

AGED CARE

WORKFORCE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

COMMUNIQUÉ

2 SEPTEMBER & 7 OCTOBER 2021 COUNCIL MEETINGS

Implementing the Royal Commission's recommendations

The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has shown that having a workforce with the right skills mix and attributes is essential to delivering person-centred, quality care.

The success of any reforms to the aged care sector are contingent upon a clear pathway to grow, upskill and better acknowledge the aged care workforce. The Council is committed to creating a better, more sustainable aged care system across Australia with a clear focus on building the capacity of the aged care workforce so that workers feel supported and valued to deliver the care that older people, their families and carers expect.

The majority of recommendations reiterate the importance of the work the Council is currently undertaking to oversee, coordinate and sequence the implementation of 'A Matter of Care'. Within the report, Commissioners Briggs and Pagone made specific recommendations for the Council to implement (recommendation 76).

An update on the Council's activities against the recommendation is outlined below.

Recommendation 76.1

By 1 July 2021, the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council Limited should:

- a. invite the Australian Government to become a member**
- b. review membership of the Council to ensure it is comprised of individuals, including worker representatives, who represent the breadth and diversity of the aged care workforce with an appropriate mix of skills and experience to lead and drive change across the sector**

On 1 July 2021, the Council welcomed its inaugural Chair, Libby Lyons. The Council has commenced the process of filling two Board Director positions. Consideration is being given to the specific skills and expertise to capture the diversity of the aged care sector and their workforce.

The Council values its relationship with the Australian Government. The Chair and CEO meet monthly with Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck (Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care Services), and a senior member of the Department of Health is invited to attend each month's Board meeting through the Department of Health. Council staff work closely with the Department of Health to oversee and sequence the implementation of 'A Matter of Care'.

Recommendations 76.2 & 76.4

2. (Commissioner Briggs) By 30 June 2022, the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council Limited should:

- a. **review the qualifications and skills framework to address current and future competency and skill requirements and to create longer-term career paths for aged care workers, in conjunction with the work to be undertaken to seek review of award rates in aged care**
- b. **review all aged care occupational groups, jobs and job grades to ensure they reflect the skills, capabilities, knowledge and competencies as well as the structure required in the new aged care system**
- c. **revise the competency and accreditation requirements for all job grades in the aged care sector to ensure education and training builds the required skills and knowledge**
- d. **standardise job titles, job designs, job grades and job definitions for the aged care sector, and**
- e. **lead the Australian Government and the aged care sector to a consensus to support applications to the Fair Work Commission to improve wages based on work value and/or equal remuneration, which may include redefining job classifications and job grades in the relevant awards.**

4. From 1 July 2022, the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council Limited should map career pathways for the aged care sector. These career pathways should:

- a. **highlight opportunities for nurses to advance in clinical and managerial roles in the aged care sector**
- b. **facilitate personal care workers having opportunities to move laterally across aged care, disability care, community care and primary health care and vertically in aged care by advancing into nursing, specialist care roles and supervisory or managerial roles**
- c. **develop and document career opportunities in the aged care sector for non-direct care workers, including kitchen hands, cooks, cleaners, gardeners, drivers, security and people performing administrative roles.**

The Council has commenced work to document the future structure of the aged care workforce, that is, the job roles and job families that will be required across the workforce to deliver models of care which holistically address the physical, social and emotional needs of older people. This will include career pathways mapping, acknowledging that the Government has also asked the Human Services Skills Organisation to lead on work regarding qualifications and career pathways.

This work will benefit the key groups in the following ways:

- **Employees:** Outline clear career pathways for people working in aged care
- **Employers:** Support business and service delivery planning now and into the future
- **Government:** Assist with aged care policy, workforce and budget planning and development
- **Registered training organisations:** Inform the skills and knowledge required by future students enrolled in Certificate III and IV courses

The Council has accepted the Royal Commission's recommendation to document consensus to support applications to the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to improve wages based on work value and/or equal remuneration (76.2.e). While we have an important role to play, the Council is not party to any application before the FWC. We are holding facilitated discussions with key stakeholders (unions, provider organisations and consumer groups) with the aim of achieving

consensus in relation to the applications. Arising from these discussions a report will be submitted to the FWC by 19 November 2021. Refer to the Council's earlier [Communique](#) for further information.

Recommendation 76.3

The Aged Care Workforce Council Limited should work collaboratively with the Aged Care Workforce Planning Division so that its work complements aged care workforce design and planning.

The Council works closely with the newly established Market and Workforce Division within the Department of Health. If an Aged Care Workforce Planning Division is established, the Council will extend the working relationship to the new Division.

Recommendation 76.5

By 1 July 2022, the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council Limited should lead a national multimedia campaign aimed at raising awareness of career paths and opportunities in aged care.

The Council ran the first part of our '[Bring your thing](#)' campaign from March until August this year. The social media campaign encouraged those whose employment was impacted by the pandemic (e.g. hospitality, retail, tourism, travel), and who have transferable skills, to consider a role in aged care.

We also targeted males, younger people and those wanting a career change where they can make a positive change each and every day by bringing their IT, finance or communications skills to a new sector. In addition, we aimed to positively change people's perceptions of ageing and aged care.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has recently launched its '[Life changing life](#)' campaign. We are considering where we can deliver most impact following the DSS campaign before we develop our next steps, noting that Council funding for the social change campaign is significantly smaller than the DSS budget.

Recommendation 76.6

The Australian Government should provide the necessary funding and resources to enable the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council Limited to implement the workforce recommendations of this Royal Commission and to build on its work implementing the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce's strategic actions.

The Council receives funding from the Commonwealth Government to oversee, coordinate and sequence the implementation 'A Matter of Care'. Funding does not cover implementation of all Strategic Actions under A Matter of Care, particularly those which relate to Royal Commission recommendations such as 76.2 a, b, c and d where responsibility lies with other Government portfolios such as Education, Skills and Employment.

Information on opportunities and how to participate in the work of the Council will be listed on our website www.acwic.com.au.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Council via contact@acwic.com.au.

The Council's next Board meeting will take place on 4 November 2021.