

Insight #1

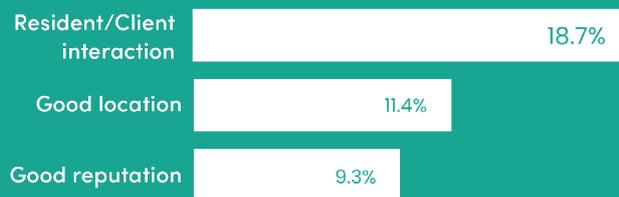
Why work in aged care?

This collection of BPA insights looks into the changing landscape of the aged care workforce in Australia, and how it differs from the broader health sector.

The top reason why people are drawn to work in aged care is the desire to interact with, and to care for, elderly people...

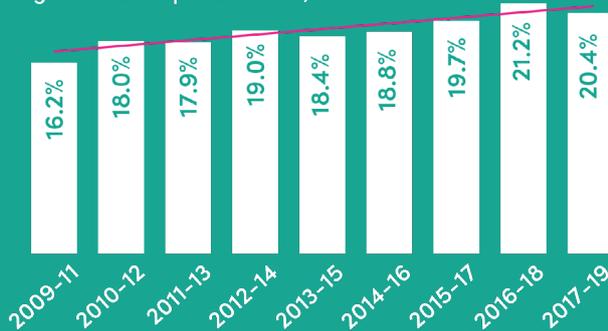
Top 3 reasons to work in aged care*

Respondents: 70,357



Resident/client interaction*

Aged Care Respondents: 61,285



... And this is growing year on year.

Is this significant? Yes, because the top 3 attraction factors in most health and community sectors are all organisational attributes rather than the desire to work with a specific client group.

Top attraction factors*

	1st	2nd	3rd
Health & Community (n = 369,274)	Good location	Good reputation	Good opportunities
Public Health (n = 168,276)	Good location	Good opportunities	Job security
Private Health (n = 71,294)	Good location	Good reputation	Good opportunities

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Analysis of the insight

Being able to spend time with, and support older Australians remains the key driving factor for workers being attracted into the aged care sector. The consumer interaction was the top reason cited by over 13,000 workers in the Aged Care Census Database (ACCD) for undertaking aged care work. The other top reasons why workers want to work in the sector is the location and reputation of the provider.

The ACCD data shows that workers in other health and community sectors consistently rank 'good location, good reputation, job security and/or good opportunities' as key attraction factors over the value of working with consumers.

What can providers do?

As a provider, in deciding how to meet the future workforce expectations:

- Consider the changing nature of workforce motivators and seek to meet the needs of the incoming workforce over the coming decade. What constitutes a 'good' location might differ from workers depending on where they live.
- Other motivators such as 'being a provider with a good reputation' can be controlled by offering better work and career opportunities, safety, job security and consistent rostered hours for workers can help you to become an employer of choice.
- By improving the reputation of the provider, there is an opportunity for:
 - Word of mouth recommendations to work in the sector from colleagues and family members
 - 'Stepping-stone' for future employment aspirations
 - Interest stemming from people's experience of caring for an elderly relative or having had employment in other care sectors
- When recruiting for new workers, providers should promote:
 - The ability to 'give back' to society
 - Work-life balance
 - High availability of work

- Be aware of the different rates of change in age profiles between residential and community care. Research from 2016 suggests that residential aged care is already attracting a younger cohort of new workers, with younger workers accounting for almost half (46 per cent) of all new hires in 2016, against a much lower 24 per cent in the community care and support workforce, which continues to get older.¹
 - This means that community care and support providers might need to consider ramping up incentives to attract younger workers while residential care is under slightly less pressure to implement such changes as rapidly.