

Communiqué

12 May 2021 Council Meeting

The Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (ACWIC) is here to support the aged care sector. We have been working hard to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and make progress on key projects.

Read on to find out more about:

- The new [workforce planning tool](#) for the aged care sector, which will soon be available via the ACWIC website
 - Your opportunity to inform the [future structure of the aged care workforce](#)
 - The evolution of the Voluntary Industry Code of Practice to a [best practice program](#)
 - The Council's [new website](#) and resource hub
 - And other [news](#) from the aged sector
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Workforce Planning Tool

Work is almost complete on the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council's Workforce Planning Tool. We look forward to sharing more details about the tool and how it can support you at the launch, the details of which will be announced very soon.

This interactive online resource for the aged care sector and will be available at no cost via the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council (ACWIC) [website](#). The tool will help workforce activity planners to better understand workforce planning, adopt proactive workforce planning practices, and sustain the practice over the long term. It's suitable for small to medium aged care providers across residential and community care settings. Data entered is completely confidential and is not accessible by anyone other than the user.

The tool has been co-designed with and for the aged care sector, by experts in design and technology from [Portable](#). It is easy to use and will fit with the daily demands of those responsible for workforce planning.

The Workforce Planning Tool is an outcome of Strategic Action 6 from [A Matter of Care](#).

Designing the future structure of the aged care workforce

Another project that is well underway is our work with the sector and [BDO Australia](#) to design the future structure of the aged care workforce, which is an outcome of Strategic Action 4 from [A Matter of Care](#).

The intention of this project is to design a workforce structure – 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. We are examining potential job pathways and career options, to lay out a plan for meaningful jobs with a long-term future. This will allow workers and volunteers over time to continue to grow and develop their skills within the sector.

Our first survey about the current state of the aged care workforce received many responses from across the aged care sector. Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far.

The next steps in the consultation process are:

- Survey #2 – the future state of Australia's aged care workforce. To provide your comments, follow this link: https://BDOAU.checkboxau.com/ACWIC_AgedCareWorkforce_FutureState
- A series of interactive webinars will take place in late May and early June to outline the project's approach, current findings and perspectives. We invite you to participate to provide your feedback and input. Further information on how to register is available on our [website](#).
- Following the webinars, the draft report will be available for review. This will be an opportunity to confirm that we have captured your input correctly and for you to provide any final feedback.

If you have already registered your interest, you will receive invitations to participate in the final stages of the consultation process. If you would like to be involved in this important work, please register your interest by email to participate@acwic.com.au.

Voluntary Industry Code of Practice to become a best practice program

In response to feedback from the sector, the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council is working to re-frame the Voluntary Industry Code of Practice (VICOP) into a best practice program. While many of the elements of VICOP will be retained, including the seven principles that underpin the code, this re-framing is an opportunity for the aged care sector to show pro-active leadership and lift the reputation of the industry.

The objectives of the best practice program will be;

- to shift negative public perceptions of aged care through employers striving for excellence beyond compliance measures, to ensure excellent care for older Australians,
- embed truly consumer-centred care in practice, and
- create a skilled workforce that is more responsive to changing service demands.

Background

The Aged Care Voluntary Industry Code of Practice is designed to support providers to focus on continuous improvement. Since its launch in 2021, 69 aged care providers have

pledged to the code, including several of the largest residential aged care and home care providers.

The development of the VICOP and the transition to a best practice program aligns with Strategic Action 2 and 5 from [A Matter of Care](#).

Development of the best practice program

The new best practice program will be developed in stages and in consultation with the aged care sector.

An initial Community of Practice consultation was held in late 2021, which decided to retain valuable elements of VICOP while seeking significant improvements.

The concept of moving towards a best practice program has been discussed by the Council with the sector, government departments, and key agencies, and has so far received overwhelming support.

In the first stage of development, the Council is seeking information on successful best practice programs from Australia and internationally, to identify options that could be applied within the aged care sector in Australia. Tender [applications](#) to conduct this research, are currently being sought from organisations with experience in developing best practice programs.

In the second stage will focus on the design of the best practice program, while the third stage will be the implementation of the new program. The development and implementation of the program is planned to be complete in early 2023.

Opportunity to shape the best practice program for aged care

There will be many opportunities for the sector to influence and shape the development of the best practice program over the coming months. To register your interest to be involved, or to provide suggestions and comments, please contact VICOPfeedback@acwic.com.au.

New website, new branding

We are very pleased to announce that we have recently reviewed and refreshed our [website](#) with the new Aged Care Workforce Industry Council branding.

A key feature of the new website is the [resource hub](#), which hosts a range of resources for the aged care sector and will include the new Workforce Planning Tool.

If you have any feedback on the new website, please drop us a line at contact@acwic.com.au.

Bring your thing

It has been just over a year since we launched the first phase of our successful campaign, [Bring your thing](#). The aim of the project, in line with Strategic Action 1 from [A Matter of](#)

Care, is to create and implement a multi-year social change and workforce recruitment campaign to:

- Encourage positive community perceptions and attitudes to aged care and its workforce
- Improve the aged care industry and its workforce's self-image and belief in their value to society
- Promote aged care as an industry of choice for a range of workers from diverse backgrounds and qualifications

We are now working to develop the second phase of the campaign.

The *Bring your thing* videos and still images are available to be shared online by aged care providers throughout 2022. For more information, please email contact@acwic.com.au.

Next meeting

The Council's next Board meeting will take place on Thursday 9 June 2022.

News from the sector

Have your say on supporting the home care workforce

The Department of Health wants to understand the experiences of personal care workers and providers caring for senior Australians in their homes.

The new [Home Care Workforce Support Program](#) aims to grow the workforce by approximately 13,000 new personal care workers, allied health assistants and enrolled nurses over 2 years.

You can help shape this program by sharing your feedback and experience on existing activities by completing one of the following:

1. [Home care provider survey](#): explores home care workforce processes and needs and how the program can better meet these needs.
2. [Personal care worker survey](#): looks at personal care workers, allied health assistants and enrolled nurses' job tasks and views on job, training and working conditions.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and will help the Department identify and measure the changes that are needed and the success of the program.

Participants can nominate to be contacted again in 6-12 months so changes can be monitored over time. Be quick because surveys close on 20 May 2022.

HealthConsult is conducting the surveys on behalf of the Department. Contact suzanne.morony@healthconsult.com.au for more information.