

Aged Care and Disability Employer Toolkit



Regional
Development
Australia

ILLAWARRA INC NSW



An Australian Government Initiative

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Overview

We are pleased to present this Employer Toolkit as a resource for the Aged Care, Disability and Community Services sectors. The toolkit will assist employers to adopt innovative strategies to address their growing workforce needs. It provides best practice case studies as exemplars and a source of inspiration. The toolkit also provides resources for use with potential employees.

Significant growth is expected in the Aged Care, Disability and Community Service (ACDC) sectors over the next 3-5 years. The ACDC sectors are undergoing significant regulatory reforms, including consumer choice driven models such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and My Aged Care. Coupled with factors such as an ageing population, the ACDC sectors are experiencing significant demand and face substantial opportunities for growth, which places pressure on recruitment and maintaining appropriate workforce numbers.

Regional Development Australia – Illawarra received NSW Government funding to deliver employer-led strategies to minimise skill shortages within the ACDC sectors.

This Employer Toolkit provides a way to assist ACDC sector employers to better understand best practice recruitment and retention strategies for employees in their growing sectors. The toolkit includes the following resources for the Aged Care and Disability sectors:

1. Resources to be used with potential employees:

- **Career Pathway Opportunity diagrams:**
highlighting the range of roles and potential career paths for employees
- **Preferred Behavioural Characteristics:**
for those considering a career
- **Qualification Pathways**
highlighting the qualifications required for common roles;

2. Illawarra Employer Inspiration on how to address workforce growth challenges:

- **Case Studies:**
providing best practice innovative strategies engaged by local employers to address the challenge of workforce recruitment and retention.

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Aged Care Qualification Pathways

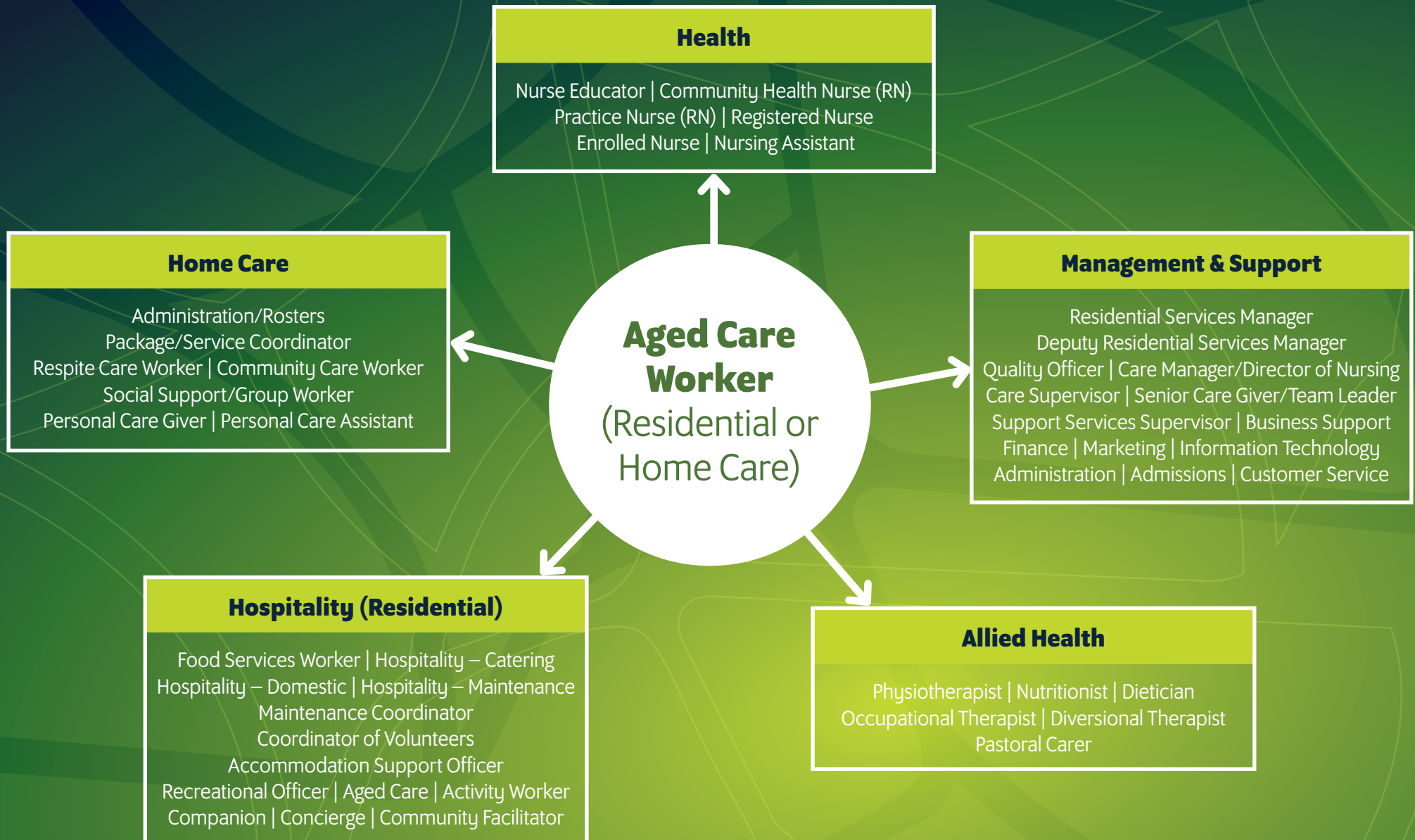
Main Qualification Pathway	None (learn on the job)	Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) with unit of competency, "Assist Clients with Medication"	Certificate IV in Ageing Support with unit of competency, "Administer & Monitor Medications"	Diploma of Nursing	Undergraduate and post graduate programs
Alternate Qualifications	Attitude highest priority - skills can be taught.	Certificate III in Individual Support (Home and Community); or Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) Certificate III in Aquatics and Community Recreation	Certificate IV in Leisure and Health	Diploma of Leisure and Health	
Entry Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainees • Studying / Job seeker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VET in school Yr 11 & 12 • School based trainee • Study placements • New entrant & trainees • Job seeker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing worker / trainee • Career changers • Upskilling • Role progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New entrant • Career changers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company Graduate Program • Internships
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care Worker • Community Care Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care Worker • Community Care Worker • Personal Care Assistant • Personal Care Giver • Accommodation Support Worker • Food Services Worker • Respite Care Worker • Companion • Recreational Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care Worker • Community Care Worker • Aged Care Activity Worker • Nursing Assistant • Recreation • Care Service Team Leader • Care Supervisor • Coordinator of Volunteers • Wellbeing Coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled Nurse • Endorsed Enrolled Nurse • Community Care • Diversional Therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Nurse • Allied Health Professionals • Physiotherapist • Diversional Therapist • Clinical Care & Rehabilitation Manager • Health Science • Nursing • Nurse Education • Practice Nurse • Community Health Nurse
Pay Guide (weekly (38hr))*	>\$715	\$740 – \$875	\$758 – \$810	\$824– \$870	\$848 - \$1956

* indicative pay rates as of 2017. Pay varies depending upon award associated with role (e.g. Aged Care Award; Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award; Nurses Award; Health Professionals and Support Services Award) and experience.

Aged Care Behavioural Characteristics



Aged Care Career Opportunities



Disability Qualification Pathways

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Main Qualification Pathway	First Aid Certificate, Induction to Disability	Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability)	Certificate IV in Disability	Diploma of Community Services	Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management	Undergraduate and post graduate programs
Alternate Qualifications	Individual Support – Disability Skill Set; Individual Support – Home and Community (Disability) Skill Set	Certificate III in Individual Support (Home and Community); or Certificate III in Individual Support (Aged)	Certificate IV in Leisure and Health	Diploma of Leisure and Health	Graduate Certificate in Client Assessment and Case Management	
Entry Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New entrant & trainees Job seeker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VET in school Yr 11 & 12 School based trainee New entrant & trainees Job seeker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing worker / trainee Career changers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New entrant Career changers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability and Developmental Education Disability Studies Diversional Therapist Health Science Disability and Community Inclusion Inclusive Education and Disability Studies
Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Services Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Services Worker Accommodation Support Worker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Support Personal Care Giver Respite Care Worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Coordination Community Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation Lifestyle Support Disability Officer – Day Support Disability Support Worker Care Service Team Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Management Case Work Program Coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Management Psychosocial Trainer Disability Services Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Program and Service Management Special Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Therapy Allied Health Specialties (Diversional Therapist, Psychologist, etc)
Pay Guide (weekly (38hr))*	\$730 – \$785	\$765 - \$870	\$807 - \$855	\$807 - \$1010		\$897 - \$1158

* indicative pay rates as of 2017. Pay varies depending upon employee classification (Social & Community Services Employee or Home Care Employee) within associated award (Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award) and experience.

Disability Behavioural Characteristics

service leadership professional empathy
commitment to vision and mission
willing to learn flexibility pro-active
compassion people-person outgoing
committed to job and sector flexible availability collegiate and team oriented
integrity attention to detail respectful
congruent with organisational values
team work customer focused
trustworthy Values and beliefs (e.g., human rights; equality) listens embraces diversity
good communicator

Disability Career Opportunities



Case Studies

Many employers in the Illawarra have developed innovative strategies to address their growing workforce needs in the Aged Care and Disability sectors. The case studies provide best practice strategies and creative solutions to meet the challenges of workforce recruitment and retention.

We offer our thanks to the many stakeholders engaged through this project who willingly shared their ideas, innovative approaches and insights with other employers of the Aged Care and Disability sectors.

The case studies cover a diverse range of innovative strategies from award winning partnerships keeping families together, through to operating efficiencies and ways to bridge the age divide. The case studies include the following:

- Mini Olympics where inclusion puts smiles on faces of all involved
- Award-winning partnership that keeps families together
- Support Stars training and partnership provides pathway to traineeships
- Growing organisation in sync with operating efficiencies
- School camp with proven pathways from volunteer students to employees
- Employee referral program gaining >75% like-minded people
- Innovative service delivery model that attracts a fivefold increase in applicants
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- Graduate Nurse Program that is care centric and specialised in aged care, delivers holistic and quality outcomes
- Language and culture bridges age divide for lasting relationships and potential careers

CASE STUDY

Sky's the Limit Mini Olympics



Mini Olympics inclusion puts smiles on faces of all involved

Since 2008, EET has been hosting the Sky's the Limit Mini Olympics in Wollongong, for people with a disability aged 15 years and up. The track and field event was replicated with the permission of a Sydney based organisation who were running a similar event but without the buddy layer which EET introduced, and was in response to a genuine desire to create reverse integration and provide young adults with a disability with the opportunity to undertake a sporting carnival like their peers without disabilities.

High school students, mainly from the Illawarra, are matched to Mini Olympic participants to ensure the experience is as complete and accessible as possible, with 6 High schools involved in the 10th annual event held 26 October 2017, once again at Beaton Park, Wollongong.

Strategies

- Ongoing relationships with Illawarra High Schools has resulted in reverse integration and an opportunity for people with disabilities and their able bodied peers to form connections, make friends and develop support skills and understanding of disability.
- Volunteer buddies from partner schools, participate along-side each competitor, to provide assistance and support when needed, and translate the strengths and ability of competitors out into the broader community.
- Maintenance of network of links between all stakeholders and referral sources for disabled participants including other disability service providers, schools, and the general population with a disability across NSW and a growing awareness of the event via word of mouth.

- Local business sponsorship are offered from \$100 to \$5000, not only assisting to fund the event for competitors, but to increase the knowledge and understanding for the business community and create opportunity for ongoing relationships with EET, leading to work placement and employment of people with disabilities.
- Westpac Corporate Volunteers are provided with paid community leave and flexible working conditions and have chosen to partner with the Sky's the Limit Mini Olympics as an approved activity to create a positive impact in the community, share their existing skills and learn new skills in the disability sector.

Key Success Factors

EET believes they have a responsibility to not just talk about encouraging diversity and inclusion for people with disabilities but to create real opportunities for this to occur. Their aim is not only to host a sporting day, but to broaden perspectives, enrich the community and celebrate diversity. Their primary goal, achieved year after year, is to put smiles on the faces of all those involved.

In 2016, 287 competitors from Metropolitan Sydney, Southern NSW, and the Illawarra converged on Beaton Park to experience the exhilaration and joy of competition in a variety of sporting activities and numbers have consistently increased with each year, with close to 300 participants in the 10th event held in October 2017.

CASE STUDY

Sky's the Limit Mini Olympics



In honour of the 10th anniversary of the event, EET ran a competition to design a new logo with entries received as far afield as the US, but with the winning entry submitted by an Illawarra local. It is the organisation's capacity to connect with the community at all levels and across different activities that makes the event as inclusive as possible and achieves the aim of encouraging diversity and connection.

The genuine goal of EET in hosting the event is to encourage diversity and create inclusion, therefore to date, they have not tracked the impact on workforce, business connections or employment opportunities created by the event. Based on success of other organisations who engage young people in volunteering opportunities there is no doubt this event has a positive impact on attracting young people into training and employment in the disability sector, a by-product that the organisation plans to harness and track as they address skill shortage issues for the organisation and the sector as a whole.

About Us

Essential Employment and Training commenced operations in Wollongong in 1986 as Illawarra Vocational Services (IVS), becoming an Incorporated Association in 1990 which was then known as Essential Personnel. In 2012 Essential Employment and Training (EET) was established as a Company Limited by Guarantee, and from one single office they have expanded to 16 locations, catering for a diverse range of customers with a disability across NSW.

EET provides services throughout the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Southern Highlands, South West Sydney, Southern Tablelands, New England, and North West and offer a wide variety of individualised support programs including life and employability skills training as well as continuing their original purpose, to provide award winning employment services for people with disability.

The EET vision is for a society where inclusion is the norm. Their purpose is to provide quality support to people with disability in response to their life choices and individual needs.

In 2013, EET began offering services to people holding individual funding packages, a person centred approach which was the precursor to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Whilst the service types, funding sources and geographical footprint of the organisation may have changed in their 30 plus years of operation, EET's commitment to an all-inclusive society never has.

CASE STUDY

Kemira



Community
Gateway



greenacres
Disability Services
enabling choice, enriching lives



Award-winning partnership keeps families together at Kemira

Kemira – Pathways through Partnership. This award winning community was made possible through \$2.9 million funding received from the Restart NSW Illawarra Infrastructure Fund and almost \$2 million in cash and in-kind contributions from IRT. Identified as a need by the retiring CEO of Greenacres, who then approached IRT Group to form a working party, Kemira is the perfect example of collaboration and community business partnership. The project is also supported by the University of Wollongong, which is evaluating the model as a blueprint for other service providers.

Located at William Beach Gardens in Kanahooka, and featuring 12 universally designed villas, a community centre and respite facility for ageing people with disabilities and their ageing parent, Kemira is designed to keep families together as they age.

Strategies

- Collaborative business partnerships and consultation via a working party resulted in successful tendering for funding from Restart Illawarra as well as in-kind support from IRT Group, making the project viable.
- Aimed at people with an intellectual or developmental disability but also catering to those with physical disabilities as a result of diagnosis or age, IRT enters into a tenancy contract with the person with a disability rather than the carer, to ensure people can continue living at Kemira even after their primary carer no longer lives with them due to their own increasing needs or passing.

Key Success Factors

The Illawarra region is a cohesive and caring community, particularly in the disability sector, who are committed to working together to ensure the needs of the people they support are met, in the spirit of collaboration instead of competition.

The disability sector in the Illawarra provided assistance to IRT Group to submit a partnered funding application to Restart Illawarra, demonstrating the need for this type of innovative and ultimately award winning, aged care residential option.

IRT Group were the drivers and linchpin to the success, due to their experience and excellence in providing aged care services. Most importantly, IRT Group allocated the land at William Beach Gardens, valued at 2 million dollars, as well as project management throughout the development and construction phase.

Upon successful tendering, IRT Group requested proposals from interested disability support providers to submit a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the operation of the 5 bed respite centre as well as the case management support for the residents wishing to live with their son or daughter with a disability.

Community Gateway successfully tendered and entered an agreement with IRT Group to provide case management support. This partnership assists ageing carers to evaluate their funding options to allow them to affordably access the lifestyle offered to them and their son or daughter with a disability.

CASE STUDY

Kemira



Greenacres Disability Services and Interchange Illawarra submitted a successful joint RFP to partner on the operation of the respite centre. Interchange Illawarra identified and approached Greenacres as a suitable partner based on shared philosophy and client group and the success of current partnership arrangements, namely sharing of resources for afterhours use. Demand for weekend access to the respite centre outstrips supply, and Monday to Friday demand is steadily increasing as NDIS funding is rolled out and aging carers are able to access more support worker hours.

Kemira has been a local, national and international award winning project, which is expected to be replicated not only by IRT Group but potentially by other aged care providers across Australia and the world, and is an undeniable success in providing accommodation for people with disabilities and their carers.

About Us

IRT Group is one of Australia's largest community-based seniors' lifestyle and care providers. Offering a range of services including In-Home care, Carer support, Lifestyle communities and Wellness programs. With a mission to create communities where seniors achieve their optimum quality of life, IRT Group have been delivering services for over 45 years.

Greenacres Disability Services is one of the Illawarra's leading disability service providers, assisting over 600 people per week, across 20 locations in the Wollongong and Shoalhaven, to live the life they imagine. Commencing in 1953 as a school for children with intellectual disabilities, they evolved in 1963 to provide employment opportunities for graduates. The size and scope of the multi-faceted organisation may have changed, but Greenacres continues to support the lives of people with disabilities in the Illawarra in many ways.

Interchange Illawarra began its journey as Illawarra Family Care for Disabled Persons Inc., in 1981, with the express purpose of providing temporary care, or respite care for adolescents and young adults with a disability. Initially funded by the state and Commonwealth governments, the organisation is continuing to innovate as a result of the commencement of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and they pride themselves on being pioneers of person-centred, self-directed disability support.

Community Gateway is an innovative organisation assisting people to achieve their milestones and remain active and involved members of their community. Commencing in 1988, as Community Options Illawarra, it has grown into one of the most respected community service providers working with a broad range of clients including the aged, people with a disability and carers. The organisation offers services including in home and community supports, centre based and community programs and activities, support coordination and case management. Community Gateway has developed Community Hubs in Wollongong, Nowra and Kempsey which include, conference rooms, activity rooms, art rooms, cafés, sensory rooms and gyms. These have become valued community assets and are enjoyed by a broad range of the community.

CASE STUDY

Support Stars



Support Stars training & partnerships provides pathway to traineeships

Strategies

TAFE NSW Shellharbour Human Services Tourism & Hospitality Faculty Director met with senior executives from the aged care and disability sectors and identified a need to introduce trained workers in an area experiencing increasing skill shortages. The strategy needed to be agile and responsive with fast turnaround times to solve an immediate need not only for the sector but for those seeking employment.

As a direct result of employer consultation and a request for training, TAFE NSW Human Services Tourism & Hospitality faculty undertook a Training Needs Identification process and submitted a funding application to Training Services NSW. The funding request was backed by research and support from the Aged Care and Disability organisations, spear headed by the Illawarra Action Workforce Group (IWAG) and funding was ultimately approved to allow a course to be planned to create trained workers ready for employment in the sector.

Commencing in August 2017, Support Stars is a NSW Government subsidised Statement of Attainment, aimed at applicants aged 18-24 who are interested in working in the disability or aged care sector. The 8 week course, delivered 2 days per week, provides a part qualification, 5 of 13 modules of the Certificate III in Individual Support, and includes 2 weeks of practical work placements. Students can self-refer or are identified by local Job Active providers and will be encouraged and supported to complete the remaining subjects to achieve the full qualification, hopefully via a traineeship.

Key Success Factors

- TAFE NSW listened to the needs of students and industry and were responsive and consultative, including industry representatives in the student interview process and identification of the most appropriate units of study necessary for entry level employment, as well as facilitating partnerships for work placements that may lead to real employment outcomes. This was a perfect example of TAFE NSW consulting with employers and responding to the needs of workforce challenges.
- TAFE NSW planned for success at every stage of the process. Information sessions were conducted to inform, attract and pre-screen students who might otherwise have not engaged in training or considered the aged and disability sectors for employment. Interested students then undertook an interview including TAFE and industry representatives, and were also assessed for any individual needs and barriers to learning including literacy and numeracy support. The aim of which was to identify any challenges to learning, allowing TAFE NSW Human Services delivery section at Shellharbour campus to fine tune the delivery of course content and provide individual support to ensure maximum course completion and workforce outcomes.
- Certificate III subjects were carefully chosen to ensure that not only does the student experience a real taste of the sector but are safe and informed when they undertake their work placements. First Aid, Workplace Health and Safety and communication subjects are delivered as well as an aged care and a disability specific subject before students are ready for work placements.

CASE STUDY

Support Stars



- Whilst Support Stars is in its initial stages, the course is fully enrolled and students are engaged and enjoying the learning. Demand is sufficient from both students and employers to repeat Support Stars at Shellharbour Campus as well as replicate in the Shoalhaven.
- Relationships and connections between TAFE NSW Shellharbour, aged and disability care providers and individual students are established and fostered, and there are already signs that students completing Support Stars may be offered traineeships to complete the Certificate III in Individual Support following their work placements, not only creating employment opportunities but also addressing workforce challenges.
- TAFE NSW is encouraged by the collaboration and partnership and are keen to consult with other sectors and replicate the process in other industries also experiencing workforce challenges, potentially retraining retrenched, redundant or otherwise underemployed people and re-engaging retirees back into employment, introducing new students to learning and offering opportunities to gain qualifications leading to workplace skills and employment.

About Us

Over 500,000 students enrol to study with TAFE NSW each year, Australia's leading provider of vocational education and training. Students choose TAFE NSW due to their proven track record of employment outcomes, as a result of connections with industry, which result in skills and qualifications that transfer into performance on the job.

TAFE NSW Shellharbour offers the best of campus based delivery, as well as flexible, online and work based learning, across a range of programs including engineering and automotive trade courses, child studies, business and administration services, nursing, adult basic education, general education and access programs, welfare, health and recreation and maritime.

Students enrolled at TAFE NSW Shellharbour have access to child care, counselling, disability support, an Aboriginal Co-ordinator as well as tutorial support when requested, with an aim of ensuring any additional student needs are identified and met, to overcome any possible barriers and to enable each individual to meet their study goals. TAFE NSW Shellharbour strives to support each student towards completion of their qualification, working towards a dual outcome for both the student and the college, and ultimately the workforce and the community as a whole.

CASE STUDY

Illawarra Diggers



Illawarra Diggers grow in sync with operating efficiencies

Illawarra Diggers are undergoing a period of extensive change and expansion in response to increasing community need for residential accommodation in the aged care sector, due to the aging population of the region.

Construction of an extension as well as upgrade of existing facilities, including individual rooms, new administration area, new entry foyer, new forecourt and residents' courtyard, new hairdresser's salon, revamped main dining room and new meeting and medical consulting rooms has resulted in a significant impact on the CEO's role.

Strategies

- Upgrading of existing senior roles to managers and increased delegations to stop approval bottle necks and allow CEO to concentrate on expansion project, which is currently occupying 60-70% of the role
- Creation of new team leader role and purchase of an extra medication trolley to reduce the travel paths and time taken to administer medication to residents each day
- Improved asset management by the purchase of a specialised program, including bar coding of all equipment. Training and education of staff ensures equipment is returned to designated storage area after use preventing time wastage whilst staff look for equipment not returned, or located elsewhere in the building
- Development of regular maintenance program of equipment to prevent down time due to unexpected breakdowns
- New facility design includes extra storage rooms in close proximity to residents reducing time accessing and returning equipment
- Potential to purchase further automated equipment to enable further efficiencies for the new extension

Key Success Factors

Coinciding with, and also to enhance the organisational expansion, Diggers welcomed a new CEO in January 2015, who rapidly got up to speed after an extended handover and introduction to the industry from the previous long term CEO.

Recruited from outside the aged care sector but with the same goals and cultural belief to enhance the lives of residents, the new CEO was able to harness their skills and experience from an engineering background, resulting in increased efficiencies that have not only resulted in continuous improvement of residents care but also impressive revenue optimisation.

Whilst the focus remains on individualised, person centred care for the residents, the CEO has created a culture of continuous improvement and empowered team members to identify areas of concern and inefficiency and to be solutions focused.

Not averse to increasing face to face hours of support where necessary, as demonstrated by the creation of a 4th team leader role, the CEO's preference is to identify inefficiencies that can be rectified with the purchase of equipment or the implementation of improved processes that save time.

The Board of Directors at Illawarra Diggers include representatives from the RSL, the ex-services community and 5 appointed professionals who assist the executive in the governance of the organisation but most importantly have empowered the CEO to make the relevant changes that have enabled a significant increase in revenue without cost cutting. This enables a better range of choice both in expenditure on the day to day care of residents, but also in optimising construction choices for the future use of residents and staff.

CASE STUDY

Illawarra Diggers



About Us

Illawarra Diggers Aged and Community Care Residence in Corrimal, has a proud 71 year history commencing in 1946, providing care to older people, particularly to veterans and war widows.

Their welcoming atmosphere offers a caring, friendly and homely environment that enhances the quality of life of every resident and maximises independence.

Illawarra Diggers currently comprises of 98 beds, and offers accommodation in the areas of residential aged care, palliative care, secure dementia care and respite. Their kiosk, hairdressing facility, on site doctor's clinic twice per week and transport options add to the community and homely culture of the residence.

Successful regulatory compliance and accreditation with the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency plus achievement of an A rating in annual Food Safety Audits confirms that the standard of care provided is excellent, however the organisation holds itself to an even higher standard.

Diggers, as it is affectionately known, prides itself on care and support of each resident on a daily basis by not only getting to know their individual needs but usually their family members too, with a goal to make their lives better each and every day.

CASE STUDY

TIGS Sony Foundation Camp



TIGS Sony Foundation Camp proven pathway from students to volunteers to employees

Since 2010, TIGS has received sponsorship and support from The Sony Foundation to host and replicate the yearly camps held in other locations, for 25 Illawarra and Shoalhaven children aged 10-17 years. Campers enjoy a 3 day camping experience of a lifetime, supported by 45 Year 11 TIGS students as part of their Christian Community Service responsibilities. This is done in full partnership with The Disability Trust (TDT).

Parent/carers nominate their children with disabilities to attend the event, and places are allocated based on the applicant's age, previous access TDT services and other camps. Children are chosen on their ability to fully access the holistic camping experience, particularly if this is the last opportunity to attend based on their age. Due to the physical aspects of the camp, as well as the volunteer supports, the event is targeted at ambulatory children with moderate support needs who have a dual or triple diagnosis.

Strategies

- The Sony Foundation provide sponsorship to TIGS Sony Camp to replicate and deliver a safe, inclusive and rewarding camp experience, changing lives and creating awareness, to be held at Berry Sport and Recreation Centre in 2017, and at other venues in previous years.
- 45 Year 11, trained and motivated TIGS Students, known as companions, are matched to campers and provided with detailed information to introduce the camper to the companion so they can familiarise themselves. The companion's only goal is to facilitate the best possible experience for their camper in a safe and nurtured environment.

- Companions assist campers to take part in the full holiday camp experience, including the food service and cleaning roster, packing of bags and bed making, therefore teaching and reinforcing living skills, team work and personal responsibility.
- The camp commences with an ice breaking activity; bowling, and this year finishes with a celebration trip to Jamberoo Recreation Park on the return journey, with the usual camping activities in between, including the giant swing, flying fox and archery. Whilst the schedule is full and fast paced, there is an option for campers to take time out and rest with their companions, nap or do craft if they need a break from the activities or are feeling tired, which can be the case due to their individual needs and diagnosis.
- Photos are taken as a record of each day and printed each evening. After campers retire to bed, companions spend time as a group to create individualised scrapbooks for their campers. This activity serves a dual purpose to not only develop an incredible record of the weekend but also affords companions an opportunity to debrief with their peers with the assistance of the TDT team, after what can sometimes be a confronting and emotional experience.

Key Success Factors

TDT carefully select campers as well as companions, and ensure both groups are as well prepared and sufficiently supported to facilitate the best possible, and often life changing experience. The aim is not only to provide a 'normal' camping experience for children with disabilities but to in fact exceed it.

CASE STUDY

TIGS Sony Foundation Camp



Christian Community Service students from TIGS must apply to support campers at this event, which is highly regarded so demand for places, both for companions as well as campers, always outstrips supply. Prospective volunteers who have supported children at other TDT activities, such as sporting groups or dance and drama classes, have preference due to their skills and experience and demonstrated willingness to facilitate diversity and inclusion. In some cases, these volunteers have already formed connections with TDT participants who are chosen as campers.

Supporters from the business community provide no cost or subsidised services to make the event viable and thus reduce the impost of fundraising on the Sony Camp for costs outside of the sponsored amount. For example, Premier Illawarra provide the coach transport at no cost and Jamberoo Recreation Park offer free entry to the campers on the final day.

Before leaving the camp grounds, a ceremony takes place where companions present the scrapbooks they have prepared for their campers, and speak about the relationship formed with the person they have supported. The companions meet with the parents/carers at the completion of the camp, and campers share their scrapbook, a pictorial record of the activities and enjoyment of the 3 day event, which is particularly important if the camper has barriers to communication. The aim of the scrapbook and meeting of the companion is not only to demonstrate and celebrate the achievements of the camper but to allay any anxiety or concern in parent/carers. The scrapbook becomes a very treasured memento.

The workforce impact and the awareness building from the camp is invaluable for all stakeholders and often life changing for all involved. As a direct result of the volunteering experience, 12 TIGS students have been employed by TDT to date, and others have commenced study with a goal to support the disability sector in the future. Companions have also formed strong and potentially life long connections with the campers they

have supported, who they remain in contact with long after the camp has concluded.

Relationship and connections with peers are the cornerstone of real inclusion and person centred disability support and this camp is the perfect example of creating an inclusive world.

About Us

The mission of the Sony Foundation is to capitalise on the unique qualities of Sony and contribute to the advancement of the Australian community by assisting youth and fostering their talents. The Children's Holiday camp program commenced in 1999 with 1 camp, and has grown to 26 across Australia, combining a unique respite program where high school and university students take responsibility for care of children with disabilities, allowing their families to have a weekend off.

The Disability Trust (TDT) was established in Wollongong in 1974 through the collective efforts of people with disabilities and their families. Having grown substantially to now cover an area from Sydney to the Victorian border and the ACT, providing services to over 4,000 people with the support of over 1,200 staff, their roots remain in the community and their mission has not diminished to create an inclusive world, and advocate and facilitate collaboration between the local services.

The Illawarra Grammar School (TIGS) was founded in 1959, spearheaded by the late Bishop Gordon Begbie, and supported by a dedicated group of 'founding parents' who believed in the need for a regional Anglican School to be based in the Illawarra. From humble beginnings of an enrolment of 28 male students, to the co-educational amalgamation with SCEGGS in 1975, TIGS now has a cohort of over 1,000 students who receive educational outcomes in a modern setting, and enjoy the benefits of programs of excellence in a caring environment founded on Christian belief and behaviour.

CASE STUDY

Uniting



Delivering the NDIS in your community

Uniting Employee Referrals gain >75% like-minded people

Uniting's LAC Program have designed and implemented an Employee Referral Program to encourage employees to refer "likeminded people" who want to make a difference in their community. The Uniting LAC Employee Referral Program encourages the team to refer potential candidates from their networks including friends and family who they believe fit the values and culture of Uniting. The program rationale is based on the premise that employees know what it takes as a local area coordinator (LAC) and understand the importance of the right fit for the Uniting culture, skill set and attributes required to be a high performing local area coordinator.

Uniting LAC team members are rewarded for a successful referral. They receive a \$150 gift card on commencement of the new employee, and a further \$150 gift card when the referred employee passes the 3 month probation period.

Strategies

- Uniting promotes the Employee Referral Program across the LAC Program providing opportunities for referrals across the 5 Districts.
- The recruitment team worked closely with the LAC Leadership team to design the program, incentives and internal marketing campaign including: posters, emails, flyers, internal newsletters and branded reward cards.
- Rewards are easy to claim by employees who make referrals by completing a referral claim form which is sent to the recruitment team. Reward vouchers are sent directly to employees once they complete and lodge their claim for the referral on commencement and at 3 months.

- Making a referral is easy for busy employees who simply send the referral to the recruitment team, who make contact and begin the process with a phone screen to assess the level of interest and motivation to join the LAC Program.
- Subject to a successful phone screen and appropriate level of interest and suitability for available roles, candidates are referred to an Assessment Centre to undertake individual and group activities that provide the applicant with an additional opportunity to demonstrate their skills, attributes and attitudes not always provided in a traditional interview.
- Uniting encourages applications and appointments of people with disabilities for the role of LAC, and offers modifications and adjustments to the recruitment process, such as exemptions from the Assessment Centre, to break down barriers and reduce stress and plan for success.
- Uniting's LAC Program proactively recruit people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people and people from CALD backgrounds. In the Illawarra Shoalhaven District 20% of the team have disability, 5% are from ATSI background and 15% from CALD background. They are proactive in ensuring the recruitment process is accessible and inclusive to ensure they attract the "right people".

Key Success Factors

The Employee Referral Program is simple and easy leveraging the culture of existing teams who support recruitment of "likeminded people" to be highly successful, rewards are easy to claim, particularly in regions such as the Illawarra, where networks and the sense of community is stronger than in some metropolitan centres.

CASE STUDY

Uniting



Delivering the NDIS in your community

The referral program is beneficial for everyone: The team have an opportunity to play a role in building the team with people they know and who are more likely to be successful in the LAC role. A real sense of pride and achievement is felt by referring staff members, who feel that the financial reward for facilitating the employment of someone in their network is a bonus, but is not the primary motivator.

Recruitment of the Illawarra LAC team, and the subsequent performance indicators of the LAC Transition Services set by the NDIA, were achieved ahead of target, which is directly attributed to the successful use of this recruitment strategy. Of the 53 people currently employed in the Illawarra Uniting LAC team, 41 (77%) of the team are a direct result of the employee referral program and this number is expected to grow as the team approaches full capacity of 79 employees.

The organisation recognises that family and friends, co-workers and colleagues, often have a far deeper knowledge of an applicant's strengths, and by recruiting from personal networks, the culture of teamwork and collaboration is strengthened and the applicant has been pre-screened by their peers to some extent. Uniting also acknowledges that personal recommendations reflect on both the referee as well as the referral and successful employment of family and friends increases the morale and sense of achievement of staff. New team members have the benefit of knowing co-workers, which allows them to settle in and become productive in a shorter period of time.

Uniting have a robust Conflict of Interest policy, process and management plan which is designed to protect team, customers and the organisation. Real or perceived conflicts of interest are declared with each case reviewed and management plan established to prevent any conflict of interest or accusations of favouritism or collusion. As a result of transparency and accountability, processes and procedures, the employee referral program operates successfully across 5 districts.



Recruiting and onboarding a large team from the ground up can be a daunting, time consuming and expensive project. By harnessing the personal networks of existing team members across the organisation, Uniting achieved the goal in record time in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. The organisation successfully attracted exceptional candidates with the appropriate skills and experience but more importantly the right fit in terms of culture, values and motivation.

About Us

On 01 July 2017, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was introduced in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven by Uniting and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The NDIS provides people with disability greater choice, control and an opportunity to improve their quality of life. It is a new era of lifestyle and service choice for people with disability and their families.

Uniting's Local Area Coordination (LAC) Transition Services partner with the NDIA in 5 Districts in NSW including: Northern Sydney, Western Sydney, Nepean/Blue Mountains, Southern NSW and Illawarra/Shoalhaven to support people with disability transition to the NDIS. Uniting's LAC Program currently employ 362 people Program wide with recruitment underway for an additional 75 people to join the LAC team prior to December 2017.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven District currently has 53 team members with recruitment currently underway for 27 additional team members to join prior to December 2017. Uniting's team target is 79 FTEs by December 2017.

Uniting are a values driven organisation, with a clear purpose to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice.

CASE STUDY

Warrigal



Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

Innovative service delivery model at Warrigal attracts fivefold increase in applicants

In response to the development of a new residential care home, Warrigal Shell Cove, including revised roles and an innovative Service Delivery Model (SDM), Warrigal identified they required a different skillset to traditional aged care recruitment and sought to attract applicants from other industries such as hospitality and retail.

Aiming to present their new model and state-of-the-art complex to potential team members, whilst also assisting to change the stigma around aged care, it was recognised that traditional recruitment would attract traditional applicants, which was not the diversity required to meet the brief. The demand for aged care employees in the Illawarra is highly competitive, and the SDM at Warrigal Shell Cove so innovative, that not only did Warrigal wish to attract applicants from outside the industry who might not have considered aged care as a career, they also wished to educate existing aged care workers both external as well as internal to the organisation, as they too did not understand the point of difference of the newly created roles. The volume of enquiries and the need to educate meant Information Sessions were the best way forward to address the employment model and the volume of applicants expected.

Strategies

- 2 sessions were conducted at 10am and 6pm, in a central and easily accessible location, to accommodate individual availability across different sectors.

- Extensive promotion of the roles and sessions in traditional formats including The Illawarra Mercury, a targeted social media campaign and the intranet to encourage word of mouth, and friends and family referrals, and less traditionally, the use of radio advertising and the insertion of flyers in local premises, email contact with the expression of interest database, and invitations to local Job Actives and training institutions.
- To enable staff in attendance to field individual enquiries, distribute flyers and promote the opportunities to friends and family not in attendance, attendees were also afforded the opportunity to speak with Warrigal staff one-on-one, assisting to answer specific questions and allow applicants to self-select, as well as promote the innovative and person centred care model.

Key success factors

After developing a set of competencies and qualities of the ideal staff member and the necessary cross-section of staff required to deliver on the outcomes of the SDM, it became evident to Warrigal that cultural fit, and a diverse range of skills and experience would be essential. Based on previous recruitment experiences for smaller numbers of positions, it was identified that additional promotion would be required to attract a higher number of applicants from a broader diversity of backgrounds.

CASE STUDY

Warrigal



Warrigal

Inspiring communities
for older people

The presentation delivered at the Information Sessions showcased the SDM, the industry, Warrigal as an employer of choice, and the innovative new roles. Warrigal involved existing employees in the presentation who had entered the sector from non-aged care backgrounds in delivering the session content, who shared their own experiences to assist potential new entrants to see the transferability of their own skillset.

Approximately 250 people attended the 2 sessions, a number that may have been larger, but numbers were capped due to venue capacity. The content was delivered in a way that when applicants provided feedback they shared of feeling inspired and encouraged to apply as they felt an alignment with the values and purpose of the new location and Warrigal as a whole.

In an endeavour to dispel misconceptions about the difference in the new SDM at Shell Cover from other Warrigal locations, existing Warrigal employees were welcome and this assisted to educate other employees who were not able to attend via word of mouth.

An unprecedented volume of applications were received, across a diversity of backgrounds, for what was an extremely competitive recruitment process, resulting in the desired mix of employees offered employment at the new location.

The information sessions had the added benefit of increasing the community awareness of the values and culture of Warrigal and the new SDM at Shell Cove in particular, resulting in a dual outcome of promoting the organisation and setting the expectations of the innovative service customers will receive at Warrigal Shell Cove.

In relation to workforce impact the strategy was a resounding success for the organisation, involving a level of rebranding as well as redesign, resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of applicants for the promoted roles in comparison to similar roles at other locations, advertised at the same time.

Over 300 applicants for Companion versus 50 for the similar role of Care Service employee and 5 times as many applicants for the role of Registered Nurse than at any other Warrigal location.

As a result of this recruitment strategy, the diversity of applicants required by Warrigal to deliver the new SDM was also achieved and there were large numbers of applications from those with a retail, hospitality, and finance and administration background.

The key message of the Information session was that cultural and motivational fit was the priority. Warrigal would assist individuals to gain the qualifications and experience required to succeed, and this was effectively delivered and enthusiastically received by the attendees, in particular those who went on to become successful applicants and motivated new employees.

About Us

Founded in 1967 by local service clubs who identified the gap in care for older people, Warrigal began small and local, supported by a mostly volunteer staff and funded by community donations. Becoming a public company and registered charity in the early 80's, Mount Warrigal Rest Home continued to expand, becoming Warrigal Care in the new millennium. With a goal to create inspiring communities where older people are allowed to be themselves, the organisation has continued to evolve, expand and innovate across the Illawarra, the Southern Highlands and Goulburn and Queanbeyan.

Warrigal are also advocates of their customers and residents experiencing fun, freedom and fitness through community activities, clubs and meaningful relationships and support their customers to feel connected, happy, respected and independent.

CASE STUDY

Saturplay Program



“Saturplay” shares resources, with familiar people & surroundings giving peace of mind to children with autism

The Saturplay program supports children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and/or challenging behaviours aged 4-12 years through provision of play in a secure environment as well as community access, supported by workers as well as volunteers. The Saturplay program has provided support to over 30 families and has run each Saturday for 50 weeks of the year, with families accessing up to 2 out of 4 weekends per month.

Delivered in partnership with Aspect South Coast School for Autism and utilising their physical resources, this program is the most in demand service for Interchange Illawarra. Communication and behaviour support strategies used at Saturplay are consistent with contemporary research and practice, and are based on approaches used by the Aspect South Coast School for Children with Autism, further ensuring consistency and stability for the children and their families.

Strategies

- Discussions with families identified children aged between four and twelve years who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and/or challenging behaviours and needed weekend respite support, particularly on Saturdays when siblings had extracurricular activities. The program commenced in 1998 as a Saturday playgroup and support group for parents.

- Interchange Illawarra partners with Aspect School at Corrimal to use school grounds and vehicles which are not utilised on weekends but are a known and comfortable venue for both children and parents. Most children accessing Saturplay attend Aspect school or a satellite class.
- In response to increasing demand, in 2001 funding was allocated to appoint a part time co-ordinator. A highly experienced Aspect staff member who was well known to both children and parents was appointed, specifically for Saturplay and family support.
- Targeting children aged 4-12 years, the program expanded to a further school location south of Wollongong later in 2001, increasing the number of children supported to 40, with 20 allocated to each location and 10 children attending per week on a rotation basis.
- Yearly goals for each individual child are identified in consultation with the parent and Saturplay staff to create real outcomes transferable outside of the group. For example, the ability to watch an entire movie in a cinema or strategies to desensitise the child to triggers such as candles on a birthday cake.

Key Success Factors

The physical and human resource sharing between Aspect School at Corrimal and Interchange Illawarra in the delivery of Saturplay, is not only an efficient and smart business strategy but also facilitates the success for children attending and increases the respite effect for parents and families due to increased peace of mind.

CASE STUDY

Saturplay Program



Children and their individual needs are well known to the co-ordinator, who is also employed by Aspect during the school week, as well as the paid workers and volunteers who attend regularly.

Depending on the activities planned and the number of children booked to attend, up to 3 paid workers and 5 volunteers support the 10 children in attendance at each group, at each of the two locations. Wherever possible, the same people work with the same children fortnight to fortnight to enable the best possible relationships. In many cases, the Saturplay team of workers and volunteers are studying education or disability support qualifications and also have experience at Aspect School, or go on to be employed as teachers and specialised learning support officers in the classrooms the children attend during the school week. In some cases, workers and volunteers who are connected to the family via Saturplay go on to provide one on one support to families in their own homes.

Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that affects, among other things, the way an individual relates to his or her environment and their interaction with other people. For many children and adults on the Autism Spectrum, rigidly sticking to routines and spending their time in repetitive behaviours are ways for them to reduce uncertainty and maintain the predictability of their environment.

Resource sharing, leading to continuity of care by familiar people, in familiar surroundings, is what makes Saturplay such an effective strategy, providing a dual outcome for both the child with the autism spectrum diagnosis as well as their family.

About Us

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is Australia's largest service provider for people on the autism spectrum. Their evidence informed schools program is the largest in the world, with additional services that include information and advice, diagnostic assessments, behaviour support, parent and family support, and adult programs. Aspect South Coast School operates from Corrimal and has satellite classes in both NSW Department of Education and Training schools and Catholic schools covering an area from Helensburgh to Appin to Kiama and including outreach services in the Shoalhaven.

Interchange Illawarra began its journey as Illawarra Family Care for Disabled Persons Inc. in 1981, with the express purpose of providing temporary care, or respite care for adolescents and young adults with a disability. Initially funded by the State and Commonwealth governments, the organisation is continuing to innovate as a result of the commencement of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and they pride themselves on being pioneers of person centred, self-directed disability support.

CASE STUDY

Career Check Up



Career Check Up Expo for >45 year olds helps plan for encore careers

Delivered in partnership with the NSW Government and the Australian Human Rights Commission, this IRT Foundation initiative is a multi-faceted community engagement and participatory action strategy. The Expo is a one stop shop for mature workers aged over 45 to review their current working arrangements, seek advice to make decisions and ultimately plan their encore career.

Aiming to build individual capacity for employment and re-training, inform participants and create service linkages as well as educate the business sector, the Expo connects mature workers directly with age-friendly employers, training organisations, career coaching, HR advisers and financial planners.

Flexible and fulfilling work can enhance our quality of life as we age, and is also a homelessness prevention action. The city of Wollongong has a higher proportion of over 50s than the national average (+2% to 35%). As this cohort is growing five times faster than the 20-50 age group, the region won't have enough people working to continue to grow our economy. National Seniors Australia found that older workers who plan for an encore career are less likely to end up unemployed yet many older Australians are unlikely to career plan for the future.

Strategies

- Career Check Up registrants are encouraged to undertake the Skillsroad Career quiz, a 15 minute online survey to help uncover strengths and talents and connect who they are with what they are naturally good at, prior to their attendance. This step is particularly useful for mature workers who have worked in the same industry their entire career but not necessarily enjoyed or felt was the correct fit.
- A Participant guide is provided for each entrant, not only an information source but a record keeping and evaluation tool, and IRT Foundation actively seek feedback and comment both in writing and via a voluntary post event evaluation workshop for the purposes of continuous improvement.
- Each mature worker attending the Expo has the opportunity to meet with a Careers Advisor and leave with a personal action plan.

Key Success Factors

The Wollongong Expo was a first for the region but the second for IRT Foundation, who ran a pilot event in the ACT in June 2016. A joint initiative with the ACT Government and the Australian Human Rights Commission, over 200 mature workers aged over 45 attended.

Thanks to a Liveable Communities Grant from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Wollongong was the venue for the second Career Check Up for Mature Workers Expo in February 2017.

CASE STUDY

Career Check Up



Entry was free for participants, however they were encouraged to pre-register to receive the program and other resources in advance, to plan their visit and view career advisor session times. The event was open between 9am and 7pm, allowing older workers still employed or working shift work a flexible opportunity to attend the event at a time suitable for their schedule.

Well supported by the business and training community of the Illawarra, a wide variety of exhibitors participated to provide advice and information, including Peoplecare, RMB Lawyers, MBC Employment Services, Centrelink, HESTA, Illawarra Credit Union, NAB Financial Planning, TAFE NSW, UOW and many more. Employers from the aged care and disability sectors such as CareSouth, Home Instead Senior Care, IRT Group and Warrigal were present promoting careers in their sector to attendees.

Diverse half hour presentations were also on offer throughout the day on a range of topics targeted at mature Australians including making the most of superannuation in retirement, and careers in growth sectors for older Australians.

IRT Foundation principles focus their attention on issues where they have the capability to impact positively and activities are targeted, measurable and relevant to their customers. Feedback from expo participants was therefore essential and was encouraged by offering attractive employment related prizes including a laptop as a random prize for completion and entry of the passport into the draw.

As Australia's largest community based aged care and lifestyle providers, the board and executive of IRT Group have a passionate belief in their moral and ethical responsibility to do more, and to give back, via the IRT Foundation, and the Career Check Up for Mature Workers is the perfect example of this commitment.

About Us

IRT Foundation believes in creating a better world for all older Australians by empowering them to live free from disadvantage.

The Foundation was launched in 2014 initially to fund research into issues affecting older people. One third of IRT Group's annual surplus is given back to the community via IRT Foundation's social impact activities.

With an outcomes focussed approach, IRT Foundation succeeds by challenging stereotypes and creating social innovation for the older Australians it supports. Close enough is not good enough, and the Foundation's willingness to engage and collaborate with all stakeholders and beneficiaries, is key to its success.

The strategic priorities of IRT Foundation are:

- Provide disadvantaged older Australians with access to supported housing
- Link disadvantaged older Australians to relevant services
- Enhance the lives of older Australians through social and civic participation
- Increase awareness of its social impact program to drive sustainability and growth.

CASE STUDY

Graduate Nursing Program



HarbisonCare

Care Centric specialised Graduate Aged Care Nurse program delivers holistic care & quality outcomes

In 2015, the increasing need for specialised aged nursing in the area was identified in discussions between senior nursing staff and the local public hospital. It was agreed that staff directing the care of aged residents would greatly benefit from a greater understanding of all nursing care in the community, and as a result the Graduate Nurse Program was developed.

A Memorandum of Understanding exists between HarbisonCare and The Bowral & District Hospital, Southern Highlands Private Hospital and the Wingecarribee Community Health Service. All stakeholders including the Community Health team, General Practitioners and Palliative Care Team, are not only committed to but also enjoying the benefits of the partnership, including most importantly, the aged care population that they support.

Commencing in March 2016 with five Registered Nurse graduates and two Enrolled Nurse graduates, 5 of the 7 graduates remain employed with HarbisonCare. Following on from the successful inaugural year, 6 nurses commenced in 2017 and the program has made a significant impact on care outcomes and reducing hospital admissions in this short time.

Strategies

- Entry to the program is by application followed by interview, and both Registered Nurses (RN) and Enrolled Nurses (EN) are encouraged to apply. Limited training positions were previously available to EN's, yet EN's represent a significant percentage of senior staff.

- 12 month program including 6 rotations of 4 weeks each in Medical Surgical Unit, Emergency Department, High Dependency, Operating Room, Community Health and Children's Ward/Maternity.
- Program graduates receive a complete overview of all sectors of healthcare that may impact on the nursing of elderly patients. For example experience gained in the maternity and children's rotation may be essential when nursing a dementia patient who had experienced a difficult birth or loss of a child.

Key Success Factors

The Graduate Nursing Program welcomes applications from nurses of all ages who are newly graduated from their professional studies, and attracts both the young 'first time' career seeker, as well as the mature 'career change' choice makers. The mix of youth and enthusiasm with experience and passion creates a very dynamic and cohesive environment for career development.

HarbisonCare values applicants who have a passion for people, a desire to make a difference and a goal to continue nursing in the aged care sector. As a result application numbers and the retention rates of program graduates are higher than previously experienced.

CASE STUDY

Graduate Nursing Program

HarbisonCare

Nursing students are often employed in care worker roles during their studies, but were leaving the area post study as insufficient graduate program positions were available locally. A loss to both the organisation and the district. The HarbisonCare program offers a career path for these nurses, which has increased retention rates to the benefit of all stakeholders. A successful graduate of the 2016 cohort is receiving support to complete a Masters of Nursing with a view to becoming a Nurse Practitioner, an opportunity that may not have been considered by the employee prior to involvement in the program.

Improved connections and confidence in graduates has led to strengthened relationships between the networks who collectively provide care to the aging population in the Southern Highlands. Public Hospital staff, Community Health Team, Palliative Care Team and General Practitioners, Specialist Medical Staff and the families of aged care residents have all benefited from the increased skills and experience, improved communication and continuity of care, as well as the patients themselves.

Aged care nursing has traditionally been seen as the last step in a nurse's career, and programs such as this improve perceptions and attract and retain quality staff. As there are currently more career paths for nurses in the aged care sector than any other and with the aging population all nurses will be working with people over 65 in the coming decades, appropriate training in aged care has never been more essential.

Review is constant, and feedback is welcomed from all stakeholders including training partners, hospital staff and medical professionals. As a result of ongoing assessment there are plans to include Rehabilitation and Palliative Care for the 2018 cohort as well as involve another major referral centre, Campbelltown Hospital.



A key success indicator is the reduced number of hospital transfers and the increase in the numbers of residents with higher care needs who are now confidently and successfully managed onsite. 100% of the hospital transfers in the first 6 months of 2017 were deemed necessary, a 40% improvement on the same period in the previous year. This is directly attributed to the holistic approach and increased skills levels of the nursing graduates and the care team as a whole.

Recognised by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency Better Practice Awards 2017 in the award descriptors Clinical Care/Medication Management, Leadership and Culture and Workforce Development, HarbisonCare has successfully developed a quality care centred solution with significant workforce and cultural benefits.

About Us

HarbisonCare is the leading provider of integrated aged care services in the Southern Highlands, offering a variety of care options in Burradoo and Moss Vale, as well as a home assistance program to support older Australians wishing to live in their own homes longer. The organisation supports older Australians by providing residential care, independent living respite care, nursing home accommodation, home care and dementia specific care.

Originally named Harbison Memorial Homes, the first of the self-care units were opened at Burradoo in 1958, thanks to a generous donation of land and fundraising and support from the local community. As the population and needs of the local residents grew, so did HarbisonCare, expanding their services to Moss Vale in 1997, and in 2001, the commencement of home assistance to local residents.

HarbisonCare has its roots firmly in the Southern Highlands, thanks to the commitment of a group of dedicated volunteers and donors in the 1950's, and it is this culture of giving and caring that drives the Board of Directors, staff and volunteers to serve and collaborate with the local community.

CASE STUDY

You, Me and Us



“You, Me and Us” – language & culture bridges age ‘divide’ for lasting relationships & potential careers

Premiered in September, 2014, this 30 minute production was part of the Smith Family’s Partnership Broker program, an initiative aimed at bringing community groups, schools and business together to improve school engagement, but proved to have far deeper and greater reaching effects than anyone could have forecast.

Spanning over 12 months, 30 students from Warrawong’s St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary school and a small number from Corpus Christi High School in Oak Flats, worked in small teams and were involved in all aspects of the project including developing the questions and undertaking the interviews, filming and recording sound.

The theme was to invite the residents to share stories about their childhood and family life in an oral history project, and offer wise words to the budding filmmakers, whilst also deepening children’s understanding and valuing of their community.

Strategies

- All stakeholders were enthusiastic, supportive and passionate about the project, facilitating effective communication and collaboration, and ensuring a positive outcome
- Teams of 5-6 children including a High School student were buddied up and matched with residents based on language and cultural background to not only encourage interaction and communication in their native language, but to show respect and encourage relationships and sharing.

- A number of monthly morning teas took place with the residents where students played games and read letters with the residents, to form relationships and create connections prior to the commencement of filming.
- Residents were also invited to attend choir performances and celebrations at the schools.

Key success factors

Both the residents and the schools involved in the project had a similar language and cultural mix which was key to facilitating real relationships between the students and aged care residents, as well as their extended families, which continue to this day. The success in matching residents and students based on culture and language background has meant that over 2 years on, many of the students and their families have maintained regular contact with the residents.

Bringing together an older and younger demographic who traditionally enjoy each other’s company, ongoing relationships encouraged a stream of young visitors and their families who would not otherwise have visited. Residents looked forward to the school visits as the highlight of their month and surrogate grandparent/grandchildren relationships were allowed the time to develop. This added to the health and well-being of the residents and assisted staff and volunteers who also benefited from the culture and positivity of the visits.

CASE STUDY

You, Me and Us



When it came time to interview and film the residents, any barriers in communication or connection had been removed, and the students were able to tease out information the residents had previously not shared, not even with their families. This provided priceless images and memories for the families, particularly for some of the residents who have since passed away.

The schools enjoyed the benefits of engaged children with a greater level of compassion, patience and understanding of not only the needs of older members of our community but a greater respect and empathy for all.

Students were surveyed at the commencement and completion of the project and unanimously shared they had changed perceptions about older people, and what it meant to live in aged care environment, with some volunteering that they might consider aged care as a career path.

The final product is a wonderful example of how family and community, in partnership with school, have the capacity to influence and build on the student's own learning and wellbeing, and how a project can have one smaller goal, but exceed expectations with far reaching effects.



About Us

Located in Warrawong and founded in 1988 (as the Illawarra Multicultural Village Group) Multicultural Aged Care Illawarra (MACI) provides care and services to older people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. 91 residents are supported in both their care facility as well as in permanent accommodation for older people within eight independent living units.

With the vision to celebrate life, community and culture, their committed team of volunteers, staff and board members come from a broad range of backgrounds, many of whom can speak languages other than English fluently. This assists to facilitate effective communication and cultural respect for the residents from over 26 countries and furthers the mission to provide high quality care services that embrace diversity.

Providing far more than just residential care, the organisation prides itself on supporting residents with nursing care, cleaning, meals, maintenance and a range of program activities to suit their needs and interests, taking into account their cultural and linguistic needs. Visiting health professionals also provide medical, chiropractic and physiotherapy services within the village, allowing residents to receive ongoing medical and health care within their residential surroundings.

More information:

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