Aged Care Workforce Industry Council

Delivering A Matter of Care
Australia’s Aged Care Workforce Industry Strategy

Discussion paper 5
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1. Engaging strategically

The Council will take leadership responsibility for strategy execution, and aim to:

- Work collaboratively across the industry and with a variety of stakeholders on a program of priority actions drawn from the aged care workforce strategy to grow and expand the workforce with the required skills, aptitudes, competencies, diversity and adaptability
- Showcase the opportunities and working environment of aged care, deal with negative stereotyping of the industry and its workforce, and promote workforce practices focused on the quality of outcomes for consumers
- Develop partnerships within the industry, with other interested parties and across sectors to leverage education and training systems, including VET providers, TAFEs and universities
- Support industry-led networking, sharing information and ecosystems to boost the performance of the workforce across all types of aged care services and support their ability to respond to changes in Australia’s health care and social assistance landscape
- Position aged care as a competitive, offering a diverse range of occupations, jobs and types of work, career pathways and appeal to a wider pool of potential employees
- Engage effectively with the wide interests that can contribute to the sustainable growth of a knowledgeable aged care workforce and support the industry’s profile.

The following principles are recommended to focus engagement efforts:

- Engagement and communications will be concise, transparent and targeted
- Priority stakeholders will be engaged and communicated early and often
- Media will be engaged at milestones where true value will be gained by the coverage. Industry media can be provided with updates more regularly, but mainstream media will be only be pursued at key achievements
- Direct means of communicating will be utilised.

Overarching engagement messaging could incorporate phrases such as:

- The Council is looking to be disruptive and challenge the status quo
- A unified leadership group. The first of its kind in aged care speaking with one voice while representing the employer, the employee and the consumer
- Working collaboratively to bring together industry, government and the community
- Will focus on the future to drive industry wide transformational change
- Will learn from the failings of the current system and build a platform to develop a renewed workforce capable of meeting new aged care horizons

The detailed engagement plan is presented in Attachment 1.
Specifically, it defines:

- The Council’s key stakeholders across the three lenses of industry, community and government (Discussion paper 4)
- The approach to communicating with key stakeholders
- How the sector will be informed of the Strategies intent, its implementation and the process for managing transformational change as it impacts the industry, government (noting that co-design will be required) and the community (notably consumers and their families).

Importantly, the Council provides a tangible opportunity to engage and bring together the broader industry, government and community in a collaborative dialogue.
2. Engagement Plan

To effectively build trust and engender commitment to deliver the Strategy, the Council must have an awareness of the stakeholder environment in which they operate and understand the needs and interests of these stakeholders.

Effective stakeholder engagement ensures there is meaningful engagement and communication with stakeholders; and their interests are understood and considered by the Council – across the three key stakeholder groups:

- **Community.** Aged care consumers are the people accessing or using care as well as their families, carers and entities trusted or designated to act on their behalf, and the local community. They are diverse in age, with varied cultural backgrounds and lived experiences.
- **Government.** Aged care services operate within a tightly regulated market where the Australian Government controls the number, funding level and location of residential aged care places and the number and level of home care packages.
- **Industry.** The aged care industry is part of Australia’s broad and rapidly growing health care and social assistance industry and a significant contributor to regional and rural economies.

It is important to recognise the Council is the first leadership group of its kind in the industry – bringing together employers, consumers and employees through one voice.

This engagement plan highlights the Council’s recognition of a comprehensive and inclusive approach to engaging with key stakeholders.

At the heart of the Council’s engagement plan is the acknowledgement that they are impacted by, and have an impact on those with whom they interact:

- From an engagement perspective, the Council:
  - Aims to build trust and credibility amongst its stakeholders and the broader community, and demonstrate action in the delivery of the Strategy
  - Understands who its stakeholders are, their needs and their expectations
- The Council oversees a framework for the meaningful engagement of stakeholders, and effective stakeholder engagement for the Council involves building relationships based on mutual trust, respect and understanding
- The Council recognises that engagement is not an end in itself, but a means by which to build and develop relationships which help organisations to pursue their purpose:
  - Stakeholder engagement is beneficial both to the Council and its stakeholders. It provides valuable information to the Council (such as about how it is perceived, its stakeholders’ needs and its broader operational environment), builds goodwill and helps to identify potential issues for resolution, particularly as priorities begin being implemented
Aged Care Workforce Industry Council

- Stakeholders benefit from these relationships too through helping the Council to better understand their needs and expectations. This engagement also helps stakeholders to develop a more informed understanding of the Council and how to work with it, and to manage their expectations accordingly

- The Council oversees a framework for the meaningful engagement of stakeholders, and it is acutely aware:
  - That its relationships with stakeholders can have a significant impact on its ability to achieve its goals
  - Stakeholder engagement is also a critical component of good governance, given that corporate governance is concerned with holding the balance between economic and social goals and between individual and communal goals
  - It has an accountability for the stewardship of its resources, and the aim is to align as nearly as possible the interests of individuals, organisations and the community more broadly
  - The influence of stakeholders is part of risk management — and so specific Council members will be selected to lead aspects of stakeholder engagement and managing relationships. This is important to build and maintain personal relationships and to reflect the Council’s commitment to engaging with important stakeholders

- There is a process for gathering and responding to complaints and feedback from stakeholders, and the Council proposes:
  - A safe and effective method for gathering feedback from stakeholders – used to inform the implementation plan and to develop an understanding of how the Council is perceived, and in doing so respond to potential concerns
  - Will look to establish a framework for how it will respond to feedback and/or complaints
  - Fostering a culture of active disclosure that recognises that feedback from stakeholders is an important source of insight that can help it achieve its vision, whilst adhering to the principles of good governance

- The Council oversees a framework for how it intends to engage with and protect vulnerable people. The Council believes this framework is important because:
  - It operates in the community with a specific focus on the elderly
  - It plays an important role in protecting vulnerable people such as through overseeing the delivery of the Strategy, through the implementation plan
  - It seeks to develop and maintain a culture that prioritises the safety of vulnerable people.
The Council will seek to grow and expand its stakeholder group. In the first instance the following key stakeholders have been identified:

**Workforce**
- Employers / providers
- Employee unions

**Government**
- Aged Care Royal Commission
- Aged Care Sector Committee
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
- Chief Medical Officer
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Employment
- Department of Health
- Department of Infrastructure (Labour market issues)
- Minister for Aged Care
- Minister for Health (the Secretary, together with the First Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary for responsible for aged care reform)
- Minister for Education
- Minister for Indigenous Affairs
- National Aged Care Alliance
- State/ Territory governments (Employment programs and initiatives)

- COAG – The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (to which the IRC reports) and is chaired by Professor John Pollaers

**Peaks:**
- Carers Australia
- Consumer representatives (i.e. COTA and National Seniors Australia)
- Dementia Australia
- Employee representatives (i.e. the Australian Nursing Midwifery Federation, Health Services Union and United Voice)
- Palliative Care Australia
- Provider peaks (i.e. ACSA, LASA and the Guild)

**Special interest groups:**
- Business Council of Australia
- Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia
- National LGBTI Health Alliance
- Organisations that represent workplace diversity and cultural diversity

**Industry partnerships with:**
- University (higher education) sector
- Vocational Education Training sector and TAFEs
- The disability sector (NDIS)
- Anna Bligh (Australian Bankers Association).
The engagement plan is built upon the following stakeholder analysis approach\(^1\).

Classifying key stakeholders into groups according to their interest in or influence provides a useful way to support the development of targeted engagement strategies for like groups.

The Council has applied the following classifications to guide engagement to support the implementation of agreed priorities:

- **Important**: Stakeholders who have power over program implementation or outcome adoption
- **Influential**: Stakeholders who have power over the Council, or management of the program
- **Mandatory**: Most critical stakeholder group
- **Beneficiaries**: Stakeholders who receive a benefit from the program
- **Impactees**: Stakeholders who may experience some form of penalty, be affected by the project or bear a cost.

Additionally, the level of involvement a stakeholder or stakeholder group may have is considered in the following way:

- **Seek participation**: Where stakeholders have a direct role to play within the project team
- **Consult**: Where stakeholders can offer knowledge, insight or new perspectives
- **Inform**: Where stakeholders need to be regularly updated on project progress, challenges and achievements
- **Maintain awareness**: Where it is beneficial for both the stakeholder and project team to keep stakeholders generally in the loop.

Lastly, the Council is cognisant that stakeholders will have competing priorities and conflicting demands. In developing the engagement plan consideration was given to two questions:

- How interested the stakeholder is to impress their expectations on the Council’s choice of strategic directions and thus implementation plan?
- To what extent the stakeholder has power to impose its wants?

How these questions are answered helps determine the handling approach by the Council:

- Monitor (low interest and power)
- Keep satisfied (low interest and high power)
- Keep informed (high interest and low power)
- Manage closely (high interest and high power).

The Council’s proposed engagement approach is presented overleaf.

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\(^1\) This will be examined and ‘stress tested’ during the strategy day scheduled for 20 June 2019.
### Aged Care Workforce Industry Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Level of influence:</th>
<th>Importance and Involvement</th>
<th>Overall Council approach</th>
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### Workforce

- **Employees**
  - Stakeholder: Impactees
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Maintain awareness
  - Overall Council approach: Keep informed

- **Employers / providers**
  - Stakeholder: Impactees
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Seek participation
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Employee unions**
  - Stakeholder: Mandatory
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Seek participation
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

### Government

- **Aged Care Royal Commission**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Aged Care Sector Committee**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Chief Medical Officer**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Department of Education and Training**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Department of Employment**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Department of Health - Secretary**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Department of Health - Secretary First Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary for responsible for aged care reform**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Department of Infrastructure**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Monitor

- **Minister for Aged Care**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
  - Overall Council approach: Manage closely

- **Minister for Health**
  - Stakeholder: Important
  - Level of influence: Important
  - Level of involvement: Consult
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<th>Key Stakeholder</th>
<th>Importance and Involvement</th>
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