



Australian Government
Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations



PROVIDER COMPANION GUIDE

Supporting job seekers to explore job opportunities
in the aged care and disability services sector.

This guide has been developed by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
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For queries about this guide, email: workforce@dewr.gov.au

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This guide is designed for employment service providers, and other people who work directly with job seekers.



1

Section One targets frontline employment consultants, providing tips to help you identify job seekers who may be suitable to work in the aged care and disability services sector.



2

Section Two provides a range of resources that employment consultants can use to support job seekers to build their understanding of entry level jobs and career pathways in the sector and how to be competitive for these roles. This includes an example agenda for running an aged care and disability services sector jobs club.



3

Section Three targets Business Development Managers, and others who work with employers in the sector, providing tips to support you to understand employer's recruitment needs and screen and refer appropriate job seekers for their organisation.



4

Section Four provides links to other useful websites and tips on how they can be used.

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SECTION ONE

IDENTIFYING JOB SEEKERS WHO MAY BE SUITABLE TO WORK IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR

OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR

AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR



SUMMARY OF WHAT'S REQUIRED AND ENTRY AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS FOR JOBS IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR

What's required

For all roles

- current Police Check
- quality job application
- current Working With Vulnerable People Clearance (or state equivalent)
- NDIS Worker Orientation Modules (for disability roles)

For some positions

- current Working With Children Check
- First Aid Certificate
- qualification in Aged Care or Disability such as Certificate III in Individual Support
- ability to pass a medical and/or fitness test
- ability to pass a drug and alcohol test
- current Australian driver's licence
- own reliable registered vehicle with comprehensive insurance for transporting clients
- basic maths (e.g. calculating medication dosages)
- basic computer skills and digital literacy (using smartphones and/or tablets)
- good reading and writing skills
- previous experience

Values and attributes

- enjoy working with people
- have a genuine interest in their clients and enjoy empowering them to achieve their goals
- flexibility
- strong customer service skills
- enjoy a variety of tasks
- physically fit
- strong communication and interpersonal skills
- personal integrity, honesty and confidentiality

Entry and Employment Options

One or a number of these options can support job seekers into work in the sector

- volunteering
- first aid certificate
- Certificate III in Individual Support - Skill Set
- completing a Certificate III in Individual Support and doing a work placement with an employer with a view to getting a job with them at the end of the course
- pre-employment projects (e.g. Launch into Work)
- employer required training

Traineeship options include

- Certificate III in Individual Support
- Certificate III in Community Services
- Certificate III in Health Services Assistance
- Certificate IV in Disability
- Certificate IV in Ageing Support
- Certificate III in Business Administration
- Certificate III in Commercial Cookery

Other employment options include:

- full-time, part-time or casual roles with aged care or disability services
- roles with agencies who provide services to aged care and disability services e.g. laundry or catering services
- working in entry level roles while undertaking accredited training to gain a formal qualification (e.g. Certificate III in Individual Support)

Tips for résumés

- include relevant life experience (e.g. caring responsibilities)
- include hobbies and interests to help employers match your skills and interests with their clients to best support client needs
- ensure referees are current and have agreed to be contacted

WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR?

Here are some insights from employers in disability services about what they're looking for in workers.

"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."

"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."

"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."

"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."

"We're looking for people who are interested in contributing to the community...it's more than financial."

"A support worker needs to be a coach and mentor, not just a friend."



WHAT ARE EMPLOYERS LOOKING FOR?

Here are some insights from aged care employers about what they look for in workers.

“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 just run with it.”

“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.”

“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.”

“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.”

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

PAY RATES IN THE SECTOR

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



SECTION TWO

RESOURCES TO HELP JOB SEEKERS EXPLORE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SECTOR, PREPARE FOR JOBS IN THE SECTOR, AND DEVELOP QUALITY JOB APPLICATIONS

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The Australia Government's Jobs Hub website, including the Discover care sector jobs and careers page:

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

Explore The Care and Support Sector – A Life Changing Life:

www.careandsupportjobs.gov.au/

The Job Seeker Guide: "Discover the aged care and disability services sector and how to kick-start your career."

Find your next job in the care and support sector on the Workforce Australia website:

www.workforceaustralia.gov.au/

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR...



Is the largest and fastest growing sector in Australia



Offers a range of roles and career pathways, including traditional care, hospitality, transport, administration and much more!



Needs a diverse range of workers to undertake a range of different roles to support and meet the needs of clients

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS

Mandatory requirements

What are the non-negotiables that applicants must have to be considered for the role? For example, do they need a police check, car and licence, first aid certificate etc.?

Values and attributes

What values and attributes do they look for in candidates?

Qualifications and experience

Do they require any accredited qualifications? If yes, do they require a full certificate or just a skill set? Do they need someone to have completed the qualification or just started? Do they offer traineeships or work placements?

Employment conditions

Is the role casual, part time or full time? What are the average hours? Does the role offer shifts that attract higher pay rates (weekends, night shifts etc.)?

RÉSUMÉ AND INTERVIEW TIPS FOR JOB SEEKERS

- Research the employer to identify their values, and tailor your résumé and interview responses to highlight how you share those values
- Include relevant life experience, hobbies and interests and community connections as this will help employers to identify how you match their clients' interests
- In your interview employers will want to get to know you as a person as well as your work abilities and experience. They will likely ask questions to help them to understand your values, so they can see how you fit their organisation.

TIPS FOR PROMOTING THE SECTOR TO JOB SEEKERS

Use the A Life Changing Life resources available at www.careandsupportjobs.gov.au/resources to encourage job seekers to think about the range of opportunities in the sector and whether they have the values required for work in the sector

Promote the strong growth in jobs in the sector - employment in Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to increase by over 250,000 nationally over the next five years

Emphasise that the support needs of aged care and disability clients are very diverse, and as a result there are a wide range of job opportunities available in the sector—for example: clients with high functional capacity won't need a lot of personal care, over 40% of clients receiving disability services are under the age of 18 years, residential facilities need cleaners, cooks, administration staff, gardeners and a range of other services to operate

Promote the benefits of working in the sector—flexible around other commitments, options to work independently or as part of a team, night and weekend work recognised with higher pay rates, and the opportunity to do meaningful work on a daily basis to support people and boost their quality of life

Ask job seekers why they don't think the sector is right for them—it may be that they don't have an accurate understanding of things like the pay rates in the sector

Promote your jobs club workshops by highlighting the values and attributes required to work in the sector—"Are you?" "Do you.....?"

Promote your jobs club workshops as an opportunity to learn more about a rapidly growing sector with a wide range of job opportunities—"Looking for a job in a rapidly growing sector that offers a range of job opportunities and career pathways?"

EXAMPLE AGENDA FOR RUNNING JOB SEEKER WORKSHOPS

We developed and used this agenda to run a number of 1-hour workshops to help job seekers explore career opportunities in the sector and develop competitive applications.

Alternatively, you could work through the Job Seeker Guide across a series of workshops to allow more time for discussion and completing the activities.

PART 1 - GETTING TO KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Start your workshop with introductions.

Suggested discussion points:

- Ask if anyone wants to share their interest in the sector?
- Are there particular roles or parts of the sector they are interested in or want to learn more about?

PART 2 - THE DIVERSITY OF ROLES AND PEOPLE WORKING IN THE SECTOR

Show an introductory video to demonstrate the diversity of roles and people working in the aged care sector.

Suggested discussion points:

- While the video focuses predominantly on the diversity of roles in the aged care sector, the disability sector is just as diverse.
- Clients receiving services under the NDIS are spread across a range of age groups from kids to teens and adults—in the latest statistics, over 40% of NDIS participants were under 18. Emphasise that if job seekers are interested in working with younger people or young adults this is a great sector to consider.
- NDIS clients have a range of support needs, from higher, complex care needs to lower-level support needs. People with intellectual disabilities and autism make up over half of NDIS participants. So, there is a range of roles in the sector that don't require a lot of personal care and are more in the space of empowering the participants to achieve their goals—which could include things like learning to fish or honing their video gaming skills or going to the footy or movies.

PART 3 - INTRODUCTION TO THE SECTOR

Talk through Section One of the Job Seeker Guide.

Suggested discussion points:

- Introduce the Job Seeker Guide—suggest that job seekers use the contents page to identify and work through the sections that are relevant to them
- Highlight the importance of values in this sector, noting that many employers tell us that they can teach the skills they just want someone with the right values and attitude.
- Use the Employment by Industry ranked chart for your Employment Region (available on the Labour Market Information Portal) to show how employment in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry compares with other industries www.jobsandskills.gov.au/
- Note the range of roles across the sector
- Suggest they complete the self-reflection quiz on pages 14-19.

PART 4 - THE RANGE OF ROLES AND CAREER PATHWAYS IN THE SECTOR

Talk through Section Two of the Job Seeker Guide

Suggested discussion points:

- Talk through the range of roles and what they involve (role profiles pages 22–27).
- Discuss the range of career pathways available (pages 28 and 29)—highlighting that there is an array of possible pathways and opportunities—for example from hospitality roles into care roles or management/admin roles or vice versa.

PART 5 - ENTRY PATHWAYS AND APPLYING FOR JOBS IN THE SECTOR

Talk through Section Three of the Job Seeker Guide

Suggested discussion points:

- Point out the first part on choosing a training provider. Highlight the importance of carefully investigating their training options before they sign up, to ensure it meets their own, and potential employers', requirements—it's a big investment of time (and possibly money) so choosing training that will lead to employment is really important. Note that some employers will have preferred training providers and not all employers require applicants to have qualifications.
- Talk through the importance of mentioning hobbies when applying for jobs in this sector - both in their résumé and when speaking with employers. Note that this enables the employer to identify how applicants match their client's goals and interests.
- Suggest job seekers work through the exercise on pages 40–43 to identify their values, attributes and experience that make them the "right fit" for the sector.
- Talk through the importance of developing and practising their "employer pitch" (page 44–45) before they talk with employers - they could use this when cold calling employers, at a jobs expo or during an interview. Note that preparing what they want to say to an employer in advance, and taking some notes with them, will help them to have the confidence to talk to employers and ensure they don't forget to ask any questions they have.
- Highlight that, by researching the employers they want to talk with ahead of their conversation, and incorporating specific details in their pitch—for example, "I note your organisation is currently advertising for support workers in <insert location> and I'm really interested in those roles", or "I am really attracted to

your organisation because I noticed on your website that you <insert example here>" - they will show the employers they are really interested in working for them.

- Talk through the résumé tips and example résumé (pages 48–52) and highlight some of the tips in the green boxes. For example, even when they have had periods of unemployment they were still doing something in those periods (for example the caring for children section in the example résumé or maybe they were gaining skills through a Work for the Dole project) - so it is important to include those in their résumé.
- Talk through the interview tips and example questions (pages 53–56).

PART 6 - NEXT STEPS

Outline any follow-up activities you have planned for job seekers who are interested in the sector.

Some ideas for follow-up activities:

- Offer one-on-one sessions with an employment consultant to help job seekers develop their employer pitch and prepare a tailored résumé.
- Organise for a local employer from the sector to come in and talk with interested job seekers.
- Identify any upcoming jobs expos with exhibitors from the sector and encourage job seekers to attend.
- Hold a further workshop where you identify a few job ads and take job seekers through a worked example of researching the employers and developing a tailored application.
- Hold a further workshop to take job seekers who are interested in NDIS roles through the NDIS Worker Orientation Modules.



SECTION THREE

TIPS FOR ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES IN THE AGED CARE AND DISABILITY SERVICES SECTOR

Appoint an industry expert in your organisation/site who has responsibility for aged care and disability services sector employer contacts

Your industry expert should have a good understanding of the range of roles in the sector and the questions to ask employers to understand exactly the type of candidate they are looking for, and ensure you are screening and referring the right candidates for their organisation.

Employment outcome data indicates that this sector has higher than average 26 week outcome rates, so if you can find the right candidate for an employer they will usually stay in the role.

Screen candidates to match individual employers

There is a wide range of roles available in the aged care and disability services sector, and organisations operating in the sector have a strong emphasis on finding staff who fit their organisational values. It is therefore critical to identify each individual employer's role requirements (including whether they require qualifications) and organisational values when screening and referring candidates to jobs in their organisation. If you get this right, it could be the start of an ongoing mutually beneficial recruitment arrangement.

Ensure your candidates tailor their application and have a genuine interest in working in the sector

Aged care and disability services sector employers get many applications for each role they advertise, so it is critical for candidates to tailor their résumé to stand out from the crowd.

Candidates should also include relevant life experience, hobbies and interests as this will help employers to identify how they match their clients' interests.

Examples of questions to ask employers

What are the main roles you recruit for and what skills and attributes do you require?

- Are each of those skills essential (i.e. non-negotiable) or just desirable?
- Do they require full-accredited qualifications or maybe just a skill-set or no qualification? If so, do they offer work placements while people are studying?
- Do applicants require criminal record checks, their own car or driver's licence etc.?

How do they recruit?

- What do they look for in candidate applications?
- Where do they advertise roles? Would they be happy to receive emailed résumés of candidates you have pre-screened?
- What does their selection process look like? Do they require online applications? Do they use assessment centres or information sessions?

Would they consider work experience placements?

SECTION FOUR

OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES

JOBS HUB—CARE SECTOR CAREERS

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

- building job seeker understanding of the care sector
- determining whether a job seeker will be a good fit for working in the sector
- résumé and interview tips for job seekers interested in applying for roles in the sector
- advertised vacancies with employers in the sector

CARE CAREERS

www.carecareers.com.au

- videos on working in the sector
- career quiz on where a job seeker's skills best fit within the sector
- career planner
- orientation module on working with people with disability
- searching for jobs in the sector

A LIFE CHANGING LIFE

www.careandsupportjobs.gov.au

- Find out more about how to get into the care and support sector
- Hear stories from people working in the care and support sector
- Explore pathways into the care and support sector

SKILLS ROAD

www.skillsroad.com.au

- Career Quiz, Jobs Board and Job Fit Test to assist in navigating the transition from school to career
- learn about different industries, what kinds of jobs there are, and the training required
- searching for jobs in the sector

MY SKILLS

www.myskills.gov.au

- search for training courses
- guidance on the average training fees for a 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

- Work Type Explorer—to help job seekers explore apprenticeship and traineeship options based on the type of work they prefer
- Practice Aptitude Quizzes - industry-based literacy and numeracy quizzes
- Job and Training Descriptions—videos and other information on the apprenticeships and traineeships available in the care sector

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, and how to find, an Apprenticeship Network provider

BOOSTING THE LOCAL CARE WORKFORCE PROGRAM

blcw.dss.gov.au

- the NDIS Demand Map, which provides a forecast of the NDIS demand by postcode across Australia. Forecasts are available for future participant numbers, spending (by type of support) and workforce
- the advice given to employers on the government support available to grow their workforce

FAIR WORK OMBUDSMAN

www.fairwork.gov.au

- guidance on unpaid work and volunteering
- guidance on the minimum pay and conditions for work in the sector

NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICES

www.nds.org.au

- information on the disability sector, including the Australian Disability Workforce Report
- disability sector news
- information on NDS events

AGED CARE SERVICES WORKFORCE HUB

www.employment.agedservicesworkforce.com.au

- videos and stories about people working in Aged Care
- example position descriptions for a range of Aged Care roles
- an LLN toolkit, including detailed outlines of the LLN requirements for various Aged Care roles

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)

www.ndis.gov.au

- information on the NDIS—refer to the “About Us” page for videos and other resources on the NDIS and the anticipated workforce requirements
- quarterly reports on the NDIS rollout

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS) QUALITY AND SAFEGUARDS COMMISSION

www.ndiscommission.gov.au

- the NDIS Code of Conduct for workers
- the NDIS Worker Orientation Module—'Quality, Safety and You'

MY AGED CARE

www.myagedcare.gov.au

- information on the aged care system in Australia
- finding aged care businesses in your area

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

JOB JUMPSTART

www.jobjumpstart.gov.au

- practical information to help job seekers identify the type of jobs they 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

JOBS AND SKILLS AUSTRALIA

www.jobsandskills.gov.au

- skills match - to help job seekers identify jobs that use their skills
- career quiz - to help job seekers think about their work preferences and get ideas for careers they can aim for
- career profiles - to learn about the future outlook, pay, main tasks, and physical and other demands of careers
- explore Australia—to discover how the jobs in demand are changing in your local area
- explore industries—to learn about the different industries job seekers can work in and what kinds of jobs there are in those fields
- future outlook—to find industries and jobs expected to grow





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