



Australian Government
Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations



JOB SEEKER GUIDE

Discover the aged care and disability services sector
and how to kick-start your career.



This guide has been developed by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (Version 8, March 2023).

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This guide is intended to help you discover the aged care and disability services sector, the employment and career opportunities it offers and how to be competitive for jobs in this sector.



1

Section one provides an overview of the sector, employment opportunities that are available, and some activities to help you determine if working in the sector is a good match for you.



2

Section two provides a more detailed overview of common roles in aged care and disability services and career pathways that are available. It also includes links to videos on working in the sector.



3

Section three provides tips and advice on how to be competitive for jobs in this sector, including tips on choosing the right training provider, developing your employer pitch, tailoring your résumé and preparing for interviews.



4

Section four provides links to some useful websites to assist you with planning your entry into, and career in, this sector.

You can work your way through all sections of the guide, or navigate to a specific section that includes the information most relevant to you.

Throughout the guide are tips, activities and links to other sources of information.

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SECTION ONE

WHAT IS THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR AND WHAT TYPES OF JOBS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE SECTOR?

Read this section if:

- you don't know too much about the aged care and disability services sector and would like to learn more.
- you're after some career guidance and are open to considering different options.
- you're interested in doing a job that involves working with people and making a difference.

TELL ME ABOUT THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR

If you're considering a job in this sector, it's important to know your own preferences and working style because the sector is very people-focussed and driven by values.

The sector is built on relationships. You will be supporting individuals, families and communities to be empowered, healthy and thriving.

The sector uses a person-centred approach to ensure that the focus of support is on what matters to the people receiving support and their families.

Person-centred outcomes in the sector include:

- **Individuality**—everyone's differences are recognised and respected
 - **Choice**—the right of individuals to make informed choices, and to take responsibility for those choices
 - **Privacy**—information and activities are kept confidential
 - **Independence**—individuals are empowered to do activities for themselves and their dignity is supported in a respectful way
- **Inclusion**—people are supported to participate in all aspects of community that they choose and are viewed as valued and equal citizens.

Working in this sector, you could be supporting people at different life stages – from birth to older age.

People who work in this sector usually talk about the personal fulfilment they get from their work and how they enjoy making a positive difference in people's lives.

BENEFITS OF WORKING IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR



Meaningful work –make an impact



Flexible working environment



Align your career and personal values



Opportunities to learn and upskill



Jobs for all experience and education levels



Offers a diverse range of roles



Time flies – Work is always interesting and never dull



Share your skills and interests with clients on a daily basis



The Health Care and Social Assistance industry, which includes aged care and disability services, offers **high job prospects** with **very strong future growth**.

In 2020 there were approximately
1.75 million
people employed in the industry

2 million
≥
1.75 million

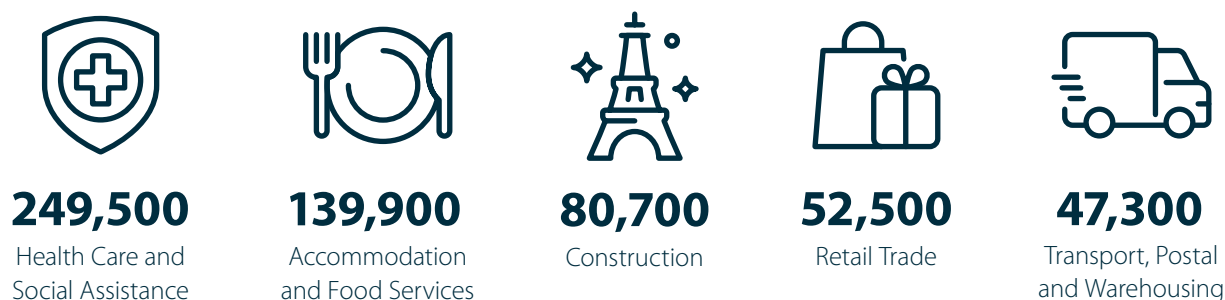
By 2025 the industry is projected to grow to over
2 million workers

The Health Care and Social Assistance industry is the **largest employing and fastest growing industry** in Australia.

This growth is supported by the continued demand generated by the **National Disability Insurance Scheme** (disability services) and **Australia's ageing population** (aged care).

There will be many opportunities in lower skilled occupations, such as **Aged and Disabled Carers**.
These roles are projected to provide the most new jobs across all occupations, increasing by **54,700 jobs** by November 2025.

PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY INDUSTRY OVER THE FIVE YEARS TO NOVEMBER 2025



For more information about the sector visit:

www.yourcareer.gov.au/industries/Q/health-care-and-social-assistance?includeExperienceAndQualifications=false

Disclaimer: The above statistics are intended as a guide only. COVID-19-related impacts are not accounted for in the industry projections described. As such, they should be used and interpreted with caution.

Source: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (2021), 2020 Employment Projections - for the five years to November 2025, accessed on 8 June 2021 at <https://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/EmploymentProjections>

IT'S ALL ABOUT VALUES

The aged care and disability services sector is all about values-based employment—that is, workers in the sector share the values of their employers and live them out in their day-to-day work.

Employers want staff who demonstrate the following **values**:

Acceptance of others' values and differences

Integrity

Outgoing-team player

Patient

Genuine interest in other people

Honest

Trustworthy

Empathetic

Compassionate

Caring

Respectful

Positive attitude

Discrete

Professional

Person centred

Leadership

Passionate

Employers want staff who demonstrate the following **attributes**:

Aligned values with organisation

Good communicator

Good attendance

Reliable

Punctual

Flexible

Attention to detail

Fits with organisation's culture

Actively choose to do this work

Committed to a job in aged care or disability support

Willing to learn

Gets things done

Able to follow instructions

Life experience that involved care for others (nice to have)

Good listener

Problem solver

Which words best describe you? Keep these in mind when you're applying for jobs and mention them in your applications for roles in the sector.

When asked, "What do you think makes a good employee?" here's what some clients receiving aged care and disability services said:

"You need to have excellent listening skills. You also need to have respect and humility."

"Compassion is an essential characteristic of a good support worker."

"Support workers need to be teachable, willing to learn and have a positive attitude. That's all."



TIPS FOR SHOWCASING YOUR VALUES

STORIES

Hear from people working in the sector to start thinking about whether you'll be a good fit for work in this sector.



www.careandsupportjobs.gov.au/resources/stories

Have a look at the websites of employers you'd like to work for and research what values are most important to them.

When browsing the website of a prospective employer, look at their 'about us' page to learn more about what they do and what values drive them as an organisation.

In your job application, use similar words to those in their mission and purpose statements to show that you understand what they do and want to help them achieve their goals as an organisation.

You should also review the pages of a potential employer's website that explain the range of services that they deliver and how they deliver them. This information will help you to talk more directly to that employer about which of their service areas you'd most like to work in and any connections/experience you have relevant to their client groups.

Think about the values that are most reflective of you. Complete the self-reflection tool on page 14 of this guide and use the results to help you develop your job applications.

When preparing job applications, be sure to emphasise those employer values that align with your individual values. Cover off as many values as you can in your cover letter, résumé or during a job interview to show why you're a great fit for the role.

In the aged care and disability services sector, it's important to take every opportunity to show how you'll live your values through the work that you undertake each day, no matter what role you're working in.

PUTTING YOUR VALUES INTO ACTION THROUGH CARE AND SUPPORT WORK

If you like helping people and enjoy doing practical, meaningful work, starting your careers in the sector as a Personal Care or Support Worker might be just the thing for you. Below are some examples of the types of activities you may do in this role:



Supporting with getting up and ready for the day



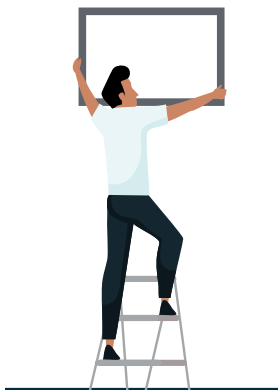
Helping with eating



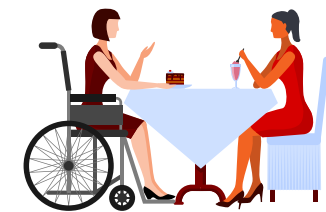
Assisting in the garden and around the house



Helping with shopping and buying groceries



Carrying out home maintenance



Preparing meals and having conversations



Supporting recreational activities



Helping with mobility



Helping with transport and getting to appointments

DIFFERENT ROLES IN THE SECTOR

There is a range of different areas that you can work in within the aged care and disability services sector. Explore some of the options below.

EVERYDAY SUPPORT



These roles involve working directly with clients to help them out with day-to-day activities and support them to live independently in their own homes or in a residential facility.

Types of roles include:

- Support Workers
- Activity Workers
- Cleaners
- Cooks
- Nurses
- Drivers

SPECIALIST SUPPORT



These roles involve delivering specific services to clients to ensure they receive good quality care and support. These services are often referred to as 'wrap around' supports.

Types of roles include:

- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Speech Pathologists
- Counsellors
- Social Workers

ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT



These roles involve looking after the 'behind the scenes' functions that ensure organisations operate smoothly and deliver consistent, high-quality support to clients.

Types of roles include:

- Receptionists
- Administration Officers
- Regional Coordinators
- Facility Managers

AGED CARE SERVICES SNAPSHOT

Here are some examples of the types of services that an older person receiving aged care services might receive on a day-to-day basis:

Personal Support Workers can assist with getting out of bed and ready for the day.

Cooks can prepare delicious meals, either at home or in residential care.

Lifestyle Coordinators can organise games and activities.

Allied Health and other Medical Professionals can provide services to support health, mobility and wellbeing.

Counsellors can provide pastoral care and support services to ensure positive mental health.

Drivers can assist with transportation such as getting to appointments or going to the shops.



DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES SNAPSHOT

Here are some examples of the types of services available to people with disability and the different roles that provide support:

Support Workers can provide assistance with daily activities, including personal care and helping clients to get ready for school or work.

Case Workers can assist in setting goals and activities.

Administration Officers can assist with clerical tasks to support disability service delivery.

Exercise Coordinators can help people to stay fit and active.

Lifestyle and Support Workers can provide assistance with social and community participation activities, including organising outings, games and social events.

Drivers can help clients to get to appointments and access their community.

Learning Support Assistants can support the development of language, literacy and numeracy skills.



AND NOW, A BIT ABOUT YOU...

Finding a job you enjoy starts with you—knowing yourself, the skills you have to offer, and what type of job will get you motivated and excited.

Use this self-reflection tool to help you think about your personal style and preferences and whether you'll be a good fit to work in the aged care and disability services sector. Start by answering the questions below about your personal and working style (tick the circle that best describes you).

MY PERSONAL STYLE

I like working with people and am committed to supporting them to live full and dignified lives	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm able to sense how others are feeling and adapt my behaviour to suit	Mostly	At times	Not often
I feel like I'm good at supporting others through physical and emotional challenges	Mostly	At times	Not often
I can neutralise stressful or emotional situations	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm able to look on the bright side of a situation	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm confident in using my own judgment to find ways around problems and make good decisions	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm able to remain calm and focussed and work through issues when things don't go to plan	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm patient and don't get easily frustrated	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm caring and concerned about the needs and feelings of others	Mostly	At times	Not often
If something feels different or doesn't seem right, I'll follow up to find out why	Mostly	At times	Not often
I respect peoples' right to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision making, and recognise others' values and differences	Mostly	At times	Not often

MY WORKING STYLE

I'm punctual and reliable	Mostly	At times	Not often
I can prioritise tasks to meet deadlines and keep to a schedule	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm confident in interacting with others and communicating clearly	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm good at listening and can understand and follow instructions	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm confident in seeking out advice or further information if I'm unsure about something	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm open to receiving feedback and accepting responsibility for my actions	Mostly	At times	Not often
I can work independently or in a team to complete my work	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm happy to undertake domestic duties (household chores) as part of my role	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'd feel comfortable working closely (physically) with clients to provide personal care	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm comfortable in adapting my working style to meet changing needs and circumstances	Mostly	At times	Not often
I understand and can comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements for the safety of myself and clients	Mostly	At times	Not often
I can self-reflect and consider things that I've done well and could do better next time	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm comfortable working with a range of IT devices to complete my work	Mostly	At times	Not often
I'm confident that I can prepare and review case notes for my clients and know when to alert my supervisor or other team members	Mostly	At times	Not often

How did you go? Count the total number of responses you ticked against each of the options ('mostly', 'at times' or 'not often') and note them below:

Mostly

At times

Not often

What do your results mean?

If most of your responses were in the 'not often' column...

...then a role working closely with clients in the aged care and disability services sector may not be the best fit for you. However, there may be other non-client facing roles in the sector that are a better fit and worth exploring, such as maintenance, gardening or kitchen roles within a facility or administration. To learn more about the non-client facing roles available in the sector, visit the Australian Government's Jobs Hub, *Care and support sector careers* page (www.dewr.gov.au/jobs-hub/care).

If you ticked 'mostly' for the majority of your responses...

...then you'll identify well with the values and attributes that employers in the sector are looking for and should be a good fit for a range of roles in aged care and disability services. Read on to determine where you're best fit might be, working in the sector.

WHERE'S YOUR BEST FIT?

Work through the additional questions below to further explore your preferences. Select the option which best describes you.

IS AGED CARE MY PREFERENCE?

I like talking to older people and providing them with companionship and support	Yes	No	Not sure
I respect the rights of older people to enjoy the best quality of life	Yes	No	Not sure
I'm a 'helper' and enjoy doing tasks to assist others	Yes	No	Not sure
I'm flexible and happy to adapt the way I work to help others	Yes	No	Not sure

If you answered **'yes'** to most of the above questions, then working in aged care and helping older people to enjoy a high quality of life, either in a residential or home care setting, might be your best fit in the sector.

If you don't feel like aged care is your best fit, work through the additional questions below. Select the option which best describes you.

IS DISABILITY SERVICES MY PREFERENCE?

I support the rights of people with disability to maximise their potential and ability to participate in their communities	Yes	No	Not sure
I'm a 'supporter' and like to work with people to help them achieve their goals	Yes	No	Not sure
I enjoy doing a range of activities and getting out and about in the community	Yes	No	Not sure
I'm enthusiastic and enjoy teaching others about my hobbies and interests	Yes	No	Not sure
I like working with people of different ages, ability levels and personality types	Yes	No	Not sure

If you answered **'yes'** to most of the above questions, then working with people with disability and supporting them to be empowered and independent in their homes and the community, might suit you best.

You may have found that you don't have a strong preference for working in either aged care or disability services. In which case, you may wish to get experience working in both areas to expand your job and career options.

NOW, THINK ABOUT THE TYPE OF ENVIRONMENT YOU'D LIKE TO WORK IN.

Work through the questions below to determine the type of work setting that's most suitable for you.

- 1. Do you prefer working indoors or outdoors, or a mix of both?
Indoors Outdoors Don't mind/mix of both

- 2. Do you like to work in a lively and bustling environment, or somewhere a bit quieter?
Livelier environment Quieter environment Don't mind – comfortable in either environment

- 3. Do you work best when following detailed instructions provided by your supervisor, or when you can work more independently and find your own way to complete tasks?
Follow instructions Work more independently Don't have a strong preference

- 4. Do you enjoy working at a faster pace, or at a steadier pace?
Faster pace Steadier pace Don't mind – happy to work at a faster or steadier pace, as required

- 5. Do you enjoy working closely with team mates to complete tasks, or do you prefer working independently?
I prefer working in a team I prefer working independently
I don't mind – happy to work in a team or independently, as required

Keep your responses to these questions in mind when reading through the descriptions of the different work settings on pages 18 and 19.



RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

If the below list describes your preferences, then working in a residential aged care environment might be the best fit for you.

- **You prefer working at the one site, without the need to travel too much.**
- **You like working in a lively and faster-paced working environment.**
- **You prefer working in a team.**
- **You like undertaking a schedule of tasks in a structured working environment.**
- **You like interacting with a range of clients each day.**

In residential aged care, much of your working day will be indoors (for most jobs) and in the one location, without much travel required. You're likely to work closely with residents and have regular interactions with co-workers to provide support to residents as part of a team, each with individual tasks. You may work under the supervision of a team leader, who can provide advice and guidance on completing different tasks. In direct care roles, the clients who you support are likely to have higher care needs, and therefore rely on you to help them to undertake activities during the day.

A range of roles are available in residential care, from direct client care roles, to administration and support roles (like food preparation, laundry and cleaning). You can enter residential care to kick-off your career in the sector in a more entry-level role (personal care and support, gardening and maintenance, kitchen and cleaning, reception), or in a higher level position that requires qualifications and experience (nursing, allied health services, lifestyle activities).

You'll also need to:

- undergo a Police Check, and possibly, a Working with Vulnerable People check
- have had the current annual flu vaccine (exemptions apply in some states and territories).

Depending on employer and role requirements, you may also need a qualification relevant to the role.

IN-HOME AGED CARE

If the below list describes your preferences, then working in a home care environment in aged care might be the best fit for you.

- **You like working at different sites and visiting clients in their homes to provide care and support.**
- **You prefer a quieter working environment where you can work at a steadier pace.**
- **You prefer to work independently and check in with co-workers as required to complete your daily activities.**
- **You like undertaking a range of tasks that may vary each day.**
- **You like working closely with individual clients to build a good rapport and provide them with personalised care and support.**

In a home/community aged care role, you'll often be out and about, working both indoors and outdoors to support clients in their homes and in the community. You'll need to be able to work independently, with limited supervision, providing direct care to clients with a range of different needs. Your daily tasks may be scheduled, but you'll also need to adapt each day to different situations.

You'll also need to undergo a Police Check, and possibly, a Working With Vulnerable People check.

You may also need:

- a driver's licence and access to a reliable registered vehicle (with comprehensive insurance) to drive yourself to clients' homes and transport clients to and from activities and appointments
- a qualification, depending on employer and role requirements.

The current annual flu vaccine is also strongly encouraged for in-home aged care workers

DISABILITY SERVICES

If the below list describes your preferences, then working in disability services might be the best fit for you.

- **You enjoy working in range of locations – indoors and outdoors, in the community and in clients' homes.**
- **You like working independently and checking in with co-workers as required.**
- **You like undertaking a range of tasks that may vary each day.**
- **You like working closely with individual clients to build a good rapport and support them to achieve their goals and try new things.**

In a disability services role, you're likely to undertake a variety of tasks each day to support clients to be independent and active in their communities. You'll spend time in clients' homes and with them in the community. You'll often work independently to support clients with different needs, with limited direct supervision.

You'll also need to:

- undergo a Police Check and a Working With Vulnerable People Check
- undergo the NDIS Worker Screening Check
- complete the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Worker Orientation Modules

Depending on employer preferences, you may also need:

- a qualification relevant to the role
- a driver's licence and have access to a reliable and registered vehicle (with comprehensive insurance) to drive yourself to clients' homes and transport clients to and from activities and appointments
- to have had a current annual flu vaccine.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Now that you've reflected on your values, attributes and personal preferences and working style, use this information to tailor your job applications and conversations with employers in the aged care and disability sector.
- You can print off your answers to the self-reflection tool questions that you answered above and attach these to your job application to give employers an insight into your values and preferences and help them determine where you'll best fit as an employee in their organisation.
- If you'd like to do a few more activities to help identify your preferences and preferred ways of working, explore the Job Search Basics workbook and other Job Jumpstart tools available at: **www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/toolbox**
- If you'd like a bit more detail on some of the roles available in the aged care and disability services sector that have been mentioned in this section, read on to Section Two.

If you're feeling confident that you have all the information about the sector that you need, and are keen to explore job opportunities and start talking to employers, check out Section Three of this resource. Section Three provides tips and advice on how to be competitive for jobs in this sector, including tips on choosing the right training provider, developing your employer pitch, tailoring your résumé and preparing for interviews.

SECTION TWO

ROLES IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT ROLES IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR AND IS IT THE RIGHT PLACE FOR ME?

Read this section if:

- you want to know more about the range of roles in aged care and disability services and what they do.
- you want to better understand what the working environment looks and feels like.
- you want to explore the range of possible career pathways available in the sector.

WHAT DOES WORKING IN THE SECTOR LOOK LIKE?

Below are some videos that give you a flavour of what it is like working in the aged care and disability services sector and the range of roles available.



CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU! CAREERS IN AGED & COMMUNITY CARE

www.youtube.com/watch?v=13o8Po2SP1I

Shows the wide range of roles available in the aged care, disability and community services sector.

Source: Aged and Community Services SA & NT



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN AGED CARE WORKER

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaNv762hMqE

Focuses on the role of an aged care worker in a home care setting.

Source: Kiama Municipal Council



AGED CARE WORKER

www.youtube.com/watch?v=aj4vzJKr788

Focuses on the role of an aged care worker in a residential facility, what it involves, the benefits and challenges and possible entry pathways.

Source: myfuture Australia



DISABILITY WORKER

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jeaxqhzggsk

Focuses on the role of a disability worker, what it involves, the benefits and challenges and possible entry pathways.

Source: Jobs and Skills WA

Read through the role profiles on the following pages for more detailed overviews of different positions.

RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE WORKER

Do you:

- see yourself as a caring 'people' person?
- like to support people in a direct and practical way?
- prefer working as part of a team in a fixed workplace?

WHAT DO RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE WORKERS DO?

These frontline staff support residents with everyday life activities to maintain their wellbeing. Many of these roles are at entry to mid-skill level with a diverse range of career pathways. Some key work tasks include assisting residents with:

- daily activities like taking medication, eating meals, showering and other personal care
- other activities that support them to maintain their hobbies and interests and connect with other residents in the facility or the wider community.

EMPLOYERS MAY REFER TO THESE ROLES AS:

- Personal Carer, Personal Care Assistant, Residential Carer, Assistant in Nursing
- Personal Support Worker, Residential Support Worker, Respite Worker
- Direct Support Supervisor/Team Leader

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Check out the key attributes and skills for the role below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES - EMPLOYERS OFTEN LOOK FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- communicates well with people – and can build rapport with residents
- has a genuine interest in people – along with empathy, care, respect and patience
- is reliable, dependable, and trustworthy
- is a good team player and flexible (with good availability to cover a variety of shifts)
- is attentive and aware – with good attention to detail and to the needs of others
- has a variety of interests and hobbies

SKILLS AND ACCREDITATIONS EMPLOYERS OFTEN REQUIRE:

- good literacy and numeracy (for example, to calculate medication dosages)
- current First Aid Certificate (essential for some roles)
- current Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Clearance (varies between states)
- entry qualifications (many employers will require you to hold, or be working towards, a Certificate III in Individual Support. Some employers offer traineeships.)

IN-HOME SUPPORT WORKER

Do you:

- see yourself as a caring 'people' person?
- like to support people in a direct and practical way?
- prefer working independently in clients' homes?

WHAT DO IN-HOME SUPPORT WORKERS DO?

These frontline staff support clients of all ages with everyday life activities to gain and maintain their independence and wellbeing. Many of these roles are at entry to mid-skill level with a diverse range of career pathways. Some key work tasks may include supporting clients with:

- daily tasks like taking medication, preparing meals, laundry, basic cleaning, and personal care
- accessing and participating in hobbies, sports, arts and community programs
- transport to and from activities, appointments, shopping, outings, lunch, movies or holidays
- support to develop work skills and participate in employment.

EMPLOYERS MAY REFER TO THESE ROLES AS:

- Home Care (Aged Care) Worker, Domestic Assistant (Aged Care), Personal Carer (Assistant), Personal Support Worker (Aged Care)
- Disability (Community) Support Worker, Learning Support Assistant
- Community Support Worker, Community Services Worker, Community House Worker

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Check out the key attributes and skills for the role below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES - EMPLOYERS OFTEN LOOK FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- communicates well with people – and can build rapport with clients
- has a genuine interest in people – along with empathy, care, respect and patience
- is reliable, dependable, trustworthy and flexible (with good availability to cover a variety of shifts)
- is attentive and aware – with good attention to detail and to the needs of others
- has a variety of interests and hobbies

SKILLS AND ACCREDITATIONS EMPLOYERS OFTEN REQUIRE:

- good literacy and numeracy (for example to calculate medication dosages)
- good digital literacy (to complete client notes online)
- current First Aid Certificate (essential for some roles)
- current Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Clearance (varies between states)
- undergo the NDIS Worker Screening Check
- completion of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Worker Orientation Modules
- current Australian driver's licence (and possibly, your own reliable registered vehicle with comprehensive insurance to transport clients)
- entry qualifications (many employers will require you to hold, or be working towards, a Certificate III in Individual Support. Some employers offer traineeships.)

HOSPITALITY, FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND TRANSPORT WORKERS

Do you:

- like hands-on practical work using a specific skill or trade?
- prefer not to be the frontline of support?
- have good fitness and agility?

WHAT DO HOSPITALITY, FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND TRANSPORT WORKERS DO?

The aged care and disability services sector has many ancillary workers behind the scenes in hospitality (food preparation, cleaning and laundry) and maintenance and home improvement (electrical, plumbing, installing fixtures in a client's house and gardening). They enable the day-to-day running of a facility and meet peoples' needs by keeping the living environment both functional and comfortable.

EXAMPLES OF ROLES IN THIS AREA AND THEIR ASSOCIATED DUTIES:

- Kitchen Hands, Cooks and Chefs, Caterers and Dishwashers (commercial kitchen or residential care) prepare and cook meals, organise meal orders and delivery, clean dishes, equipment and surfaces.
- Cleaners keep clients' living environment clean by dusting, vacuuming, mopping, and disinfecting surfaces.
- Hotel Services cover a range of hospitality and cleaning roles.
- Laundry Workers load and unload washers and dryers, and sort, iron, fold and pack laundered items.
- Gardeners maintain the garden landscape by mowing lawns, raking leaves, planting and pruning.
- Maintenance Workers keep facilities and equipment running smoothly and carry out minor repairs. These roles may require knowledge of electrical outlets, circuits and switches, carpentry and plumbing.
- Home Modification Tradespeople modify homes and gardens to make them more accessible.
- Drivers deliver meals, laundry and goods, and drive people to appointments and activities.

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Check out the key attributes and skills for the role below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES - EMPLOYERS OFTEN LOOK FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- has a practical mindset and is good at hands-on work
- has good fitness, strength and agility – someone who can handle a lot of moving around, lifting and standing for long periods
- is reliable – good team player, time management skills, can get things done, and is flexible.

SKILLS AND ACCREDITATIONS EMPLOYERS OFTEN REQUIRE:

- good literacy and numeracy (to follow recipes, read safety instructions and measure cleaning fluids, etc.)
- current Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Clearance (varies between states)
- certification in a trade or working towards one as an apprentice may be required for some roles. Some employers offer traineeships/apprenticeships, particularly in food preparation and maintenance.
- current Australian driver's licence (sometimes an LR licence) are required for drivers.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS

Do you:

- like to organise, manage and coordinate?
- write and communicate well?
- have a general interest in the sector?

WHAT DO ADMINISTRATION WORKERS DO?

Businesses in this sector require a range of administrative support, including receptionists, office managers, rostering support and book keepers/accountants. Administration workers manage and coordinate people and resources in an efficient and effective way to support the day to day running of the organisation.

EXAMPLES OF ROLES IN THIS AREA AND THEIR ASSOCIATED DUTIES:

- Receptionists, Administration Officers and Business Support Workers provide office support to the teams that deliver care by organising and ensuring services run smoothly.
- Finance, Payroll and Human Resources Workers support the back-end operations of organisations and ensure that their workforces are adequately supported to fulfil their roles on a day-to-day basis.

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Check out the key attributes and skills for the role below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES - EMPLOYERS OFTEN LOOK FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- is able to organise tasks and people to meet timeframes
- has excellent written and verbal communication skills
- can use technology, and has computer and phone skills.

SKILLS AND ACCREDITATIONS EMPLOYERS OFTEN REQUIRE:

- current Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Clearance (varies between states)
- reception and administration roles may require qualifications or the ability to demonstrate capability.

COORDINATORS AND MANAGERS

Do you:

- like to organise, manage and coordinate?
- write and communicate well?
- have management experience or previous experience in the sector?

WHAT DO COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT WORKERS DO?

The day-to-day delivery of individual or group support in a home care, community or residential setting requires workers to manage and coordinate people and resources and ensure that each individual's care and support needs are met.

EXAMPLES OF ROLES IN THIS AREA AND THEIR ASSOCIATED DUTIES:

- Site Managers, Disability Services Managers and Regional Coordinators manage the overall priorities, staff and processes for a team, site or region. They often have previous experience in the area.
- Lifestyle Coordinators/Officers, Service Coordinators, Disability Coordinators, Community Facilitators and Program Facilitators identify individual needs and preferences; plan, organise and coordinate activities and experiences; and develop, assess and review programs.

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Check out the key attributes and skills for the role below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES - EMPLOYERS OFTEN LOOK FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- is able to organise tasks and people to meet deadlines and complete tasks on time
- has excellent written and verbal communication skills
- can use technology and has IT and phone skills

SKILLS AND ACCREDITATIONS EMPLOYERS OFTEN REQUIRE:

- current Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Clearance (varies between states)
- Managers may require a qualification or the ability to demonstrate capability
- Lifestyle Coordinators usually require a Certificate IV in Leisure and Health

HEALTH AND ALLIED HEALTH WORKERS

Do you:

- like to provide direct practical support in a specialised area of focus?
- have excellent problem-solving skills?
- always look for ways to improve and develop?

WHAT DO HEALTH AND ALLIED HEALTH WORKERS DO?

These professional level roles provide a range of therapeutic supports to clients. Many of these roles are in a specialised area.

EXAMPLES OF ROLES IN THIS AREA AND THEIR ASSOCIATED DUTIES:

- Social Workers and Counsellors who liaise with clients and their families to provide support and connect them with appropriate services to improve their quality of life.
- Enrolled Nurses, Registered Nurses, Nurse Assistants / Nursing Aides. Nursing can include areas of speciality with specific job titles such as Aged Care Nurses.
- Physiotherapists, Physiotherapist Assistants, Occupational Therapists and Speech Pathologists.
- Medical Doctors and Specialists.

SOUNDS INTERESTING?

Check out the key attributes and skills for the role below.

KEY ATTRIBUTES - EMPLOYERS OFTEN LOOK FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- has excellent communication with a wide audience, from clients to other industry professionals
- has excellent attention to detail and problem solving to solve specialised or complex issues
- seeks continuous improvement and learning to enhance client wellbeing

SKILLS AND ACCREDITATIONS EMPLOYERS OFTEN REQUIRE:

- current Police Check and Working with Vulnerable People Clearance (varies between states)
- tertiary qualifications are required for these professional level roles, along with eligibility for registration with the appropriate professional board or association
- Assistant roles require a minimum Certificate level qualification, such as a Certificate III in Health Assistance (for Nursing Assistant)

Note: Many educational providers (universities and Registered Training Organisations) have arrangements with employers to provide a practical work experience component as part of their training and accreditation. This generally means that you can start some form of work experience before you fully complete your qualification and accreditation. Some professions have assistant roles which usually only require a Certificate III level qualification. Assistant roles differ in that they usually provide basic level care (Nurse Assistants) or assist in preparing patients for diagnosis or in executing a rehabilitation plan (Physiotherapist Assistants).

AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR ROLES



THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF CAREER AND PROGRESSION PATHWAYS IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR.

The diagram above shows the diversity of career pathways available in the sector. If you enter the sector in an entry-level role, there are plenty of opportunities to move into different roles at the same skill level, or progress into higher-skilled roles. Some roles may have qualification or experience requirements that must be met to commence in the role, so be mindful of these when mapping out your preferred career pathway.

Entry-level roles can be the start of a career path into the sector. These roles do not usually require prior experience or qualifications.

Lower/medium skill roles often require a Vocational Education and Training Certificate level qualification (such as a Certificate III) which may be gained by completing a traineeship or apprenticeship. These roles are often direct support or service delivery roles.

High skill roles are often skilled trade, supervisor or coordination support roles that connect people with services. These roles typically require a qualification and may require prior experience either in the role or in the sector. Supervisors may require additional training to manage staff. Allied Health roles usually require Certificate or tertiary level qualifications.

Very high skill roles usually require higher-level Vocational Education and Training qualifications or university degrees and may require industry experience. These roles are often higher-level management and coordination roles and specialised health professionals.

EXAMPLE CAREER PATHWAYS IN THE SECTOR

HOSPITALITY

e.g. kitchenhand

Qualification

Safe Food
Handling training

PERSONAL CARE WORKER

Qualification

Certificate III in
Individual Support

ENROLLED NURSE

Qualification

Diploma of Nursing
(Enrolled Nurse)

REGISTERED NURSE

Qualification

Bachelor of Nursing

DOMESTIC ASSISTANT

E.G. CLEANER

Qualification

None

DISABILITY SUPPORT WORKER

Qualification

Certificate III in
Individual Support

TEAM LEADER

Qualification

Management
training course

PLAN MANAGER

Qualification

Diploma of
Business Administration

SUPPORT WORKER

Qualification

Certificate III in
Individual Support

ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

Qualification

Certificate IV in
Leisure and Health

ALLIED HEALTH ASSISTANT

Qualification

Certificate IV in
Allied Health
Assistance

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Qualification

Bachelor of Science–
Occupational Therapy

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR

WHAT IS IT LIKE WORKING IN THE SECTOR?

The aged care and disability services sector is vast and offers a range of supports to individuals, families and communities.

Residential care facilities (sometimes called 'nursing homes') are not the only workplaces as care and support work occurs across a range of settings, including in people's homes, workplaces and community venues.

IS IT MOSTLY PERSONAL CARE?

It is not just personal care, not all clients have high needs, and not all clients have a physical disability. Personal care workers play an important role in delivering services, but are not the only type of workers in this sector. A huge range of other jobs exist in administration, support coordination and management, hospitality and maintenance, health and a range of other areas.

IS IT INTERESTING AND ENGAGING?

Working with a range of different individuals, and in the community, provides exposure to a rich range of experiences on a daily basis. No two clients, nor two situations will ever be the same in the sector. The work is often fast-paced, dynamic and exciting, regardless of the role you have.

IS IT CHALLENGING?

Working in the aged care and disability services sector can sometimes be emotionally difficult and physically demanding. However, most people working in the sector believe that the benefits and fulfilment derived from helping to enhance another person's quality of life far outweigh the day-to-day challenges.

Organisations have support networks in place and many also provide additional training to assist their staff to manage any difficult situations or issues that arise.

Employers also have additional supports in place, like counselling, to ensure that their workers are well looked after, particularly in the people-focussed direct care and support roles.



WHO IS AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR WORK FOR?

WHAT IS THE SECTOR ALL ABOUT?

In the disability services area, the sector is about empowering and enabling others to break through their barriers to make the most out of their lives. For aged care services, it's all about supporting older people to stay healthy and enjoy a high quality of life.

Although many workers across all areas of the sector experience a great sense of personal fulfilment, it is not about fulfilling your own individual needs like some sectors. This sector will suit a 'people' person who is caring and compassionate towards the wellbeing of others.

I AM NOT SURE I FIT THE TRADITIONAL PROFILE. WILL THERE BE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ME?

Many think work in this sector is just for women and middle age workers, which is not the case, as the sector employs a diverse workforce to help better service a range of clients and their needs. This includes all age cohorts from young workers to the mature-aged, men and career changers.

Many organisations actively look for mature age workers with the skills and experience needed to support their clients and community. Lived experience counts for a lot in the sector, and employers look to support a diverse workforce.

There are also many opportunities for young people to gain valuable work experience in the sector, through work placements, volunteering, (school-based) traineeships and apprenticeships, or other entry-level roles.

WHAT ARE WORKING CONDITIONS LIKE?

IS WORK FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO FIT IN WITH MY LIFE (STUDIES, CARING RESPONSIBILITIES, ETC.)?

The sector often has quite flexible working arrangements. Many jobs are part-time and/or casual, as services are delivered whenever clients need them, so there is often a reasonable amount of flexibility to arrange rosters that accommodate your other commitments, while also meeting your employer's needs.

For example, if it is your preference to work night shift so that you are at home during the day, or work weekends to balance family commitments, some employers have flexibility to accommodate these preferences.

WHAT IS THE PAY LIKE?

Most people do not enter this sector with the goal of becoming wealthy. However, huge demand for services has resulted in strong growth in the sector, with existing providers expanding and new service providers entering the market, creating more opportunities for employees to boost their career progression and earning potential. In this competitive climate, many organisations offer incentives to support retention of their valued workers and ensure workforce continuity. Like any sector, job satisfaction and financial reward will depend on how willing you are to work hard and seek out advancement opportunities.

For information on pay rates in the sector, visit the Fair Work Ombudsman's website:

- For current pay rates under the Aged Care Award and the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award visit: www.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-wages/minimum-wages/pay-guides

HOW DO I GET IN?

HOW EASY IS IT TO ENTER THE SECTOR AND DO I NEED QUALIFICATIONS?

Employers often hire through a wide range of flexible career entry and study pathways. For some it is attending an information session and interview to land the job, or volunteering, doing a course, a school-based apprenticeship, a traineeship, or a combination of study, on-the-job training and work experience.

You may not have all the skills and experience but if you have the right values and behaviours, then many organisations are willing to give you the opportunity – especially if they hire through values-based recruitment, where skills can be developed on the job and through further training.

The need for qualifications can depend on the role, the employer, and a range of other factors such as previous work history and life experience. There are roles in the sector that do not require a qualification. While some jobs require higher level qualifications (such as Social Work, Counselling, Nursing etc.), other roles may only require Certificate III qualifications.

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES?

DOES THE SECTOR PROVIDE REAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES?

With a growing and ageing population, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry, which includes the aged care and disability services sector, is the fastest growing industry in Australia. The jobs expected to grow the most over the coming five years within the industry include Aged and Disabled Carers and Registered Nurses.

The sector provides real career opportunities with many valuable opportunities and pathways (refer to the diagrams on pages 28-29). The range of employment opportunities available in the sector means that you can try out a number of different areas before settling on the type of role that you are passionate about.

DOES STARTING WITH A SPECIFIC QUALIFICATION OR ENTRY-LEVEL ROLE LIMIT YOUR CAREER OPTIONS?

There is more career choice and a wider range of career pathways than most realise.

Just because you start with a particular role and/or qualification, does not necessarily lock you in.

For example, someone might begin as a Personal Support Worker but eventually move into a supervisory, lifestyle coordinator, allied health, nursing or management role, or even something completely different.



SECTION THREE

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Read this section if:

- you might have decided to gain a qualification. Head to page 34 to read more about choosing a training course and provider.
- maybe you're still unsure whether this sector is right for you, or perhaps you want to gain some experience to be more competitive for jobs. Read page 38 to find out more about volunteering.
- once you're ready to approach employers, whether at a jobs fair or by contacting them directly, go to page 39 for some tips on how to put your best foot forward.

CHOOSING TRAINING FOR AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES ROLES

Some roles will require formal qualifications. Other roles may have different requirements, such as a First Aid Certificate or holding a valid driver's licence. Individual employers have differing requirements, so it is important to investigate these before you enrol in training.

WEBSITES TO EXPLORE

Search these sites for job advertisements and see what qualifications and other requirements employers are asking for.

It's important to note that each employer takes a different approach to qualification requirements (some require formal qualifications for most roles while others look for values and attributes and train people once they are working). It's a good idea to search for jobs advertised by employers in your local area to understand what they require from job applications.

JOBS HUB

www.dewr.gov.au/jobs-hub/find-employers-hiring-now#all/ad

www.dewr.gov.au/jobs-hub/care

WORKFORCE AUSTRALIA

www.workforceaustralia.gov.au/

CARE CAREERS

www.carecareers.com.au/job/search

CARE AND SUPPORT JOBS

www.careandsupportjobs.gov.au/

CONTACT LOCAL EMPLOYERS

Be sure to ask whether a qualification is required to be competitive for positions or just desirable, and if so:

- whether they have any preferred local training providers?
- do they need full qualifications or just a few units to start in the role?
- what are their preferred electives?
- is it possible to complete training while you are working, for example through a traineeship or in your own time?

HOW DO I CHOOSE A TRAINING PROVIDER?

Once you have worked out what training you require, you need to choose a local training provider who delivers the course and is able to meet your needs and the training requirements of local employers.

STEP 1 CONSIDER YOUR NEEDS

Think about any learning support or training requirements that you might have, including:

- will you need access to public transport or car parking?
- do you have caring/other responsibilities that you will have to fit training around? If so, you could investigate child care availability, or options for online or evening classes.
- will you need access to computer facilities?
- do you need language, literacy and numeracy (also called 'LLN') support?
- do you need wheelchair accessible training facilities?

STEP 2 USE **MY SKILLS** TO FIND LOCAL TRAINING COURSES

Use the **My Skills** website (www.myskills.gov.au) to search for the training course you would like to complete (for example, a Certificate III in Individual Support).

In the search boxes:

- enter the course name in the "Search courses or occupations" box; and
- select **Search**

Select the relevant course from the search results list for guidance on the average training fees for that course and a list of training providers who deliver it.

To identify local training providers:

- select **Search All Training Providers** (in the blue box just below the Course Overview);
- enter the location or postcode for your preferred training location in the "Enter a location" box; and
- select **Search**

Look for the **\$ Subsidies** indicator to identify government subsidised training options.

You can also talk with local employers, as they may have recommendations on local training providers who they think deliver quality training outcomes.

STEP 3 COMPARE YOUR SHORTLISTED TRAINING PROVIDERS

The next step is to speak with your shortlisted training providers to enquire about the course, including any needs that you identified at Step 1.

You may wish to use the table on the next few pages to compare your shortlisted training providers.

ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES	TRAINING PROVIDER 1	TRAINING PROVIDER 2	TRAINING PROVIDER 3
TRAINING PROVIDER NAME:			
Course availability:			
Do they have places available?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
When does the next course start?			
Course details:			
Where will I need to go to attend classes?			
Is the course full time or part time?			
How long does the course go for?			
How is the course delivered (face to face, online or a mix)?			
How many 'face to face' (or classroom) hours will there be per week and what are the expected hours of work in your own time?			
How many students are in each class?			
Is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)/credit transfer available for the course?			
Do they use industry standard equipment in their teaching - i.e. a simulated workplace environment?			
What course electives do they offer?			
How will I be assessed? Exams, assignments, presentations, class participation			
How long have they been delivering the course?			
Who is the trainer and what experience do they have?			
What industry/employer links do they have?			
Do they organise work placements with an employer as part of the course?			

ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES	TRAINING PROVIDER 1	TRAINING PROVIDER 2	TRAINING PROVIDER 3
Course outcomes:			
Does the course lead to a nationally recognised qualification?			
Can I build on this training or qualification in the future?			
What percentage of course participants have found jobs in the sector following the course?			
What assistance do they offer to secure a job after finishing the course?			
Course costs and refunds:			
How much does the course cost?			
Will I be eligible for a government subsidised training place?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Will I be eligible for a concession?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Will I be eligible for a VET Student Loan?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Can they provide a breakdown of the costs (including administration and books/material fees)?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
What payment options are available?			
What are the rules in regards to withdrawing from a course or getting a course refund?			
Course requirements:			
What are the entry requirements and/or prerequisites for the course?			
What level of computer literacy does the course require and do they offer support?			
What is the process to apply for the course? How long does it take to know the outcome?			
Training facilities:			
Can I visit an open day?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Do they offer support services to help with my study?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Do they have computer and printing facilities? If so, is there a cost?			
Do they have car parking/public transport access?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Do they have childcare facilities?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

GET WORK EXPERIENCE BY VOLUNTEERING

More than six million Australians make a difference to the community by volunteering each year, doing a variety of tasks for a range of organisations.

Some people use volunteering as a way to gain new skills or to build their résumé. Others use it as a way to give back to the community, meet new people and try new things. You can also use volunteering to ‘test the waters’ to see if an industry is right for you.

HOW TO USE VOLUNTEERING TO IMPROVE YOUR COMPETITIVENESS FOR JOBS

Volunteering can help you develop the skills and abilities that employers look for. This includes being organised, honest, showing initiative and self-management.

Remember to include any relevant work experience (including volunteering) in your résumé. This is especially useful if you don’t have previous paid experience as it demonstrates you have a genuine interest in the sector and relevant experience.

Your volunteering coordinator/supervisor may also be happy to act as your referee.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLACEMENT FOR YOU

Think about why you want to volunteer, how much time you have and what you hope to get out of it and be sure to mention these when you contact potential host organisations. This will help you choose a role that is a good match for you.

Make sure you understand your rights and responsibilities when it comes to unpaid work and volunteering. For more information, check out the Job Jumpstart article “Unpaid work experience, when is it okay?” (www.jobjumpstart.gov.au/article/unpaid-work-experience-when-it-okay) or visit the Fair Work Ombudsman website (www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/unpaid-work).

WHERE TO FIND VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

There is a range of websites (such as volunteeringaustralia.org) that list volunteering opportunities in your area.

SPEAKING TO EMPLOYERS

When you're speaking with an employer, it is important to consider both what they are looking for and what you have to offer them.

The following pages will help you consider what skills and attributes you have to offer, so that you are ready to talk about yourself with employers. They will also be great lines to work into your application selection criteria or cover letter.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES, INTERESTS AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS?

For a typical résumé, you are usually advised against including your hobbies and interests, however this is not the case for most roles in this sector. An employer wants to know who you are as a person and what hobbies, interests and community connections you have, so they can match you with clients with similar interests. So have a think about what you have to offer:

- Do you play sports?
- Do you play a musical instrument?
- Do you like video gaming?
- Do you like to make things with your hands? (e.g. arts, woodworking, cooking, etc.)
- Do you perform on stage?
- Do you write?
- Do you collect something? (e.g. coins or stamps, etc.?)
- Are you part of any community groups (e.g. Landcare or Scouts)?
- Do you speak any other languages?

List the hobbies, interests and community connections you have here:

DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES FOR WORKING IN AGED CARE

Aged Care employers often talk about the importance of finding someone who is the “right fit” for their organisation. What this means is that there are certain values and attributes that they are looking for in their staff. Consider the following quotes from employers and think of practical examples that demonstrate you have what they’re looking for:

“We want staff who are compassionate and value older people and treat them with the respect and dignity that they deserve.”

I am a compassionate person because I...

I value older people. An example of how I would demonstrate this in the workplace is ...

“No two days will be the same so candidates need to be flexible and adaptable. You might turn up expecting to help someone with a shower, and they might have other ideas, so you have to be able to think on your feet, take control of the situation and run with it.”

A time I demonstrated flexibility was...

Other quotes from employers that you may consider:

“You may be the first or only person someone talks to in a day, so you need to be a people person. Even if you are just there to clean someone’s house or deliver their meal, taking the time to have a quick chat will brighten their day.”

“You’ll need to be reasonably fit. There’s quite a bit of lifting involved, and if you’ve got to shower a bunch of residents in quick succession, trust me you won’t need to spend money on a gym membership.”

“Rostering can be a nightmare so if we have staff who have good availability, particularly on weekends and overnights we have plenty of hours and can make it worth their while.”

How would you demonstrate these qualities?

DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES FOR WORKING IN DISABILITY SERVICES

Disability services employers also frequently talk about the importance of finding someone who is the “right fit” for their organisation. What this means is that there are certain values and attributes that they are looking for in their staff. Consider the following quotes from employers and think of practical examples that demonstrate you have what they’re looking for:

“The NDIS is designed around the client. They control the support they receive, when they receive it, and who provides it. So we need workers who can deliver great service to our clients so they continue to choose us to help them achieve their goals”

I’ve shown I can deliver great service when...

I have respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making of people with disability. An example of how I would demonstrate this in the workplace is...

“It can be a great role for Mums or Dads returning to the workforce after looking after their own kids...they are organised and used to dealing with different behaviours”

Even if you’re not a parent, think of an example when you’ve demonstrated your organisation skills and ability to deal with different behaviours...

“Teamwork and communication are really important...one client may have a number of workers supporting them so it is critical that those workers communicate well and work as a team to ensure that client can achieve their goals”

A time I demonstrated teamwork was...

Other quotes from employers that you may consider:

“A support worker needs to be a coach and mentor, not just a friend”

“We’re looking for right fit. . .right fit with our organisation and right fit for our clients. So if we have a client who wants to learn guitar we’ll be looking for a worker who can play guitar. . . so when applying for roles we want to know all about the candidate, their interests, hobbies etc”

“Some of our best support workers are people who have had previous careers in manufacturing or trades, and have come to us looking for a role where they can share their passion for carpentry or cooking or whatever with our clients”

“We’re looking for people who are interested in contributing to the community...it’s more than financial.”

How would you demonstrate these qualities?

DEVELOPING YOUR “EMPLOYER PITCH”

An “employer pitch” is a quick overview of your skills and experience, your interests and hobbies, why you are interested in the sector and what you are hoping to discuss with the employer you are speaking with. It should be around 30 seconds – it doesn’t need to cover everything, just the highlights.

You can use your “employer pitch” to provide content for your job applications, when you are speaking with employers, and during interviews.

COMPLETE THE STEPS BELOW TO DEVELOP YOUR “EMPLOYER PITCH”.

Step 1. Start by introducing yourself:

Hello, my name is _____. It’s lovely to meet you!

Step 2. Next give a brief summary of your relevant values, skills and experience, and your interests and hobbies:

Consider the values listed in Section One and identify a few that are relevant to you. Also, review your responses to the self-reflection tool questions in Section One of this guide (starts at page 14).

Other things you could include:

- relevant training courses (for example, if you’ve completed a First Aid Certificate);
- caring responsibilities, (for example, if you’ve previously supported a family member or friend); and
- previous work experience, and how it is relevant to this sector (for example, if you have previously worked in hospitality or retail you could talk about the customer service skills you developed in those roles).

If you’re not sure what to include, try writing down everything that comes to mind and then go through the list to pick the top 3 or 4 points that will help an employer to see why you’re a good fit for the sector.

Some examples could be (remember you don’t need to cover everything just the highlights):

Example 1

I have <insert relevant values, skills and experience>. I enjoy <insert your hobbies and interests>.

Example 2

I am currently studying <insert course>. I have <insert relevant values, skills and experience>. I enjoy <insert your hobbies and interests>.

Example 3

I am currently working in <insert sector e.g. retail>. I have <insert relevant values, skills and experience>. I enjoy <insert your hobbies and interests>.

Step 3. Now outline your interest in the sector:

Maybe you have attended a recent employer information session, or realised the range of interesting roles available in the sector. Perhaps you have had experience caring for older relatives or supporting a family member with disability and are interested in pursuing a career. Or maybe you have a friend or relative working in the sector, or who is a client of the sector, and that has sparked your interest.

Step 4. Finish with what you would like from the employer:

End your “employer pitch” by outlining what you would like from the employer. This could be asking an employer to discuss current vacancies in their organisation. Or it could be asking if they have time to have a chat and answer some of your questions about their organisation or the sector more generally. If you are considering training, you may also want to ask them what qualifications they look for and for recommendations of local training providers.

Step 5. Practise saying it aloud

Now that you have completed your “employer pitch” practise saying it aloud. This is the best way to get comfortable with it so it sounds natural. You could also practise with a friend or family member and get them to time you to check that it isn’t too long (remember, you are aiming for around 30 seconds).

While your “employer pitch” is designed to be a quick conversation starter, be careful you don’t speak too fast or start rambling. Remember to make eye contact and keep your energy level high, confident and enthusiastic, and don’t forget to breathe!

SPEAKING TO EMPLOYERS AT A JOBS FAIR

If you're planning to attend a jobs fair it's a good idea to do a little preparation so that you are more at ease when approaching employers and to make sure you get the most out of the day.

If you can, find out which employers will be exhibiting and decide in advance who you would like to talk to. Before the event, visit these employers' websites and make some notes on what they are looking for (for example, roles and values) and what you have to offer them (that is, why you would be a good fit for the organisation and role). Use this information to tailor your résumé for that particular employer and take a printed copy along with you to give to them on the day.

After you have met with an employer, write down what you talked about with them, and the name of the person you spoke to. This will enable you to follow-up with them to thank them for their time, and to confirm your interest in future opportunities with their organisation.

Below is a template you can use to record this information:

EMPLOYER NAME:

Before approaching them, have a think about:

What I know about them (for example, location, the services they offer, roles they are recruiting for, values of their organisation, etc.):

What questions do I want to ask? Some examples might be:

- How often do they recruit?
- Where do they advertise their jobs?
- How could you be more competitive for jobs in their organisation (do they recruit from volunteers or offer work experience)?
- Do they have specific employment requirements (e.g. all workers must have a qualification)?

How do I need to tailor my résumé for this employer? (For example, do you need to update your career goals to reflect your desire to work in the sector? Refer to the next section for tips on tailoring your résumé for this sector.)

After you've spoken to them, write down:

Who I spoke to:

What we spoke about:

What I need to do to follow up:

RÉSUMÉ TIPS AND EXAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

A good résumé can be key to finding a job. If you submit a high quality, tailored and error-free résumé, you're indicating to employers that you will be a professional, engaged worker with good attention to detail.

RÉSUMÉ TIPS

Here are some handy tips to get you started as well as an example résumé to help you out.

1. The length of your résumé will depend on your level of work experience, the skills you have and the job you are applying for. Try to keep it to no more than 2 pages.
2. Make sure your résumé is in an easy to read font – Calibri or Arial in size 11 are good choices.
3. Tailor your résumé for each job you apply for. Each job needs different skills so if you change your résumé to match the job, you will be noticed more easily. Use 'key words' from the employer's job ad to describe your past work tasks and responsibilities.
4. Include your name, phone number and email address on every page.
5. When listing your work history, include paid and unpaid work, and start with your most recent role first and work backwards. If you don't have much work experience, include everything that you have done that is relevant to this job, including volunteer work and caring responsibilities. Provide explanations for any gaps in your work history. For example, periods when you were out of the workforce and studying or raising your family.
6. Think about your referees carefully. Find people who can say you would be good for this job. Always:
 - list at least two people.
 - list people who will say good things about you.
 - list people who are not related to you.
 - ask your referees before listing them. Let them know what the role is that you've applied for, why you think you're a good match, and that they may be receiving calls from employers.
7. Get someone to proof-read your résumé. Ask them to look at the design, spelling and grammar and give you any suggestions to improve your application.

EXAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

Below is a fictional example of a résumé for a candidate who is applying for a job in the aged care and disability services sector. You can use this example résumé, and the tips provided in each section, to develop and tailor your résumé for this sector.

Jane Citizen

M: xxxx xxx xxx

E: example@example.com

About Me

As a [insert your values here – use the list on the employer’s website to identify the values they look for and include those that you possess. Also consider the list of values on page 8 of this guide]

I am keen to pursue a career in [aged care/disability services].

I would bring to this [insert role name] role [mention your skills, qualifications and experience].

Skills and Attributes

Include your technical and employability skills relevant to the job as well as your personal and working style.

If you are responding to a job advertisement, highlight the skills and attributes you have that are relevant to the role you are applying for.

If you don’t have a job advertisement, consider the skills and attributes outlined in the role profiles in Section Two of this guide. Don’t forget to include any other relevant skills gained through life experience.

- Do you have customer service skills? Many roles in the sector require interaction with clients and their families/carers.
- Do you have good written and verbal communication skills? Some roles require you to build a rapport with clients and to talk with their families.
- Do you have good numeracy skills? This may be needed to measure medications.
- Do you have good digital literacy? This may be required to record and access client records.
- How are your fitness levels? Many roles require a reasonable level of fitness.
- Are you attentive and aware? This is especially important to identify and respond to client needs and ensure their safety and wellbeing.
- Are you reliable, dependable and trustworthy?
- Are you good at taking care of or supporting other people? This could include taking care of children, elderly relatives, volunteering in local communities, charities or support groups.
- Do you enjoy hands-on work and/or have skills in any trade? This could include art and craft skills, cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or home maintenance?
- Do you have administration, coordination or management skills? This could include arranging local school or charity events.
- Do you speak any languages?

What to include:

- your phone number and a professional sounding email address so the employer can contact you.
- your name, email and mobile number should be on every page.

This is a short pitch to outline why you are the best person for the job.

Think about how your values and key skills, attributes or experience make you a good fit for this job.

Try and match the skills and attributes included in the job advertisement.

Tailor this section for each job you apply for. You could also call this section ‘Personal summary’ or ‘Career objectives’.

Hobbies and Interests

Arts and crafts
Cooking
Watching AFL
Bike riding

- List any hobbies and interests, particularly those that might be relevant to the sector. This will help employers to see how you match the hobbies and interests of their clients.

Work History

2017 – Current Company Name – Administrative Assistant

Duties:

- Reception duties
- Filing
- Office management
- Report writing

What to include:

- all paid and unpaid work experience relevant to the job.
- your most recent experience first and work backwards.

If you haven't had many (or any) jobs:

- write down some experience that might fit, like volunteering, work experience, participation in sports, or caring roles like looking after children.

2015 – 2016 Company Name – Sales Assistant

Duties:

- Customer service
- Cash management
- Stock replacement

What to include:

- your highest level of qualification (also include any you are working towards) and any relevant study.
- the name of the training provider, the dates of the course, the course title and relevant electives.

Education History

2017 Completed Certificate III in Business (Administration)
Training Company

2016 Completed Year 12
College

Licences and Accreditations

2016 Driver's licence – Auto Passenger

[Mention which type of licence, as an LR licence is sometimes required for drivers and some organisations have restrictions on P plates]

2016 First Aid Certificate
Training Company

2016 Working with Vulnerable People Clearance
Western Australia

Include any additional certificates or tickets that you have, as these may be essential for some roles.

For example, the type of car licence you have, Working with Vulnerable People Clearance, or First Aid Certificate.

[Include your state or territory, as there are different rules that apply in every state]

Referees

John Citizen
HR manager – Name
Former supervisor
Ph: xxxx xxx xxx
Email: example@example.com

John Citizen
Owner – Name
Ph: xxxx xxx xxx
Email: example@example.com

Your referees are the people who are going to tell employers how suitable you are for the job. Find people who will say good things about you, such as past employers, teachers or people you know from sporting and community activities. Do not use family members.

Before adding a person as your referee:

- ask them if they are happy to be your referee.
- let them know about the jobs you are applying for, and to expect a call from an employer.

What to include:

- your referee's name
- the business they work for
- contact number

RÉSUMÉ INFORMATION GATHERING WORKSHEET

Write your information in the relevant sections below. Fill in as much as you can. If you don't know something, leave a space for it until you can find out. Once you've filled in all the information, you can type it all into your preferred résumé template.

Name:

Phone:

Email:

About Me

Skills and Attributes

Hobbies and Interests

Work History

Education History

Licences and Accreditations

Referees

INTERVIEW TIPS

Preparing for your job interview in advance will help you feel more confident on the day.

HERE ARE SOME HANDY TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED.

1. Write down all the important information

When agreeing to a job interview, write down the date, time and location. Ask for the name and phone number of the contact person. Don't ask the person calling to email you the details.

2. Plan, research and practise!

- Plan ahead what you will wear and how you'll get to the interview.
- If your interview is via phone or video conference, ensure you choose a quiet place where you won't be disturbed, and test the technology ahead of time to ensure it works for you on the day.
- Review your notes on the employer and their priorities and preferences.
- Practise your responses to possible interview questions.

3. Stay calm

- Remember that everyone finds job interviews a bit stressful, so feeling nervous is normal.
- If you start feeling stressed, a couple of slow, deep breaths or taking a sip of water may help you calm down.

4. Follow-up

- At the end of the interview, ask about the next steps in the selection process.
- Check who you should follow up with about the outcome and how long it might take to make a decision.

INTERVIEW APPROACHES

It's important to be aware that employers in this sector use a range of interview formats. For example, assessment centres are a common interview style for some employers in the sector, where applicants all undergo a series of assessment exercises at the same time and location. The location, duration and exercises used in these assessment centres will vary across different organisations. Assessment centres give you the opportunity to demonstrate your values, skills and competencies rather than just talking about them in a traditional formal interview. Some employers may also use a combination of an assessment centre and a formal interview.

HERE ARE SOME COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS THAT EMPLOYERS IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR LIKE TO USE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CANDIDATES.

Question 1 – Tell me about yourself

Consider using your “employer pitch” (refer to page 44) to answer this question. Remember to mention your hobbies, interests and community connections, so that the employer can see how you might be a great match for some of their clients with similar interests.

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Question 2 – Why do you want to work for our organisation and what do you know about the different services we offer our clients?

This question is seeking to draw out why you think you are a good fit for this employer. Employers in this sector are very focussed on finding candidates who share their organisation’s values, so be sure to include this in your response.

To be ready to respond to this question in an interview:

- use the organisation’s website—especially the ‘About Us’ section and ‘Careers’ pages – to identify their values, mission, work environment and the services they offer. Note down what elements of these attract you to the organisation and why.
- make some notes on what attracted you to apply for the specific role, and the sector more widely. You may want to share a personal story, connection or experience that inspired your interest in the sector.

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Question 3 – What do you understand about a person-centred approach to care/support?

Some key concepts to include in your response are empowerment, individuality, choice, privacy, independence and inclusion.

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Question 4 – What do you know about different types of disabilities?

Your response should note that there are a range of disabilities, including intellectual, physical and mental/psychiatric. If you have personal experience with particular types of disabilities, you could focus your response on these. Also consider reading the National Disability Services webpage on disability types and descriptions - www.nds.org.au/disability-types-and-descriptions.

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Question 5 – How would you work with a person with disability and maintain the dignity and respect of clients when delivering care and support?

This question is asking you to explain what you know about the etiquette of working with people with disability, as well as your understanding of the person-centred approach to support (refer previous example question). Some examples of etiquette you may wish to talk about in your response include:

- offering assistance rather than just stepping in and doing things for them
- teaching rather than just doing
- it is their right to say no
- the importance of establishing appropriate boundaries that both you and the person you are supporting are comfortable with
- if someone has speech problems, give them your whole attention. Be patient, actively listen and watch for non-verbal cues.

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Question 6 (Scenario based question) – Tell me about a time when you worked as part of a team to achieve an outcome

Your response to this question will help the employer to understand your teamwork experience and skills. Teams in this sector may be directly working together (e.g. a team working a shift together in a residential aged care facility) or virtual (e.g. a team who each provide different supports to a person with disability who lives independently).

Some key elements to include in your response:

- start by providing some context – what was the team and outcome you were trying to achieve
- talk through your role and responsibilities and how you worked on these. Talk about how you shared ideas, listened to other's ideas and worked together
- finish with the outcomes and your reflections (what worked well and what you would change).

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Question 7 (Scenario based question) – Imagine you are working with Jess to build her confidence in doing her grocery shopping. Today when you get back from the shops, Jess is putting away her groceries and notices the chicken she just bought is past its best before date. What actions might you take and why?

Similar to the previous questions this is about testing your understanding of the person-centred approach to support. Your response should cover talking through with Jess what she would like to do, suggesting some options for her to consider and offering to support her if she would like to go back to the shop and seek a refund or exchange.

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Question 8 (Scenario based question) – If a dementia client became aggressive what would you do?

This question is asking you what you know about working with clients with dementia. If you have experienced a similar situation you could focus your response on that example: explain what you did, what worked well, and what you would do differently next time.

Some key elements to include in your response:

- staying calm and avoiding exciting the client
- protecting your own safety and the client's safety
- trying to identify and address the underlying issue as soon as you can to put the client at ease and defuse the aggression
- the importance of documenting the incident and communicating it with your team.

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Question 9 (Scenario based question) – We all find ourselves in stressful situations at work and remaining calm and positive is important. Tell me about a stressful time you had at work and how it turned out?

Similar to the previous question, this question is asking about your ability to remain calm and productive and de-escalate challenging situations. Consider scenarios where you have:

- unpacked issues to tactfully get to the bottom of a confronting situation
- stayed calm and avoided further confrontation
- protected your own safety, and the safety of others around you
- escalated and documented issues and outcomes as appropriate.

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SECTION FOUR

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU FROM HERE

CONGRATULATIONS!
YOU'VE WORKED YOUR WAY THROUGH THE RESOURCES IN THIS GUIDE, BUT MAYBE YOU STILL WANT TO KNOW MORE.

The following websites are a great place to start depending on whether you're ready to pursue:

- training
- volunteering
- employment

TRAINING

myskills

MY SKILLS

www.myskills.gov.au

- Search for the training course you would like to complete
- Guidance on the average training fees for that course and a list of training providers who deliver that course
- Identify RTOs who are able to offer government-subsidised training



AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS PATHWAYS

www.aapathways.com.au

- Information on apprenticeship and traineeship options in the aged care, disability and community services sector
- Practice aptitude quizzes to check the literacy and numeracy requirements for working in the sector

A U S T R A L I A N APPRENTICESHIPS

Your Life. Your Career. Your Future.

AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS

www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

- Information on how apprenticeships and traineeships work and the support and incentives available for apprentices, trainees and employers
- Role of Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) providers and how to connect with them

VOLUNTEERING



VOLUNTEERING AUSTRALIA

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

- Find a list of volunteering opportunities in your area
- Resources to help you get started



Australian Government

Fair Work OMBUDSMAN

FAIR WORK OMBUDSMAN

www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/unpaid-work

- To help you understand your rights and responsibilities when it comes to unpaid work and volunteering

EMPLOYMENT



Australian Government
Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations

JOBS HUB DISCOVER CARE AND SUPPORT SECTOR JOBS AND CAREERS WEBSITE

www.dewr.gov.au/jobs-hub/care

- Build your understanding of the aged care and disability services sector
- Tools to help you think about whether you're a good fit
- Tips on being competitive for jobs
- Links to advertised vacancies



Australian Government
Jobs and Skills Australia

JOBS AND SKILLS

www.jobsandskills.gov.au/

- Learn about the future outlook, pay, main tasks, and physical and other demands of careers
- Discover how the jobs in demand are changing in your local area
- Learn about the different industries you can work in and what kinds of jobs there are in those fields
- See how industries and jobs are expected to grow



Australian Government

Workforce Australia

CAREERS IN AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

www.workforceaustralia.gov.au/

- Search for jobs in the sector
- Tips and guidance on applying for jobs, including tailoring your résumé and preparing for interviews



Australian Government

Fair Work OMBUDSMAN

FAIR WORK OMBUDSMAN

www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements

- To help you understand the minimum pay and conditions for work in this sector

JOB JUMPSTART

YOUR CAREER. YOUR FUTURE.

JOB JUMPSTART

www.jobjumpstart.gov.au

- Practical information to help you identify the jobs you might be suitable for
- Tips and guidance on tailoring résumés and preparing for interviews
- Insights from employers on what they look for in workers
- Ways to connect with work experience and employment opportunities



YOUR CAREER

www.yourcareer.gov.au

- To find study, training or job options that support your current career needs or goals.
- Explore careers by industry



NATIONAL CAREERS INSTITUTE

www.dewr.gov.au/nci

- To find careers information and support.

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JOB SEEKER
GUIDE