

Workforce

Challenges relating to the employment of a suitably qualified and skilled workforce that is sufficient in size to meet demand remains one of the most significant issues facing the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Sector. The NDIS National Workforce Plan 2021-2025 reports that 83,000 new workers are needed by 2024 to meet growing demand, equivalent to a 31 per cent increase in the size of the workforce. Anecdotally, QAMH members constantly report workforce shortages as their primary concern.

QAMH is committed to ensuring the landmark reforms occurring in the mental health system have a suitably skilled workforce underpinning them. Here we have collated a number of resources directly related to the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Sector workforce. As we embark upon our Workforce Project from 2023, we will be populating this page with the latest research, government policy, workforce data and more.

Resource Links

- **Psychological health and safety in the workplace report**

[Psychological health and safety in the workplace report | dataswa \(safeworkaustralia.gov.au\)](https://www.dataswa.gov.au/psychological-health-and-safety-in-the-workplace-report)

Safe Work Australia has published its report on psychological health and safety in the work place. Mental health conditions account for an increasing proportion of serious workers compensation claims. The report highlights that targeted support and resources are required for people who work in the mental health and care sectors, along with support for people in workplaces with lived experience of mental ill-health and their family, carers and supporters.

- **“Being a carer, you just get forgotten!”: exploring the experiences and opportunities of informal primary carers in Australia**

[“Being a carer, you just get forgotten!”: exploring the experiences and opportunities of informal primary carers in Australia in: International Journal of Care and Caring - Ahead of print \(bristoluniversitypressdigital.com\)](https://www.bristoluniversitypressdigital.com/being-a-carer-you-just-get-forgotten-exploring-the-experiences-and-opportunities-of-informal-primary-carers-in-australia)

Around one in ten Australians are informal carers. Most are unpaid or in a significantly poorer financial situation than they would be if working and – as this paper finds – most would not choose to be carers. This study exploring the experiences of informal carers across Western Australia and Queensland finds that being a carer carries a heavy mental health toll and little support is available for those who make up this significant and important part of the workforce.

- **Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-2031 Outcomes Framework: First Annual Report**

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/bba98de3-d1c3-454e-86e3-5a5226b85a47/aihw-ads-1.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

The Outcomes Framework aims to measure, track and report on outcomes for people with disability. It is a key initiative under Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021–2031. This “baseline” report gives a snapshot against which future reports will be compared.

- **Research Report: Economic Cost of Violence, Abuse Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability**

<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2023-02/apo-nid321587.pdf>

This research – commissioned by the Disability Royal Commission - investigates the annual and lifetime economic cost of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability in Australia. The results show that 60% of people with disability experience interpersonal maltreatment in their lifetime and 17% of people with disability have experienced maltreatment in the last 12 months, at an estimated cost of \$46 billion per year to the Australian economy.

- **Free and Equal Position Paper: A Human Rights Act for Australia**

https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2023-03/apo-nid321795_0.pdf

This report from the Australian Human Rights Commission provides a model for what a national Human Rights Act might look like, how it could function, and what it would do.

- **Research Report: Outcomes Associated with ‘Inclusive’, ‘Segregated’ and ‘Integrated’ Settings for People with Disability**

<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2023-03/apo-nid321761.pdf>

This research by the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability explores what can be done – in terms of both policy and practice - to promote inclusion for people with disability in Australian society within the domains of accommodation and community living, employment, and education.

- **The Senate Select Committee on Work and Care: Final Report**

<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2023-03/apo-nid321832.pdf>

Many Australian carers are struggling as they experience time poverty, unpredictable hours of work and care, flat career structures and demanding, inflexible work. They are mostly women. This report argues for a comprehensive approach that brings the social contract for work and care into the 21st century.

- **The NSW Mental Health Care System on the Brink: Evidence from the Frontline**

<https://mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/NSW-Mental-health-system-on-the-brink.-Evidence-from-the-frontline.pdf>

This report tells the story of frontline mental health workers across NSW. The NSW Branch of Royal Australian New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP), in partnership with other peak health and mental health groups, surveyed frontline mental health workers across NSW to illuminate the mental health crisis facing NSW from the perspective of those charged with providing care. They describe a system that is too complex, inaccessible, sometimes ineffective, and with increasing inequality.

- **NDIS Workforce Capability**

<https://workforcecapability.ndiscommission.gov.au/framework>

The NDIS has developed a Workforce Capability Framework, which describes the attitudes, skills and knowledge expected of all workers funded under the NDIS, along with a range of Framework-based support tools and guidance, including:

- Workforce management and planning resources
- Position description tool
- Recruitment and selection resources
- Job suitability-self assessment
- Career options resources
- Supervision Resources
- Training development resources
- Participant, provider and worker resources

- **NDIS National Workforce Plan 2021-2025**

[ndis-national-workforce-plan-2021-2025.pdf \(dss.gov.au\)](#)

The Federal Government's NDIS National Workforce Plan features 16 initiatives that will be implemented to support building a capable workforce. Focused on ensuring the workforce is able to support participants to meet their needs and achieve their goals, the Workforce Plan is designed to attract workers with suitable skills, values and attributes, while also improving existing workers' access to training and development opportunities.

- **Queensland Workforce Strategy**

[Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032 | Department of Employment, Small Business and Training \(desbt.qld.gov.au\)](#)

A 10-year Queensland Government Strategy designed to tackle skills and labour shortages across the state and help Queenslanders overcome barriers to employment. While

obviously a broad-sweeping document addressing the diverse needs of Queensland's population, it has significant influence over shaping the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing workforce.

- **National Mental Health Workforce Strategy**

[National Mental Health Workforce Strategy – A literature review | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)

This literature review looked at existing national and jurisdictional workforce strategies related to the mental health workforce and was used to help develop the national mental health workforce strategy.

- **National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines**

[National Mental Health Commission // National Lived Experience \(Peer\) Workforce Development Guidelines](#)

The National Mental Health Commission has developed National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines. These guidelines are primarily intended for decision makers to help them implement change across the mental health sector, by further understanding the Lived Experience workforce, increasing the size of that workforce, improving awareness of recovery-oriented service delivery, and promoting consistency in quality and outcomes. It is hoped the guidelines will be used as a roadmap for leaders across diverse settings to establish policies and practices that support sustainable and effective workforce growth.

- **Queensland Framework for the Development of the Mental Health Lived Experience Workforce**

[Queensland Framework for the Development of the Mental Health Lived Experience Workforce \(qmhc.qld.gov.au\)](#)

Produced by the Queensland Mental Health Commission, the framework is a tool to assist and guide organisations across sectors and along all stages of Lived Experience workforce development. The framework is for use in the public, non-government and private sectors to inform development of the Lived Experience workforce and improve lived experience collaboration within mental health settings.

- **Care Workforce Labour Market Study**

[Care Workforce Labour Market Study | National Skills Commission](#)

The federal government's report titled *Care Workforce Labour Market Study* contains many stunning revelations. Most concerning is that by 2050, the workforce gap between demand for care and labour supply is estimated to be more than 200,000 full-time equivalent positions. Unfortunately, the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Sector is not discretely coded in the report, making it difficult to draw conclusions. However, the

overarching message is clear – Australia is facing a growing crisis in the aged care, disability and mental health workforces and we need a dedicated response from the federal government to address the looming catastrophe.