

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

5.14 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy taskforce be composed of representatives of service providers, workforce groups, including nurses, care workers/personal care attendants, medical and allied health professionals, and others, and representatives of consumers and volunteers. Representatives of workers, care providers and consumers from regional and remote areas should also be included.

Recommendation 2

5.15 The committee recommends that the government, as a key stakeholder in aged care in terms of regulation, policy, intersections with other sectors and the coordination of government involvement, and as the key source of funding and revenue for the aged care sector, must be an active participant of the taskforce and must take ownership of those aspects of the workforce strategy that will require government intervention and / or oversight.

Recommendation 3

5.20 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy include a review of existing programs and resources available for workforce development and support and ensure consideration of the NDIS Integrated Market, Sector and Workforce Strategy to identify overlapping issues and competitive pressures between the sectors and how they may be addressed.

Recommendation 4

5.25 The committee recommends that, as part of the aged care workforce strategy, the aged care workforce strategy taskforce be required to include:

- **development of an agreed industry-wide career structures across the full range of aged care occupations;**
- **clear steps to address pay differentials between the aged care and other comparable sectors including the disability and acute health care sectors;**
- **mechanisms to rapidly address staff shortages and other factors impacting on the workloads and health and safety of aged care sector workers, with particular reference to the needs of regional and remote workers including provision of appropriate accommodation; and**
- **development of a coordinated outreach campaign to coincide with developments introduced through the workforce strategy to promote the benefits of working in the aged care sector.**

Recommendation 5

5.28 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy taskforce include as part of the workforce strategy a review of available workforce and related data and development of national data standards in a consultative process with aged care sector, and broader health sector and other relevant, stakeholders. Any nationally agreed data standards should enable comparison across and between related sectors where possible.

Recommendation 6

5.31 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy include consideration of the role of informal carers and volunteers in the aged care sector, with particular focus on the impacts of both the introduction of consumer directed care and the projected ageing and reduction in these groups.

Recommendation 7

5.34 The committee recommends that the national aged care workforce strategy includes consideration of the role of medical and allied health professionals in aged care and addresses care and skill shortages through better use of available medical and allied health resources.

Recommendation 8

5.41 The committee recommends that the government examine the introduction of a minimum nursing requirement for aged care facilities in recognition that an increasing majority of people entering residential aged care have complex and greater needs now than the proportions entering aged care in the past, and that this trend will continue.

Recommendation 9

5.42 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy include consideration of and planning for a minimum nursing requirement for aged care services.

Recommendation 10

5.43 The committee recommends that the government consider, as part of the implementation of consumer directed care, requiring aged care service providers to publish and update their staff to client ratios in order to facilitate informed decision making by aged care consumers.

Recommendation 11

5.48 The committee recommends that the government take immediate action to review opportunities for eligible service providers operating in remote and very remote locations to access block funding, whether through the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program or through other programs. The committee further recommends that consideration be given to amending the 52 day limitation on 'social leave' for aged care residents living in remote and very remote aged care facilities.

Recommendation 12

5.49 The committee recommends that the Department of Health review the implementation of consumer directed care to identify and address issues as they emerge. Specific attention should be paid to any impacts on remuneration, job security and working conditions of the aged care workforce, and impacts on service delivery in remote and very remote areas, and to service delivery targeting groups with special needs, as identified in the Section 11-3 of the *Aged Care Act 1997*.

Recommendation 13

5.51 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy ensure consideration of the service delivery context in which the workforce is expected to perform. The strategy should also include medium and long term planning for location- and culturally-specific skills, knowledge and experience required of the aged care workforce working with diverse, and dispersed, communities throughout Australia. This must specifically include addressing workforce issues specific to service delivery in remote and very remote locations.

Recommendation 14

5.55 The committee recommends that all recommendations of the Senate Education and Employment References Committee inquiry into the operation, regulation and funding of private vocational education and training (VET) providers in Australia be implemented.

Recommendation 15

5.57 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy taskforce work with Australian Skills Quality Authority to establish nationally consistent minimum standards for training and accreditation.

Recommendation 16

5.59 The committee recommends that the aged care workforce strategy taskforce work with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) to establish aged care as a core part of the nursing curriculum, establish dementia skills training, and develop greater collaboration between the sector and nursing colleges to increase student placements in aged care facilities.

Recommendation 17

5.61 The committee recommends that the government and the aged care workforce strategy taskforce develop a specific strategy and implementation plan to support regional and remote aged care workers and service providers to access and deliver aged care training, including addressing issues of:

- the quality of training;
- access to training;
- on-site delivery of training;
- upskilling service delivery organisations to deliver in-house training; and
- additional associated costs relating to regional and remotely located staff.

This strategy should take account of consultation and analysis such as that undertaken through the Greater Northern Australia Regional Training Network (GNARTN).

Recommendation 18

5.62 The committee recommends that the government work with the aged care industry to develop scholarships and other support mechanisms for health professionals, including nurses, doctors and allied health professionals, to undertake specific geriatric and dementia training. To succeed in attracting health professionals to regional and remote areas, scholarships or other mechanisms should make provision for flexible distance learning models, be available to aged care workers currently based in regional and remote areas, and include a requirement to practice in regional or remote locations on completion of the training.

Recommendation 19

5.68 The committee recommends that the government examine the implementation of consistent workforce and workplace regulation across all carer service sectors, including:

- **a national employment screening or worker registration scheme, and the full implementation of the National Code of Conduct for Health Care Workers;**
- **nationally consistent accreditation standards;**
- **continuing professional development requirement;**
- **excluded worker scheme; and**
- **workplace regulation of minimum duration for new worker training.**

The regulation of the workforce must address:

- **historical issues impacting on employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and**
- **ways to ensure the costs of this regulation are not passed on to workers.**

