



NATIONAL 2021
SKILLS WEEK August 23rd - August 29th

MEDIA RELEASE

Workforce of the future: 1 million workers needed in Health & Community care by 2050

Human Services Skills Organisation (HSSO) announced as sponsor of National Skills Week 2021

16 August 2021 – The Human Services Skills Organisation (HSSO) estimates Australia needs 1 million health and community care workers by 2050⁽ⁱ⁾ and highlights that human services is Australia’s fastest growing sector, requiring a vast amount of specialist skills training and education.

Never in Australia’s history has the need for skilled healthcare, aged care, disability support and human service carers been greater given the Covid-19 pandemic but also Australia’s ageing population.

Partnering for the first time this year with National Skills Week, **HSSO Chief Executive Officer Jodi Schmidt** said the development of a skilled and available workforce is essential, as is the need to support a sector that provides career opportunities that can last a lifetime.

As Australia’s largest employment industry, Health Care and Social Assistance employed around 1.7 million people last year (2020) and is expected to increase to more than 1.9 million by 2024 (AISC, 2020⁽ⁱⁱ⁾).

Qualification enrolments for human services increased from almost 333,000 in 2018 to over 357,000 in 2019 and included over 100,000 students completing courses (AISC, 2020⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾).

“The HSSO is trialling new ways to shape the national training system in sectors such as aged care, disability and early childhood education services and is working with industry to develop innovative ways to address gaps in the workforce. We are representing industry to shape the skills and training needed to better support the sector, now and into the future,” Ms Schmidt said.

“Skilled, confident, empathic and patient staff are seen as critical to how human services providers can successfully deliver services to improve the lives of people in our communities.” she said.

“Every day, higher numbers of people accessing human services supports in their community including older Australians, people with a disability, children and families, and veterans.”

Qualifications available to support human service careers include Certificate I to Certificate IV, Diplomas, and Vocational Graduate Qualifications in both Community Services and Disability, and can cover:

- Aged care
- Nursing
- Home and community care
- Disability
- Employment services
- Career development
- Counselling
- Information, advice and referral
- Case management
- Advocacy
- Community service work.

Now moving into its eleventh year, **National Skills Week 2021** will be held August 23 to 29, inviting Australians to explore the many vocational career pathways required to support Australia’s economic recovery from the pandemic.

National Skills Week Chair, Brian Wexham, says that during the week, areas of emerging skills needs are highlighted, career options profiled and inspiring stories told. There has never been a more pivotal time to educate job seekers and school leavers on the importance of gaining a skill and particularly highlighting key job growth industries.

“As Australia’s largest employment sector, it’s very significant that the Human Services Skills Organisation is on board for the first time as a key supporter of National Skills Week. Importantly, this organisation is helping ensure Australia meets its skills and employment needs of the future, whilst supporting an industry that creates greater social and economic inclusion within our communities” Mr Wexham said.

“The human services sector is one of the most diverse in Australia. It’s a sector that delivers a range of different services to support people in a variety of ways, including practical everyday living supports, addressing personal crisis or achieving life goals,” he said.

The National Skills Commission projects that the Health Care and Social Assistance industry will make the largest contribution to employment growth over the period 2020 to 2025. Increasing by 249,500 jobs or 14.2 per cent, which is almost double the projected growth in jobs of any other industry in the Australian economy (iv).

This growth is supported by the continued demand generated by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Australia’s ageing population. Large investments in hospitals and increasing demand for childcare and home-based care services also contribute to this strong projected growth.

Workforce of the future: the numbers

Australia needs to rapidly grow a diverse, skilled, values-driven and adaptable workforce to meet this demand:

- As of June 2021, there are approximately 3,750 unfilled vacancies with an **additional 83,000 NDIS workers** expected to be required by 2024, bringing the total NDIS workforce to over 350,000 (v)
- Within two years the **aged care workforce** will need to increase by around 3,600 Registered Nurses and 34,200 personal care workers. **By 2050, the workforce is expected to grow to more than one million people** (vi)
- The **children's education and care sector** requires an additional 30,000 educators (20% increase) and 7,000 teachers (16% increase) (vii)

The HSSO Chief Executive Officer Jodi Schmidt said their vision for Australia's human services sector to be equipped with a diverse, skilled and adaptable workforce, will ensure the strength of sectors like disability and aged care both now and into the future.

"National Skills Week is a great way to learn about getting the skills needed to enter or grow your career opportunities in human services and be a part of making a difference in people's lives," she said.

National Skills Week 2021 will be launched by The Hon. Minister Stuart Robert, Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business of Australia during the week from 23-29 August via virtual link.

For more information, visit www.nationalskillsweek.com.au

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Notes to editors:

Sources:

- i. Estimates based on number of workers required to meet employee turnover and projected growth and demand for services.
- ii. Australian Industry and Skills Committee (2020), published via their website and accessed here: Community Services | National Industry Insights Report (aisc.net.au)
- iii. Australian Industry and Skills Committee (2020), published via their website and accessed here: Community Services | National Industry Insights Report (aisc.net.au)
- iv. 2020 Employment Projections - for the five years to November 2025
- v. NDIS National Workforce Plan: 2021–2025

- vi. Budget Fact Sheet: Workforce (Pillar 4 of the Royal Commission response) – Growing a skilled and high-quality workforce to care for senior Australians
- vii. Consultation on a Ten-Year National Children’s Education and Care Workforce Strategy (2021–30) – May 2021

About National Skills Week

- National Skills Week (NSWk) is an annual event now entering its 11th year.
- This year it will be held from 23 August to 29 August.
- Dedicated to raising the profile and status of practical and vocational learning, the week also aims to dispel outdated ideas about vocational education and training (VET).
- By providing a greater understanding of the opportunities available through VET, it helps Australians better recognise how they can contribute to a successful, modern economy.
- This year’s theme is **RE-THINK**
- Working within the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 and the need to maximise safety for all, a wide range of online, digital and physical events will take place for 2021.
- National Skills Week is an initiative of SkillsOne Television and is supported by Australian, State and Territory Governments, along with leading corporate partners and sponsors.
- As the founder, SkillsOne has worked consistently with stakeholders to help the Federal Government address national skills and labour demands and challenges, and to provide opportunities for Australians young and old to benefit from a growth economy.

WHY NATIONAL SKILLS WEEK 2021 IS IMPORTANT

- 2021 Federal Budget emphasises the necessity for training in high-demand sectors as well as new careers as the Australian Government attempts to drive down unemployment.
- A large part of addressing this issue is providing ample education and information about the career and training possibilities and opportunities that are available to all Australians.
- National Skills Week provides an energetic national platform to convey positive messages through multiple platforms, conveying a tone of motivation, inspiration and potential to students, parents, jobseekers and their influencers.

The Human Services Skills Organisation (HSSO)

- The Human Services Skills Organisation (HSSO) is a national employer-led body addressing the growing and evolving workforce needs of the human services sectors.
- This means that:
 - Students and employers are at the centre of what we do
 - We represent human service employers across aged care, disability care, veterans’ care, allied health, and early childhood education and care.
 - We are here to improve the skills and workforce capacities of the human services sector to deliver the best outcomes for Australians.
- The HSSO connects human services sector employers and workers with training organisations, industry experts, peak and workforce bodies, and government. We empower a community of cross-sector collaborators — employers, current and future

workers, training organisations, industry experts, peak and workforce bodies, and government — to develop, pilot and deliver responsive, fit-for-purpose workforce development and training programs.

- We do this through interactive forums and engagement activities that facilitate information sharing, innovation and collaboration to directly address employers'