

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health and Aged Care

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the Aged Care Bill 2024 (Provisions)

03 October 2024

PDR Number: IQ24-000124

Workforce availability for new Aged Care System

Written

Senator: Marielle Smith

Question:

What is being done to ensure that there is a workforce available to deliver the new aged care system

Answer:

The Government is taking action to lift the standard of aged care in Australia and build a valued, skilled and supported workforce that meets the needs and rights of older people.

Eight goals have been prioritised - uplifting pay and conditions, boosting education and training, improving culture, encouraging innovation, increasing career pathways, improving workforce planning, building the evidence base and boosting leadership capability.

To achieve these goals, the Government has invested in a range of initiatives including:

- Over \$15 billion to support award wage increases for aged care workers as a result of the Fair Work Commission's decisions under the Aged Care Work Value Case:
 - \$11.3 billion to provide a 15% award wage increase for direct care workers, recreational activity officers, head chefs and cooks, which commenced 30 June 2023.
 - \$3.8 billion for award wage increases to many aged care workers from 1 January 2025.
- Investment in training for the aged care workforce, including a \$1.5 billion investment in Fee-Free TAFE, which has supported 131,300 enrolments in care and support sector courses between January 2023 and June 2024.

- \$88.4 million over four years from 2024-25 for the continued delivery of workforce development programs, including to provide better career opportunities for nurses and attracting and supporting workers and providers in regional, rural and remote regions with acute workforce shortages. These programs include:
 - Aged Care Nursing Clinical Placements program to enable up to 8,000 nursing students to undertake a clinical placement in aged care.
 - Aged Care Transition to Practice Program to support 2,125 nurses to commence their career in aged care.
 - Aged Care Nursing Scholarships program to allow 1,050 students access to a scholarship to build their skills and further their career.
 - Aged Care Skills Development Program to support an additional 20,000 people to complete training.
 - Regional, Rural and Remote Home Care Workforce Support Program that will provide targeted support to build the home care workforce in regional, rural and remote locations where workforce shortages are the most acute. This funding will enable the recruitment of up to 4,000 new personal care workers in these areas.
- Migration initiatives such as Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement (ACILA) will allow providers to bring an additional 26,000 qualified direct care workers to the workforce over five years.