

Insight #2

Recruiting quality staff

The aged care sector has been increasingly successful over the last 10 years at recruiting people who are seen by their work colleagues as “quality staff”...

The organisation recruits quality staff

Aged care respondents: 57,766



The organisation recruits quality staff

Health & community sector overall respondents = 205,270



... But its 10 year average of 43.1% still ranks the lowest compared with a selection of other health and community sectors.

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Analysis of the insight

The Aged Care Census Database (ACCD) shows that between 2010–2019, aged care workers have increasingly felt that they are working with quality colleagues. On average, at the beginning of the decade around 33% of workers described their colleagues as ‘quality’ whilst at the end of the decade 47% of workers were happy to describe their colleagues as so.

The ACCD also records a considerable spike in workers feeling that the quality of their colleagues improved during 2013–15. However, when compared to other care sectors, aged care workers still rank their sector as the lowest in terms of recruiting workers who are viewed by other staff as ‘quality’. In comparison, the disability sector is rated as more successful at doing so (5% higher), and mental health (9% higher). This data is supported by a 2017 analysis of care sector recruitment which found that disability care employers considered a higher proportion of applicants to be more suitable for the role (35%), compared with those in aged care (23%).¹

What does this mean for providers?

As a provider, you may want to be mindful of the underlying causes frustrating your attempts to recruit high quality staff.

You are:

- Competing for a workforce that is in high demand across the human services sector.
- Attempting to attract employees to lower paid roles than other care sectors.
- Recruiting workers who are the product of a training system that requires systemic reform in order to consistently meet the training standards required to consumer needs.²

As a provider or manager, you should consider:

- Conducting effective exit interviews to determine the reason/s quality staff are leaving and decide whether you have capability to address those reasons.
- Undertake forecasting that identifies the skills your workers will need and target recruitment around these skills. This could include recognition of the increasing diversity of ageing Australians and the need to meet their care expectations.
- Investing in quality internal training and mentoring new staff. Research has indicated that well-developed induction programs may improve retention.³
- Establishing productive relationships with high quality RTO’s and support their students with work placements within your service.
- If you have capacity, consider paying workers above the minimum award rate. There is a casual relationship between more highly paid workers and higher quality work.⁴

1. Australian Government (2017), The Labour Market for Personal Care Workers in Aged Care and Disability – Australia 2017, Department of Jobs and Small Business, p 4. Full report available at mip.gov.au

2. The ASQA’s 2013 report, found that 87.7 per cent of RTOs offering aged and community care training were not compliant with at least one of the training standards: Australian Government (2013) Australian Skills Quality Authority Training for aged and community care in Australia Report, p ix (9). Accessible at <https://www.asqa.gov.au/resources/strategic-review-reports/training-aged-and-community-care-australia-2013>

3. Odunayo, P. Olubsayo, H. Akinobe, J. (2014) Induction and Staff Attitude towards Retention and Organisational Effectiveness, IOSR Journal of Business and Management, Vol 16, Issue 4, version VI, April 2014 pp 47–52.

4. The Efficiency Wage Theory. For more information see <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/glossary/efficiency-wage-theory/>