right values and attributes, and provide them the basic technical skills needed for a role. This involves training, work experience and mentoring. <b>Commencement: July 2017</b> <b>End date: June 2028</b>	Support aged care providers to recruit and prepare job seekers for entry level roles in their organisation.
Australian Apprenticeships Incentives System (AAIS)	\$3.3 billion over five years	Government support under the AAIS focuses on priority occupations including the care and support sector, to build the skills that Australia needs most. The system includes wage subsidies for employers and support payments for apprentices. This will assist to attract and retain apprentices in areas of skills need. <b>Commencement: July 2022, ongoing</b>	Increase the attractiveness of an apprenticeship in areas of critical skills shortages (such as the care and support sector). Support apprentices to meet the costs of work and training in the early years of the apprenticeship.

**Grow: Promote approaches that attract and retain workers with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to work and pursue a career in aged care.**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>
Workforce Australia – Workforce Specialists	\$12.5 million each financial year from 2022–23	<p>Workforce Specialists will deliver projects that connect identified industries and occupations, including aged care, with eligible job seekers. The Workforce Connections: Workforce Specialist Project Framework has identified significant labour market opportunities in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry for job seekers.</p> <p><b>Commencement: July 2022, ongoing</b></p>	<p>Project-based workforce solutions that connect industry and employers, such as aged care providers, to job seekers. Support job seekers to build the skills and attributes needed to work in the industry.</p>
Positive Humanity Social Change Campaign	\$0.26 million	<p>This campaign encourages young people to consider a career in the human services sector. The Human Services Skills Organisation and Year13 are implementing the campaign. It includes an e-learning short course, social media and promotional activities, an online expo, and targeted engagement to Year13’s national database of over 1.6 million young people.</p> <p><b>Commencement: December 2021</b> <b>End date: December 2022</b></p>	<p>Improve perceptions about working in the human services sector and increase training and employment rates.</p>

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## Skilling the workforce

The Government is investing in aged care workforce initiatives to support a continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.

### Initiatives for nurses and allied health professionals include:

- **Aged Care Transition to Practice Program** – ensures aged care nurses in their first year of clinical practice have the aged care specialty skills to deliver safe, high quality clinical care to senior Australians.
- **Aged Care Nursing and Allied Health Dementia Care Scholarship Program** – boosts the skills and qualifications of aged care nurses and improves dementia care expertise of allied health professionals.

These initiatives respond to recommendations 83 and 114 from the Royal Commission.

### Initiatives for personal care workers include:

- **48,800 additional training places through JobTrainer for new or existing aged care workers** – to enrol in aged care related qualifications. This includes a Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) or the Entry to Care Roles Skill Set.

These additional training places respond to recommendations 78 and 114 from the Royal Commission.

### Initiatives to develop specialist skills for the aged care workforce include:

- **Dementia and palliative care training** – supports improved practice and knowledge of dementia and palliative care of aged care workers.
- **Diversity, inclusion and intersectionality training** – ensures the workforce understands the importance of diversity and inclusion for delivering quality of care.
- **Online Skills Development Program** – provides online training modules for aged care workers.

These initiatives respond to a range of recommendations from the Royal Commission, including recommendations 30, 48, 77, 78, 80 and 114.

These initiatives will be supported by the \$34 million Aged Care Centre for Growth and Translational Research. The industry-led, workforce research program will translate evidence into best practice, including in the use of technology. The Centre was established in December 2021 in response to Strategic Action 12 from A Matter of Care. It will drive innovation to increase workforce capacity and capability.



## Case study: Aged Care Transition to Practice Program

Ryan recently graduated with a Bachelor of Nursing degree and was hired by a local residential aged care facility.

Ryan was excited to begin working as a registered nurse, but was apprehensive about aged care. He had heard aged care facilities were challenging environments, and was worried he wouldn't receive the same level of support as a recent graduate in a hospital setting.

His employer offered him the opportunity to participate in the Aged Care Transition to Practice (ACTTP) Program. Through the ACTTP Program, Ryan accessed aged care-specific training which boosted his skills in delivering high quality clinical care to residents.

Ryan learned a lot through these training courses. At university, Ryan was not exposed to the complex clinical care needs of older people. His ACTTP Program training covered diabetes, dementia care, palliative care and much more.

The ACTTP Program also connected Ryan with a mentor, Maria. Maria is a senior aged care registered nurse with 10 years of experience. She guided Ryan through many of the challenges he faced in his first year of clinical practice. Maria provided advice and answered Ryan's questions. For example, Ryan found working with older people receiving palliative care to be emotionally and professionally challenging. Maria gave Ryan support and guidance, and helped him access useful resources.

Maria also assisted Ryan to develop a career plan in aged care. Ryan was not aware of the different professional pathways, depending on his goals and interests. Ryan learned that aged care gave nurses the opportunity to develop leadership and management skills more quickly than in other healthcare settings.

Thanks to this professional coaching, Ryan will undertake a Graduate Certificate in Clinical Leadership, with assistance from the Aged Care Nurses and Allied Health Dementia Care Scholarship Program. He hopes to become a clinical nurse consultant in the future to help aged care facilities deliver best practice care to residents.

**Skill: A continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.**

Initiative	Investment	What is it?	What will it achieve
<b>Nurses and allied health professionals</b>			
Aged Care Transition to Practice Program	\$5.2 million	Specialist training in aged care nursing and mentorship for registered and enrolled nurses. <b>Target number of participants: 1,300</b> <b>Commencement: July 2021</b> <b>End date: June 2024</b>	Showcase the unique career opportunities that exist in the sector, and improve aged care nursing skills. Increase in new nurses working in aged care.
Aged Care Nursing and Allied Health Dementia Care Scholarship Programs	\$31.5 million	Scholarships for aged care nurses, personal care workers and allied health professionals. This scholarship program includes a completion bonus related to study load (e.g. Graduate Diploma or Masters). There are guaranteed places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers. Preference is given to people living and/or working in regional, rural and remote (MM3-7) locations. <b>Target number of scholarships: 1,900</b> <b>Commencement: 2020</b> <b>End date: 2024</b>	Increase the skills and qualifications of aged care nurses and attract more nurses to aged care. Improve dementia care expertise of allied health professionals, and encourage greater participation in aged care.
Clinical placements for nursing students in the care and support sector	\$15 million	High quality clinical placements for nursing students in the care and support sector. Higher education providers will have access to clinical facilitators to supervise students in the care and support sector. <b>Target number of students: up to 5,250</b> <b>Commencement: 2022-23</b> <b>End date: June 2024</b>	Increase uptake of nursing careers in the care and support sector on graduation.
Training for aged care nurses to administer vaccinations	\$50.4 million	Grant funding for aged care providers to train 4,000 residential aged care Registered Nurses (RN) as Authorised Nurse Immunisers. Funding includes training costs, and paid study leave for each RN plus back fill arrangements. It also includes study leave for continuing professional development to support nurses maintain the accreditation. <b>Commencement: 1 July 2022</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2026</b>	Increase the capability and capacity of registered nurses in residential aged care to administer vaccines to residents and workers. Increased training and practice opportunities may also attract more nurses to aged care.

**Skill: A continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.**

Initiative	Investment	What is it?	What will it achieve
Infection protection and control (IPC) training places	\$37.6 million	<p>Funding for up to 2,907 training places to support aged care nurses to undertake critical IPC training.</p> <p>This will reduce the financial burden on residential aged care providers by reimbursing costs associated with training through a grant process.</p> <p><b>Commencement: July 2022</b> <b>End date: September 2023</b></p>	<p>Increase the skills of nurses in residential aged care to improve IPC practices to effectively respond if an outbreak occurs.</p> <p>Increased training opportunities may also attract more nurses to aged care.</p>
<b>Personal care workers</b>			
An additional 48,800 training places through JobTrainer for aged care related qualifications and short courses	Part of the \$500 million expansion of JobTrainer and \$50 million 2022-23 JobTrainer Aged Care Boost	<p>48,800 additional training places for new or existing aged care workers to enrol in aged care related qualifications and short courses. This includes the Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) or the Entry into Care Roles Skill Set (Ageing).</p> <p><b>Commencement: 1 October 2021</b> <b>End date: 31 December 2024</b></p>	<p>Increase the skills of personal care workers entering or currently working within aged care.</p> <p>Increase the pipeline of job ready personal care workers</p>
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Toolkit	\$0.25 million	<p>The Human Services Skills Organisation is developing a RPL toolkit for the CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support (aged care and disability pathways). This will assist in identifying and recognising existing skills of the workforce across the sectors.</p> <p><b>Commencement: August 2021</b> <b>End date: April 2022</b></p>	<p>Simplified RPL process for students (employees) and employers enabling employees to complete or work towards completion of their Certificate III in Individual Support.</p>

**Skill: A continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.**

Initiative	Investment	What is it?	What will it achieve
<b>Specialised skills for aged care workforce</b>			
Palliative Care Training	\$21.4 million	<p>Training to support aged care workers deliver quality palliative and end-of-life care. This will be achieved by expanding on well-established palliative care training and education activities delivered through national palliative care projects. These include the Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach, End of Life Directions for Aged Care and Palliative Aged Care Outcomes Program.</p> <p>Targeted communications activities will educate health and aged care professionals on palliative care, raise awareness of available tools, and generate informed conversations between senior Australians, their families, and health and aged care professionals.</p> <p><b>Commencement: November 2021</b> <b>End date: June 2024</b></p>	<p>Improve the palliative care skills of more than 2,000 residential aged care staff. This will benefit thousands of residents who will receive care that is appropriate, timely and meets their individual needs at the end of life.</p>
Dementia Training Program	\$27.8 million	<p>A national approach to accredited education and professional development in dementia care. It includes 1,000 additional training places for GP and GP registrars, 60 communities of practice and advanced dementia training for personal care workers.</p> <p><b>Commencement: due to commence in Q2, 2022</b> <b>End date: June 2024</b></p>	<p>Improve the care of senior Australian's living with dementia through building aged care workers' knowledge and practice in dementia care.</p>
Diversity, inclusion and intersectionality training	\$5.2 million	<p>Culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTIQ+ training for the aged care sector. The Silver Rainbow program by the National LGBTIQ+ Health Alliance assists aged care providers to deliver inclusive and respectful care to older LGBTI people. The Partners in Culturally Appropriate Care program supports aged care providers to deliver culturally appropriate and sensitive care that meets the needs of senior Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.</p> <p><b>Commencement: 2021-22</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2023</b></p>	<p>Increase the skills of aged care workers to deliver care that meets the needs of senior Australians from diverse backgrounds and experiences.</p>

**Skill: A continuous learning environment. This includes approaches for workers and providers to upskill, attain formal qualifications and put learnings into practice.**

Initiative	Investment	What is it?	What will it achieve
Online Skills Development Program	\$2.6 million	Targeted online training available for nurses, personal care workers and allied health workers in aged care. Modules include dementia care, palliative care, trauma-informed service delivery and the Australian aged care system. <b>Commencement: due to commence by July 2022</b> <b>End date: June 2023</b>	Aged care workers have the skills to deliver quality care in contemporary aged care settings.
Mental health online training	\$0.9 million (GST inclusive)	Online training for mental health practitioners and the aged care workforce to build understanding and awareness of aged care residents' mental health. Two training modules are available for free on the Australian Psychological Society website: a targeted module for practitioners and a general awareness module for lower intensity workers in the aged care workforce. <b>Commencement: 13 June 2019</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2022</b>	Mental health practitioners and the aged care workforce have the skills to understand and support aged care residents' mental health.
Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme (PHMSS)	\$13.9 million	Scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to complete their studies and join the health and care workforce. The number of scholarships has increased from 100 per year to 250 in 2022–23 and 150 in 2023–24. <b>Commencement: 1 July 2022</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2024</b>	Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples supported to gain the qualifications and skills to enter the health and care workforce.

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## Enabling the workforce

The Government is investing in aged care workforce initiatives to support aged care providers to develop sustainable and coordinated approaches for growing a skilled workforce, with an emphasis on thin markets and meeting the needs of diverse communities.

Initiatives include:

- **Workforce Advisory Service** – provides free, independent and confidential advice to support providers to develop strategies to attract, retain and grow the skills of their workers. The service supports providers to become ‘reform ready’ and develop coordinated service-level workforce training and skills plans. This service responds to recommendation 75 from the Royal Commission.
- **Indigenous Employment Initiative** – creates employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and support a skilled workforce to provide culturally appropriate and safe care.
- **Centre for Growth and Translational Research** – conducts on-the-ground research with aged care workers, providers, researchers and people who use aged care services. The Centre’s research program aims to expand evidence-based workforce solutions, with technology being a considered in each project.
- **Rural Locum Assistance Program** – expanding to assist rural and regional aged care providers impacted by high staff turnover or sudden departures of personnel. It provides access to a temporary surge workforce while they recruit. Incentives for permanent placements are available. This program responds to recommendations 54 and 75 from the Royal Commission.

The Government is also undertaking initiatives to reduce burden on aged care providers, including those that provide services across the care and support sector through:

- **Aligning regulation across the care and support sector** – the Government is pursuing alignment of regulation across the care and support sector to improve quality and safety of care for consumers and participants. Alignment will reduce duplication of obligations, and enable providers and workers to operate more seamlessly across the sector.
- **National care and support worker regulation** – the Government is also committed to implementing nationally consistent worker screening and a code of conduct across the care and support sector.
- **Improved data collection and sharing** – enhances linkages with other aged care data sets to inform future policy development and evaluation.

**Enable: Support aged care providers to develop sustainable and coordinated approaches for growing a skilled workforce, with an emphasis on thin markets and meeting the needs of diverse communities.**

Initiative	Investment	What is it?	What will it achieve
Supporting the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council	\$10.9 million	The Council is funded by the Government to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the 14 strategic actions from A Matter of Care. The Council works collaboratively with the sector to design practical solutions to improve workforce outcomes such as the workforce planning tool, designing the future job structure for the sector. <b>Commencement: December 2020</b> <b>End date: June 2023</b>	Together with the aged care sector and Government, the Council supports the workforce to deliver on the community's high expectations for the sector – that all senior Australians have access to high quality aged care. To achieve this, the Council is developing practical tools and resources, shifting attitudes to caring, and increasing capacity and capability of the workforce.
Workforce Advisory Service	\$5.9 million	A free, independent and confidential service that supports workforce planning for residential aged care and home care service providers. <b>Commencement: October 2021</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2023</b>	Aged care providers will be 'reform ready' and able to apply best practice workforce planning approaches. This includes accessing and using workforce data.
National care and support worker regulation	\$105.6 million	The extension of NDIS worker screening arrangements to the aged care and veterans' care workforce. A single code of conduct will be developed for the whole care and support sector. <b>Commencement: 1 July 2022, ongoing</b>	Common arrangements for worker regulation across the care and support workforce will support worker mobility across sectors and increase quality and safety of services for care recipients.
Aligning regulation across care and support	\$23.1 million	Short, medium and longer term reform to align care and support regulation to improve quality and safety for care and support recipients. Alignment will reduce duplication of obligations, and enable providers and workers to operate more seamlessly across the sector. <b>Commencement: 1 July 2021, ongoing</b>	Regulatory alignment will improve information sharing between regulators, streamline reporting processes, and align standards and auditing/assessment reporting.
Improved data collection and sharing	\$6.3 million	Build on the previous aged care workforce surveys and increase frequency of data collection. The Department of Health is working with the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to develop and share data. <b>Commencement: 1 July 2021</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2023</b>	Improved data collection will increase understanding of aged care workforce trends and inform future policy development.

**Enable: Support aged care providers to develop sustainable and coordinated approaches for growing a skilled workforce, with an emphasis on thin markets and meeting the needs of diverse communities.**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>
Expansion of the Rural Locum Assistance Program	\$25.1 million	The program will provide access to a temporary surge workforce while rural and remote aged care providers recruit workers. Incentives for permanent placements are also available. <b>Commencement: 2022</b> <b>End date: 2024</b>	Assist aged care providers in rural and regional areas affected by high staff turnover or sudden departures of personnel.
Supporting the review of the Certificate III in Individual Support and Certificate IV in Ageing Support	N/A	Following sector consultation, the primary vocational qualifications for aged care workers have been reviewed and updated to ensure contemporary practices. <b>Commencement: mid-2022, ongoing</b>	Revised qualifications will increase the skills of care and support workers and improve the safety and quality of care.
Supporting the Centre for Growth and Translational Research (Centre)	\$34 million	The Centre will conduct research with aged care workers, providers, researchers and aged care recipients. Findings will be used to create innovative solutions for the sector to deliver best practice care. The establishment of the Centre is Strategic Action 12 from A Matter of Care. <b>Commencement: 2021–2022</b> <b>End date: 30 June 2024</b>	Increase aged care workforce efficiencies, and enable technology uptake and innovation.
Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training (RHMT) Program	\$32.7 million	The RHMT Program will be expanded to enhance the quality of aged care services in rural and remote areas. The program will create opportunities for nursing and allied health students, and Indigenous students experience aged care clinical placements in rural and remote communities. <b>Commencement: 1 July 2022, ongoing</b>	Five successful grant recipients have been selected across 5 states. The program will be expanded to another 5 sites and will increase training infrastructure within aged care settings in rural and remote areas.
Remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Service Development Assistance Panel	\$4 million	Free professional support advice on clinical care, operations, governance and regulation, and infrastructure helps aged care providers located in remote areas or who provide care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. <b>Commencement: 2010, ongoing</b>	Improve the quality of aged care services to remote areas and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older peoples.



**Enable: Support aged care providers to develop sustainable and coordinated approaches for growing a skilled workforce, with an emphasis on thin markets and meeting the needs of diverse communities.**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Investment</b>	<b>What is it?</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>
Cooperative and Mutual Enterprises (CMEs) Support Program	\$7 million	<p>CMEs are organisations that are owned and run by members, such as consumers, service providers, employees or people in the local community. The program will support the broader care and support sector to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop sustainable and coordinated approaches in growing a skilled workforce</li> <li>• start-up 6-7 CMEs that will deliver care services in areas of need, and</li> <li>• deliver up to 6 additional projects to help grow existing CMEs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Commencement: July 2022</b> <b>End date: July 2025</b></p>	<p>More CMEs in the care and support sector will help to address critical care workforce issues (such as employee attraction and retention), enhance senior Australian's choice, and increase access to quality care services.</p>
Indigenous Employment Initiative	\$86 million	<p>An ongoing grants program subsidising the employment and training costs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to provide culturally appropriate and safe non-clinical aged care services to older people.</p> <p><b>Commencement: July 2020</b> <b>End date: June 2023</b></p>	<p>Increase employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and support a skilled workforce to provide culturally appropriate and safe care.</p>
Boosting the Local Care Workforce	\$41.5 million	<p>Regional coordinators across Australia provide support to aged, disability and veterans' care providers to expand their care services, overcome local workforce challenges and gather intelligence on local and national issues to inform future policy.</p> <p><b>Commencement: 2018</b> <b>End date: 2023</b></p>	<p>Support providers to grow their business and workforce to better meet the needs of NDIS participants, aged care and veterans' care consumers.</p>
Expansion of the NDIS Demand Map	\$2.4 million	<p>Highlights market demand and supply gap information across the care and support sector including disability, aged care and veterans' care. This supports providers with business decisions such as operation expansion.</p> <p><b>Commencement: mid-2022, ongoing</b></p>	<p>Expansion of the map to include information about aged care.</p>

# 6. Conclusion

Growing a skilled, diverse and valued aged care workforce is central to the successful implementation of the Australian Government's aged care reforms.

The challenges facing the aged care workforce continue to evolve and the Action Plan outlines the Government's targeted and coordinated response over 3 years.

The Government acknowledges the need to remain agile and responsive to the needs of senior Australians and the workforce that is critical to supporting wellbeing.

The success of this Action Plan cannot be achieved without the collective action of the aged care workforce, providers, peak bodies, education and training providers, and state and territory governments.

The implementation of the Action Plan will be informed by feedback from senior Australians, their families and carers, and stakeholders. This will enable opportunities to adapt and enhance the delivery of aged care workforce initiatives.

Monitoring of the Action Plan will be supported by initiative specific evaluations and the Workforce Advisory Working Group, which was established under the National Aged Care Advisory Council (Advisory Council). The Advisory Council will provide expert advice and guidance on the implementation of the Government's aged care reforms.

Beyond the Action Plan, the Government will continue to work with relevant stakeholders in the design and delivery of aged care workforce initiatives to ensure the delivery of safe, high quality care that puts senior Australians first.



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**Let's change aged care,  
together**

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