



Australian Government  
Department of Health

# Shaping a future workforce

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## Australia's aged care workforce

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3 August 2018

*4th International Conference of Long-term Care Directors and Administrators – Aged care and ageing: Global challenges and responses*



## **Workforce – thinking in the round – upstream, downstream, multiple occupations, across sectors**

Thinking about aged care workforce starts by taking stock of the entire landscape

- Starting with society's attitude to ageing
- Covers the ageing arc for the long-term
- Recognises older people interact with a variety of workforces in their daily lives and the broader community, and in very individual ways

Direct link to aged care reform and improving safety and quality

We need to challenge thinking about supply, demand and productivity

Building a better workforce - take what's working and look at future trends

Engagement between health professionals and our older consumers



## **Workforce – thinking in the round – upstream, downstream, multiple occupations, agile across sectors**

Deepen best practice models of care, evidence-base and on-the-ground practical application

Re-thinking education and training

Drawing on Australian and international best practice – with Australia also leading (e.g. University of Tasmania’s Wicking Centre Massive Open Online Course, Understanding Dementia with 40,000 people have enrolled in the course from more than 180 countries)

Operating in an environment of empowered consumers

Responding to the needs of consumers and their individual needs underpins how the sector and society re-invent the workforce-consumer relationship.



## **Aged care – part of Australia’s rapidly growing Health Care and Social Assistance Industry**

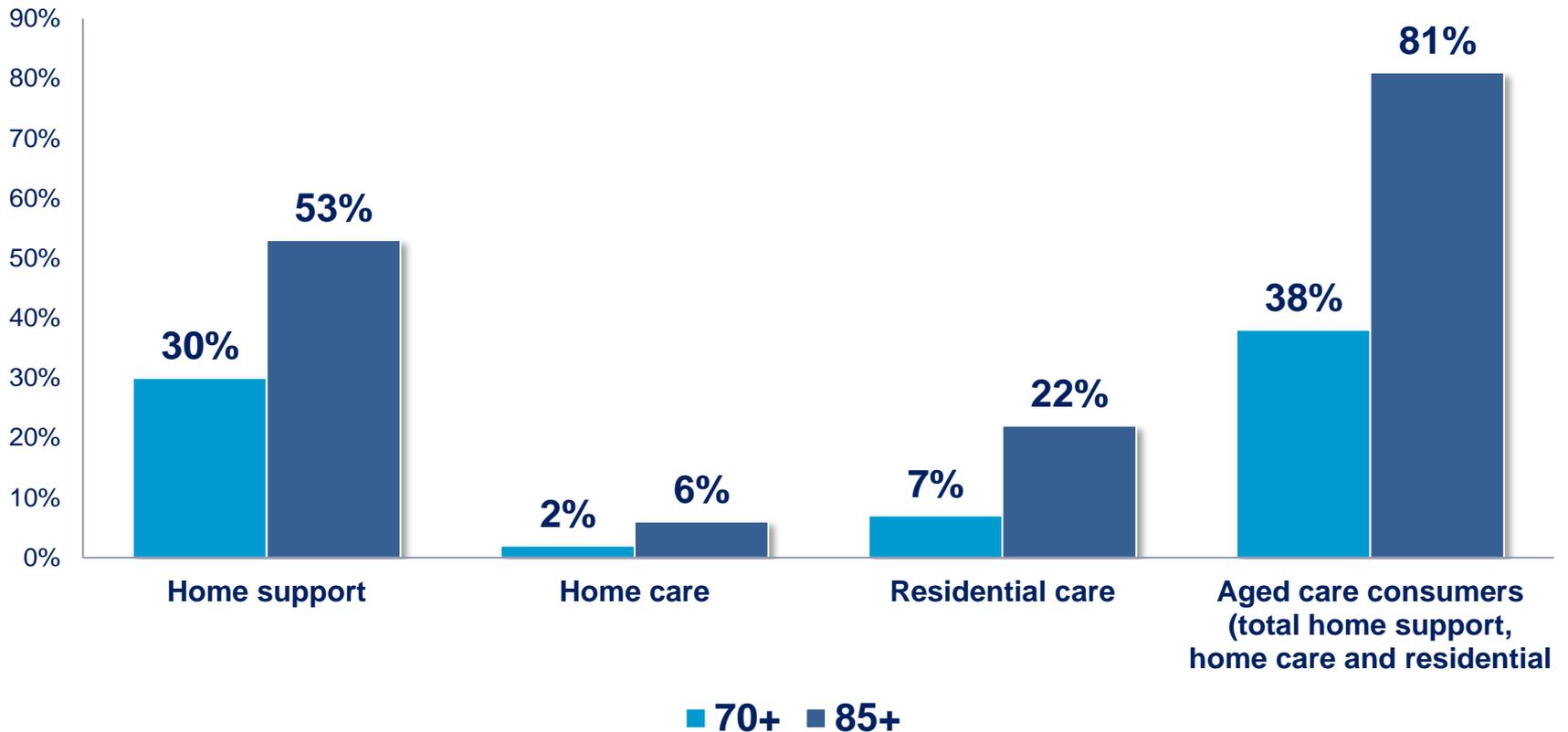
Industry accounts for 12.6 per cent of Australia’s working population

Australian Government subsidised aged care providers and services

- ❑ More than 1.3 million people access or use some form of aged care
- ❑ 3,223 providers – receiving annual funding in 2016-17 of \$17.1 billion
- ❑ Predominantly small to medium enterprises – a mixture of for-profits and not-for-profits
- ❑ Operating in community, home and residential care settings – with a significant rural and remote presence
- ❑ 366,000 + workforce – 70 per cent are personal care workers



## Aged care is about people – consumers, their families, friends and their representatives





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## **Aged care is about people – consumers who interact daily with the workforce**

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Changing consumer demand challenges providers, workforces – and governments

- ❑ Meeting rising consumer expectations
- ❑ Consumers as drivers of their own care and willingness to pay
- ❑ Variability in the community of health and aged care literacy
- ❑ Extent of knowledge, and use, of information and services
- ❑ Managing chronic disease and co-morbidities
- ❑ Responding to diverse life experiences in an ageing population
- ❑ Equity for consumers irrespective of location or diversity
- ❑ Maintaining workforce skills, knowledge, competencies and up-to-date care practices
- ❑ Accessing other systems and professions to enable integrated care
- ❑ Supports for informal carers, friends and family



## Aged care is people care – a wide-angle lens on workforce

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Leadership, role of governing bodies, occupational expertise, and health professionals collaborating with front-line workforces

People with the right fit for care work

Need to understand who will make up future workforce – and why

- ❑ Evidence on different attraction and retention factors for different groups
- ❑ Engaging with younger potential workforce
- ❑ Securing the participation of health professionals
- ❑ Making the most of invaluable community volunteers

Secure more responsive vocational and higher education and training systems

Recognise specialisations such as dementia; gerontology; palliative care



## Using scenarios to expand informed thinking

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CSIRO Futures, *Australia 2030* — 7 global megatrends —  
5 touching on ageing/aged care

- ❑ The silk highway ... Forever young ... Digital immersion...  
Porous boundaries ... Great expectations

Scenarios developed in relation to aged services and caring

- ❑ Community caring ... Remote caring ... Digital-preneur caring ...  
Self-enabled caring



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## Workforce of the future – reimagining aged care and caring work

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Where jobs will be open to people: where humans have an absolute or a comparative advantage over robots or other technologies (100 year life)

Safety and quality in basic care should be assumed, non-negotiable

Consumer at the centre of quality care — along with consumer experience

Integrated and connected care services — multi-disciplinary teams

Value of engaged and enabled workforce

Contribution to be made by peer-to-peer or ‘platform’ workers

Inter-generational workforce as a strength



## Workforce of the future – reimagining aged care and caring work

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Role of governing bodies and leaders – collectively and in organisations

Keeping competencies and training up-to-date, including digitally literacy

Innovative and suitable use of technology

Data rich and learning organisations

Partnerships between service providers, researchers and universities

How to get there across an industry?

- ❑ Moving from one to many + reform + disruption
- ❑ Clear roles – governments, providers, workers, consumers, academics and researchers, and the community



## Follow-up information

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My Aged Care: <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/>

- ❑ The Australian Government's My Aged Care phone line and website to help people access services and find information

National data about aged care: <https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Topics>

- ❑ GEN is a comprehensive 'one-stop shop' for data and information about aged care services in Australia
- ❑ Access to data and information from the National Aged Care Data Clearinghouse managed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Information about the work of the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce: <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/reform/aged-care-workforce-strategy-taskforce>