

state of the sector : 2021
aged care workforce insights

covid — and — beyond

| HESTA |

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a message from our ceo

As the national superannuation fund dedicated to health and community services, HESTA has unique data and insights from our more than 880,000 members working in the sector.

These insights can help inform how we as a country meet the challenges of an ageing population and the increased demand for services.

The bushfires and now the COVID pandemic have highlighted glaring and often longstanding gaps in our caring economy. Closing these gaps must focus on the workforce and the people, often our members, who are so central to delivering these services and improving outcomes.

We strongly believe this starts with listening to our members to find out how they are experiencing work and how that shapes their attitudes to their industries, their employers and their leaders.

As the aged care sector grappled with a Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and then a global pandemic, HESTA took two snapshots of our members working in health and community services (HACS). Our research explored their workplace and industry attitudes, experiences and outlook prior to the pandemic in May 2019, and again in July 2020 during COVID.

Our data tells a fascinating story for the aged care sector.



It's a story that shows substantial improvement in workforce sentiment towards the aged care industry and employers, and which potentially points to an opportunity for the sector as it looks to build the aged care workforce of the future.

Creating the future workforce was a key focus of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. With forecasts of increased demand for services as Australia's population ages, the sector faces significant challenges building its workforce to the size and capability necessary to deliver the aged care services Australians will need.

The pandemic impact only highlighted the current workforce shortages. COVID outbreaks and the need for infection control practices, including visitor restrictions, across the sector put enormous pressure and stress on clients, their families and the professionals who cared for them. I want to acknowledge the hard work, compassion and leadership shown by so many aged care professionals during this difficult time as they cared for and protected Australia's seniors. Thank you.

HESTA manages nearly \$60 billion in retirement savings for its 880,000 members. We are proud to have forged a strong connection with the health and community services sector over 30 years. More than 200,000 of our members work or have worked in aged care and we are extremely proud of the critical and essential work they do that is vital for our post-COVID economic recovery.

We remain committed to partnering with the sector to help inform and facilitate collaborative solutions to address some of the biggest sector challenges, such as workforce planning. This will impact the working lives of a significant number of our members and will also affect their quality of life in retirement.

Our research, which expands on HESTA's 2018 *Transforming Aged Care* report, showed COVID manifested in the sector through disrupted hours and increased financial pressures. Approximately a quarter of our aged care members made claims to access their super early under the Federal Government's COVID scheme. Despite these challenges, aged care professionals told us they felt prouder to work in the sector than before COVID. Compared to 2019, they felt more appreciated by their community and their employer, and they were more likely to advocate for a career in aged care.

While it was clear through our discussions with industry representatives that there are systemic issues that cannot be ignored, the contrast between the 2019 and 2020 results in a relatively short time and in such a challenging and uncertain environment is significant. These findings could provide valuable further context as the sector looks to develop workforce attraction and retention strategies and implement the Royal Commission's recommendations.

We understand data is a key challenge for the sector as it undertakes this important work. That's why HESTA is committed to continuing to develop its workforce insights research program to inform solutions for the sector and shed light on how the global pandemic, economic recovery and ongoing sector reforms continue to shape the aged care landscape.

I wish to thank everyone who participated in the surveys and in discussions with HESTA. Your experiences, knowledge and insights have been incredibly valuable and will help inform and further the conversation about how we can create a stronger aged care system for us all.

Debby Blakey
CEO

overview

HESTA took two snapshots of its members working in health and community services, one prior to the global pandemic and again during COVID.

The research broadened the scope of HESTA's 2018 *Transforming Aged Care* report and examined the workplace experiences, job intentions and industry outlook of professionals working across health and community services more broadly. The research also considered the effect of COVID on the sector at that time.

State of the Sector Aged Care Workforce Insights: COVID and Beyond is the first of three reports and focuses on findings for the aged care sector, supported by additional HESTA data and insights.

The remaining reports explore findings for the early childhood education and care sector, and the community and disability services sectors.

HESTA intends to use this research to provide insights that can help the sector with workforce planning strategies and solutions to meet the growing demand for services, which can ultimately improve the working experiences and retirement outcomes for HESTA members working in aged care and in health and community services more broadly.

methodology

HESTA undertook two online surveys of HESTA members, one pre-COVID (May 2019) and again during COVID (July 2020). The surveys were obtained from a random representative sample of HESTA members working across health and community services with open super accounts in the accumulation phase.

Questions covered members' workplace experiences and job intentions, their employment satisfaction drivers, their attitudes towards their employer and industry, as well as how COVID affected their work, financial situation and industry outlook.

In 2020, 4622 HESTA members working in or intending to return to work in the sector completed the survey. HESTA received responses from more than 1500 members in aged care – the largest number of respondents for surveyed health and community services sectors. In 2019, 537 aged care members participated.

In addition to the surveys, HESTA discussed the findings with representatives from six industry organisations, including peak bodies, employers and unions, to seek their perspective on what was occurring in the aged care sector at the time and the impact of key industry issues. These interviews covered topics ranging from the impact of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's final report and recommended reforms to the high casualisation of the workforce and wages and conditions.

These thoughts and insights have been used anonymously throughout the report to provide context to the survey results.

The report also includes other supporting data and insights, including data on the uptake by HESTA members of the Federal Government's early release of super scheme due to COVID. HESTA has also developed a model to measure the preparedness of its members for retirement. This model has allowed HESTA to better understand the level of financial retirement readiness of its members who work in aged care and compare them to members working in other health and community services sectors. This data produced by this model has also been included in this report. Please note data totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Breakdown of 2020 survey respondents per sector

Industry	Count	%
Aged Care	1568	34%
Community Services	975	21%
Public Hospital	593	13%
Private Hospital	510	11%
Primary Healthcare	414	9%
Early Childhood Education and Care	364	8%

Note: excludes non-HACS professionals

key findings



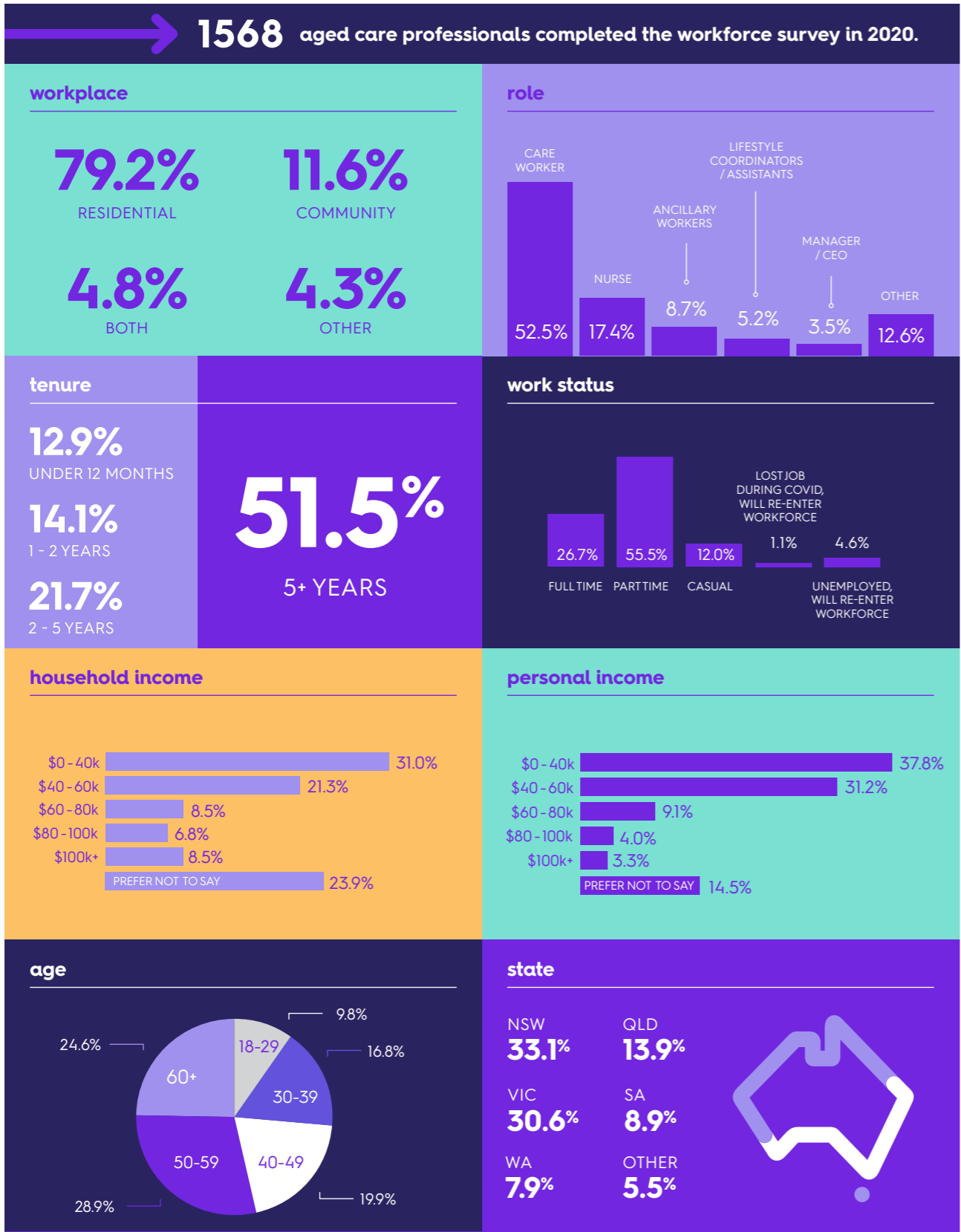
Despite the significant challenges of a Royal Commission and a global pandemic, the aged care workforce returned a much stronger, more positive sentiment towards their employers and the industry during COVID in 2020 compared to 2019:

- Aged care employees felt more appreciated by their employer and valued by their community.
- Aged care professionals felt prouder to work in the industry, and were the second proudest workforce behind community services professionals within health and community services.
- Aged care professionals were more likely to recommend a career in their industry, their employer's services and working for their employer and leader in 2020, with significant improvements in employee Net Promoter Score from considerably negative scores in 2019.
- Short-term intention to leave the aged care sector decreased 10%, with a corresponding increase in professionals who said they intended to stay with their current employer.

Nevertheless, the improvement in workforce sentiment in a challenging environment potentially indicates an opportunity for the sector and government to implement workforce strategies and solutions to improve the standard of care for aged Australians now and into the future:

- Skills development, wanting to try something different and pay were the top reasons for aged care professionals wanting to leave their employers.
- There was unanimous agreement among aged care employers, peak bodies and unions that improving pay, conditions and creating more skills development opportunities to ensure high-quality, sustainable jobs were key.

who we spoke to in aged care



the COVID impact

The pandemic put incredible pressure on an already stretched aged care system. By 26 March 2021, there had been more than 4000 cases of COVID among aged care staff and residents in Australian residential aged care facilities.⁶ More than 680 aged care residents died during these outbreaks, the majority in Victoria.

Throughout Victoria’s second COVID lockdown, which started in July 2020, distressing accounts emerged of aged care residents – isolated from their families and loved ones – deteriorating from neglect and inadequate care. This was due in large part to severely depleted staffing levels as providers experienced disruption to their operations and worked to manage infection control, often with limited support or guidance.

This was also an incredibly stressful time for aged care employees. Beyond the pressures of COVID on their actual work, many also experienced significant disruption to their work hours. This disruption is likely to have increased the financial pressure many households may have already

been experiencing due to the economic impact of the virus. Those who experienced disrupted work patterns included professionals in aged care facilities with caring responsibilities who needed to quarantine due to contracting the virus or becoming a close contact. Casual employees, who may have worked across multiple employers, were also under considerable financial pressure due to a lack of leave entitlements if they needed to quarantine.

It is important to note the majority of survey responses were received prior to certain COVID measures taking effect in Victoria. These included the increased visitor restrictions for hospitals and aged care facilities to allow carers only, and measures restricting Victorian aged care employees to work at a single site.⁷ Victoria had also not yet reached its peak of daily confirmed COVID cases.⁸ Accordingly, the full COVID impact as experienced by Victoria is unlikely to be reflected in these results.

COVID early release of super scheme

Reflecting the financial pressures experienced by the workforce, HESTA members working in aged care were more likely to access their super early under the Federal Government’s COVID-related early release of super scheme when compared to members in other health and community services sectors. Approximately a quarter of HESTA’s members who work in aged care – more than 45,000 professionals – applied to withdraw money from their super under the scheme, resulting in substantial decreases in the already low superannuation savings of many of these members.

The scheme allowed Australians whose jobs and income were affected by the pandemic to withdraw up to \$10,000 from their super in the 2019-20 financial year, and a further \$10,000 in the 2020-21 financial year up to December.

The proportion of HESTA aged care members who made early release claims was the largest when compared to other health and community services sectors: 19.6% of HESTA members working in the early childhood education and care sector, 16.4% in primary healthcare and 19.7% in community services.

Proportion of HESTA members by sector who made a claim to access their super early under the COVID scheme

Sector	% of members in that sector who made a claim
Aged care	25.6%
Community services	19.7%
Early childhood education and care	19.6%
Primary health	16.4%
Public hospital	10.6%
Private hospital	13.1%
Other health	20.8%
Other	17.0%

Note: based on number of HESTA members as at 17 April 2020.

More than 37,000 members working in residential aged care claimed super under the scheme, almost 27% of HESTA members in this cohort. More than 16,800 members working in aged care made a second claim for super, which was typically for the maximum \$10,000 they could claim under the scheme.

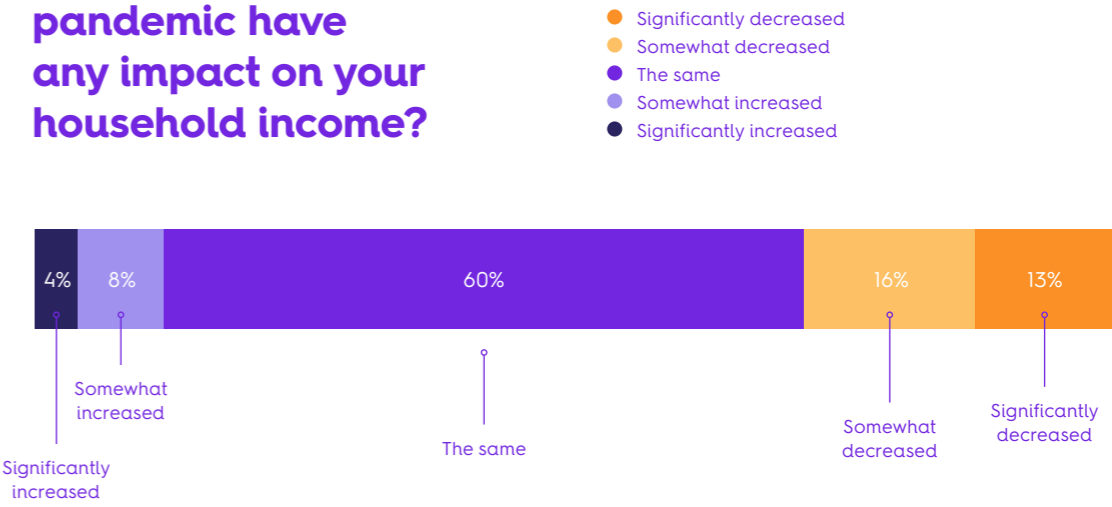
As can be seen from the below table, aged care members working in community care saw the biggest decreases in median account balance (-45%), closely followed by residential care (-40%).

Aged care sub-sector	Median balance where account remains open after early release		
	Before claim	As of 15/1/21	Change
Community care	\$23,364	\$12,769	- 45%
Residential Care	\$24,991	\$14,975	- 40%
Retirement Village	\$27,137	\$17,289	- 36%

Given aged care is the oldest cohort of HESTA members (see **A typical HESTA member in aged care**, page 20) they typically have less time to rebuild their retirement savings. In January 2021, the median account balance for members working in community or residential aged care who accessed their super early under the scheme was less than \$15,000.

A factor that may have contributed to the need to access super early is that, while 20% of aged care professionals were working more due to COVID (see **Disruption to work hours**, page 12), nearly one in three aged care respondents said they had experienced a decrease in household income.

Did the coronavirus pandemic have any impact on your household income?



6. Australian Government, Department of Health, COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities 2021 <<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/covid-19-outbreaks-in-australian-residential-aged-care-facilities>> at 26 March 2021. 7. ‘Workplace coronavirus transmission driving Victorian case numbers, including in aged care’, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 19 July 2021 <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-19/workplace-coronavirus-transmission-in-victoria-in-aged-care/12470704>>. 8. Australian Government, Department of Health, COVID-19 outbreaks in Australian residential aged care facilities 2021 <<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/covid-19-outbreaks-in-australian-residential-aged-care-facilities>> at 26 March 2021.

employee outlook and experiences

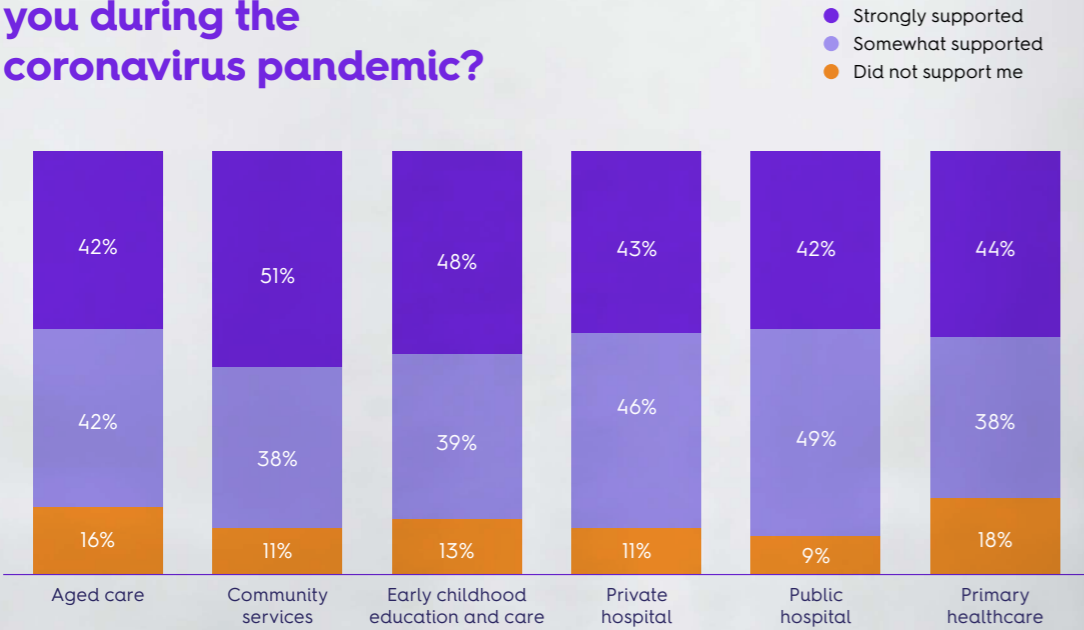
HESTA’s research indicated COVID and the Royal Commission have significantly affected the aged care workforce’s outlook and workplace experiences. Like other health and community services professionals, aged care employees experienced significant disruption to their work hours and ability to provide care and services. They were also feeling less confident about the future of their industry when compared to most other health and community services sectors.

Despite these experiences, a key finding that emerged through the research was an uplift in positive sentiment of aged care professionals towards their role, employer and industry. The data showed most aged care respondents (84%) felt somewhat or strongly supported by their employer during the pandemic, with no significant differences between states and territories.

While this sentiment is lower for aged care than most other health and community services sectors, this is still significant. After an intense focus by media, government and the community on the essential nature of their work, aged care employees appear to be feeling more appreciated by their employer and valued by the community. They are feeling prouder to work in the industry and have returned higher ratings for job satisfaction in 2020 compared to 2019.

While these findings do not negate the sector’s systemic workforce issues, the improvement in results – which notably arose in a highly negative external environment – could flag an opportunity for employers when developing their workforce attraction and retention strategies. Industry representatives with whom HESTA discussed the findings talked about how the 2020 environment had changed dynamically.

How did you think your employer supported you during the coronavirus pandemic?



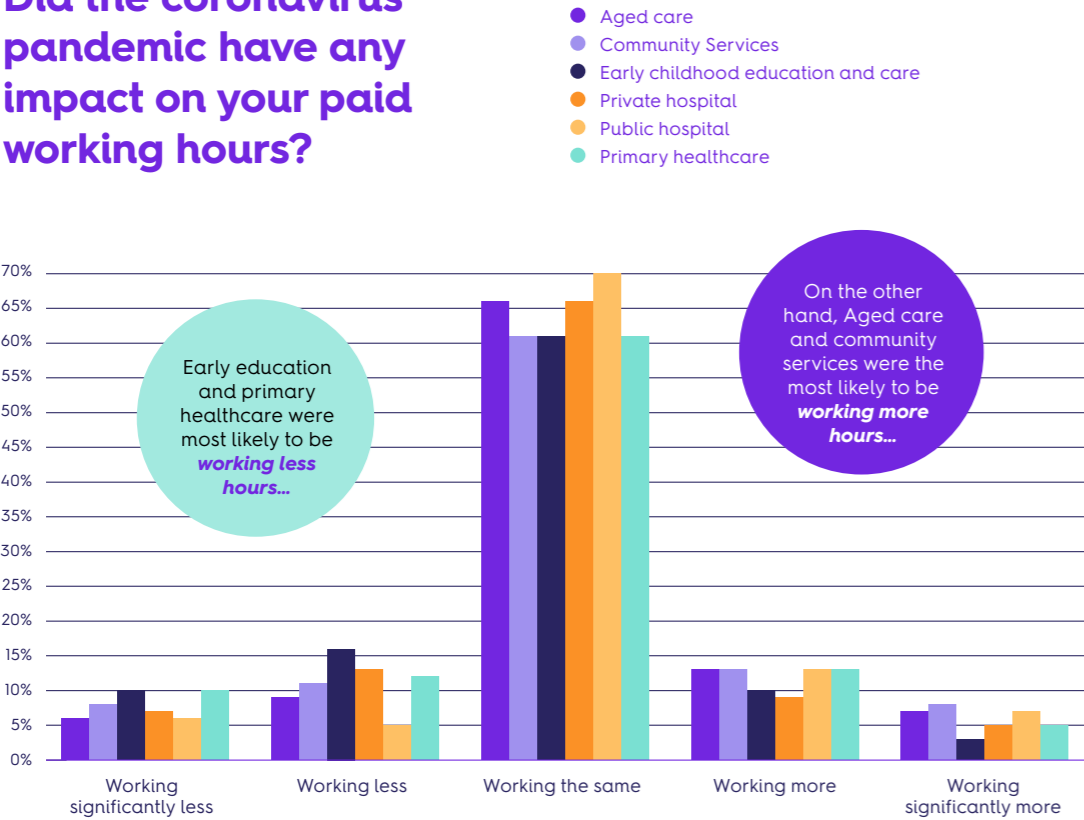
“What happens at a time of crisis is people tend to band together. It’s no different in aged care. So, I think people probably did feel under siege. It does knit you closer.”

disruption to work hours

The research found one in three aged care respondents had their working hours disrupted due to COVID. Of the aged care respondents who experienced changes to their work hours, 60% found they were working more. More full-time aged care employees (29%) experienced an increase in work hours, compared to part-time (18%) and casual (14%) employees.

While aged care professionals were the most likely, compared to those in other health and community services sectors, to feel their weekly hours were not ideal – 14% said their hours were too few and 5% said too many – the majority (81%) said their working hours in 2020 were ‘about right’. This figure increased from 2019 (77%).

Did the coronavirus pandemic have any impact on your paid working hours?



Just 7% of full-time aged care employees lost hours. Casual aged care employees experienced the greatest impact, with 40% of these respondents reporting they worked less due to COVID. While the Fair Work Commission announced in July 2020 that residential aged care professionals, including casual employees, should be given paid pandemic leave,⁹ concerns were raised about casual employees slipping through cracks as they would only qualify for this entitlement if they worked for an employer on a “regular and systematic basis”.¹⁰

This may also have contributed to the higher rates of claims for the early release of super scheme among HESTA’s aged care member base.

“I think that whole thing shows that casualisation is not a good thing – that people are doing lots of different things in lots of different places to put together a living wage.”

Industry representatives said aged care’s ‘highly casualised’ workforce was a key issue for the sector, which has given rise to precarious employment arrangements, financial pressures if employees had to take time off work due to lack of leave entitlements, lean staffing ratios and employees feeling overworked.

More than half of aged care professionals who were managers, general managers or CEOs experienced an increase in work hours, which was not unexpected in light of the severe disruption to the operation of aged care facilities and the need to manage staffing levels and infection control during the pandemic.

For other roles, safety restrictions potentially meant care workers were the most likely to have experienced a cut to their work hours (19%), compared to 11% of nurses and 9% of lifestyle coordinators or assistants.

Aged care professionals in community care were more likely to have lost work hours, with 30% reporting they worked less compared to just 11% of residential care professionals. For those working across both types of care, 26% said they worked less.

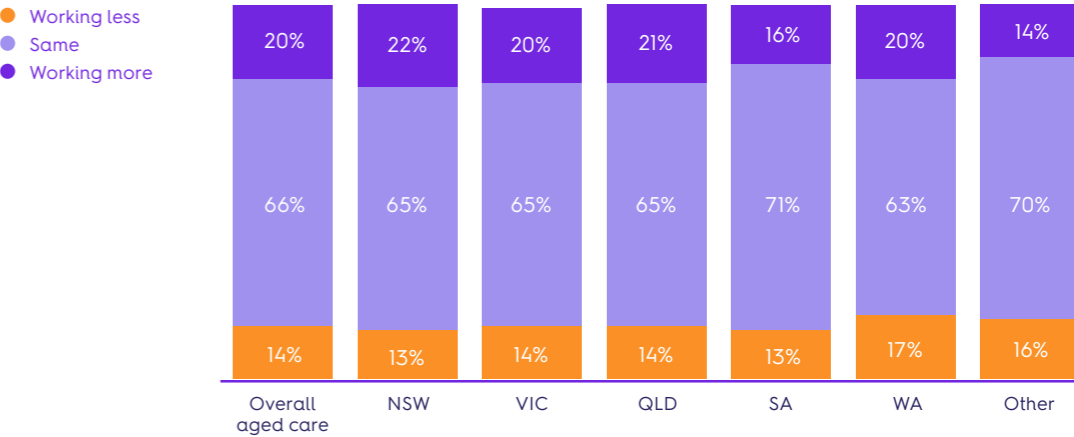
Discussions with industry representatives indicated community care clients during COVID had been concerned about safety and had cut back services.

There was a view that there had been a pick-up in demand since the research was conducted, with this likely to continue to build as the vaccine roll out progressed.

A large proportion of aged care professionals aged 39 and under (21%) also experienced a drop in work hours due to COVID. This was also the case for single parents (21%).

On 19 July 2020, the Federal Government urged Victorian aged care professionals to stop working across multiple age care facilities to prevent the further spread of COVID.¹¹ It is important to note the majority of survey responses were obtained prior to or just after this announcement. This may explain why the impact on paid working hours due to COVID was broadly consistent between different states and territories, as the full impact of this policy had not yet taken effect.

Did the coronavirus pandemic have any impact on your paid working hours?



⁹ Australian Government, Fair Work Ombudsman, *Paid pandemic leave in some awards* (2020) <<https://coronavirus.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/changes-to-workplace-laws-during-coronavirus/paid-pandemic-leave-in-some-awards>>, at 26 March 2021.
¹⁰ Rachel Clayton and Yara Murray-Atfield, ‘Fair Work Commission awards paid pandemic leave to aged care workers to stop staff going to work sick’, *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, 27 July 2020 <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-27/aged-care-workers-get-paid-pandemic-leave-fair-work-commission/12496342>>. ¹¹ ‘Workplace coronavirus transmission driving Victorian case numbers, including in aged care’, *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, 19 July 2021 <<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-19/workplace-coronavirus-transmission-in-victoria-in-aged-care/12470704>>.

industry outlook

The aged care sector has been going through a period of intense transformation and change in comparison to other health and community services industries.

When respondents were asked in July 2020 how they felt about the future of their industry after the pandemic, the Royal Commission had been in operation for nearly two years with recommended reforms due in early 2021. The workforce was also just starting to experience COVID-affected work environments.

Most aged care respondents were confident about the longevity of their industry. When compared to the rest of the health and community services workforce, however, aged care proved to be the least confident workforce aside from early childhood education and care. One in three aged care professionals said they felt moderate to uncertain about the future of their industry.

This was particularly the case for respondents aged 50 to 59 – nearly 40% said they felt moderate to uncertain about the future of their industry – followed by professionals aged 18 to 29 (36%). Nurses had the lowest confidence levels – 40% felt moderate to uncertain.

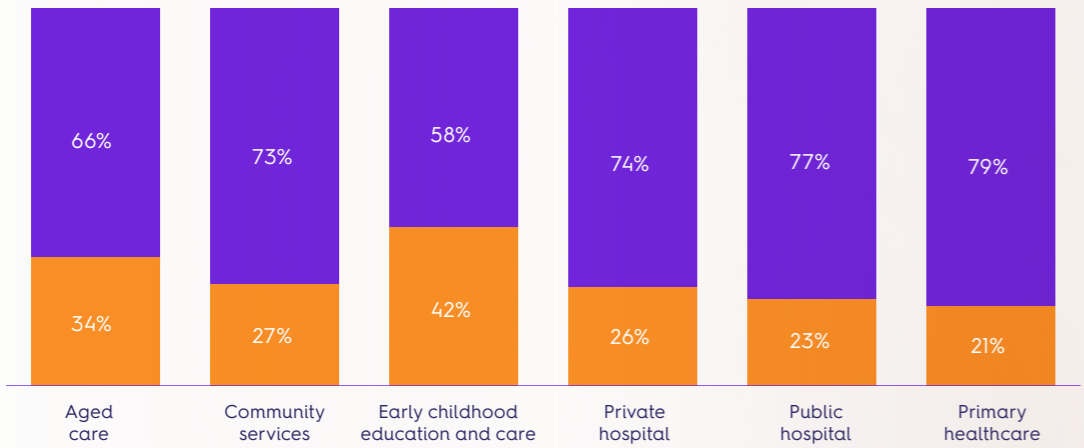
This potentially points to a challenge for the sector as it looks to attract the next generation of aged care professionals with the required skills.

Unsurprisingly, confidence levels were also lower for aged care employees who lost work hours due to COVID, with 42% saying they felt moderate to uncertain compared to professionals with unchanged hours (32%) and those who worked more (30%).

Discussions with industry representatives revealed there were concerns around the ability of the sector to meet the wide range of reforms proposed by the Royal Commission aimed at improving standards of care and client outcomes. These recommendations are likely to result in substantially increased regulatory oversight and demands on the workforce, and industry representatives raised concerns around how this would impact those working in the sector.

Which of the following best describes how you feel about the future of the industry you typically work in post-coronavirus?

- Confident
- Moderate to uncertain



appreciation by employers and community

Health and community services professionals were asked to rate how much they felt their skills and experiences were valued by the community and whether they felt appreciated by their employer and clients.

By July 2020 there had been increased focus on the vital and essential nature of the health and community services workforce during the pandemic, including public recognition of the hard work being done by aged care professionals to protect residents from COVID. It is worth noting, however, the full impact of the second lockdown in Victoria had not taken effect at the time this research was conducted.

Health and community services professionals felt their skills and experiences were valued more by the community during COVID than prior to the pandemic in 2019. For the aged care workforce, the average rating increased from 7.0 to 7.2 out of 10 with more than half of respondents strongly agreeing they felt valued by the community.

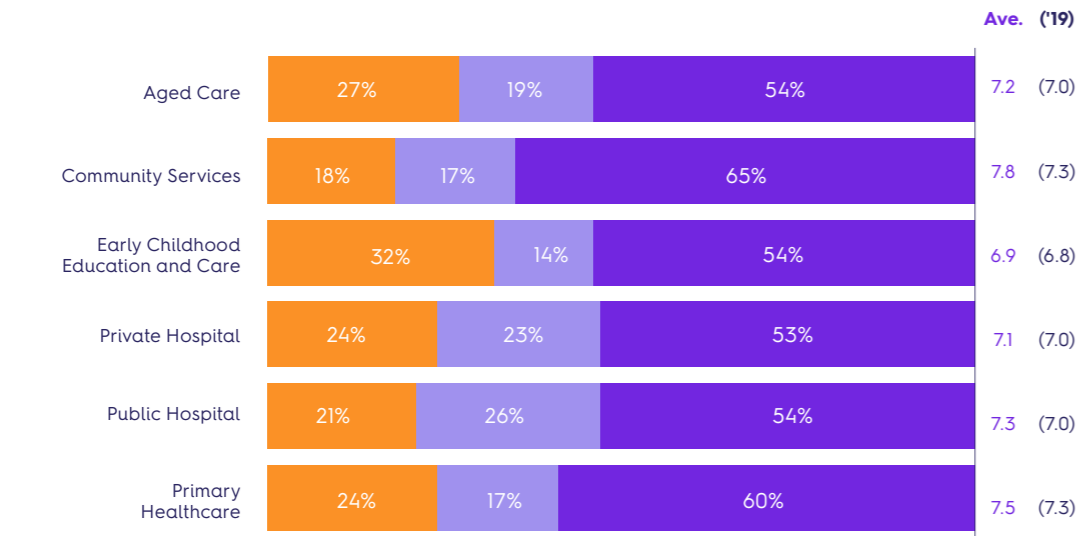
It is also important to note just over a quarter – 27% – of aged care respondents strongly disagreed, the second highest proportion of members within health and community services behind early childhood education and care professionals.

Despite 54% of respondents feeling valued by the community, industry representatives told HESTA they were surprised at the high sentiment levels. They told stories of aged care professionals not wanting to be seen in their uniforms for fear of abuse and high levels of negativity among those in the sector when it came to how they believed they were perceived.

“There is this underlying theme that I’ve been getting for a couple of years now ... there is a view that the community doesn’t value the work of aged care and that people don’t feel valued either by the community or by the system for want of a better term.”

My skills and experience are valued by the community

0 - 5 6 - 7 8 - 10
0 = strongly disagree / 10 = Strongly agree



Similar findings emerged when respondents were asked to rate appreciation of their work by their current or most recent employer. Nearly half of aged care respondents strongly agreed they felt appreciated by their employer. Those in management roles (66%) felt the most appreciated compared to professionals in other roles, including care workers (48%).

A significantly higher proportion of community aged care professionals felt appreciated by their employer (60%) compared to those who worked in residential aged care (45%).

Nevertheless, more than one in three aged care respondents did not feel appreciated. While there was an increase in the average rating from 6.0 to 6.6 out of 10 in 2020, aged care had the lowest average rating out of all health and community services sectors in 2020.

Industry representatives raised concerns about the significant number of respondents who gave a 0-5 rating. One industry representative raised the link between perceptions of appreciation and standards of care, saying: “A third of the workforce is saying that they don’t feel appreciated and we know getting workforce right is fundamental to getting care right. That’s got red flags all over it from my perspective.”

Professionals in residential aged care (37%) felt significantly less appreciated by their employer compared to those in community aged care (24%). Analysing aged care respondents by roles, 40% of nurses felt significantly less appreciated by their employer, compared to care workers (35%), professionals in ancillary services (33%) and lifestyle coordinators (33%).

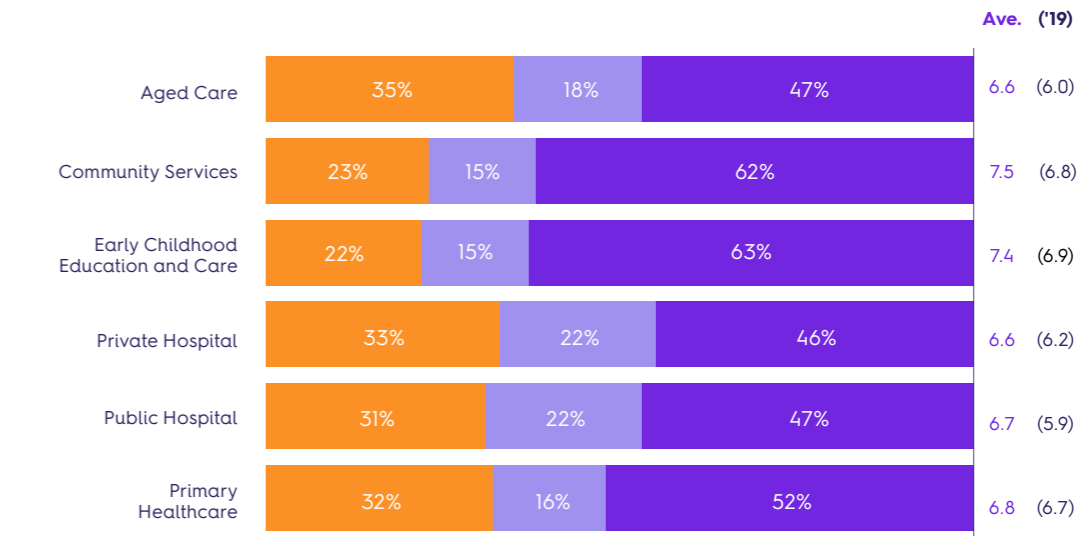
Industry representatives believed these figures did not reflect the discussions they were having with the sector.

One industry representative said:

“What I hear from our members and from workers is that they’re feeling by and large that they like their work, that they are proud of the work that they do, but they feel that they are undervalued broadly by the community. That they feel over scrutinised by media and royal commissions and regulation and things like that, and that there have been significant reports of an exodus, of people from the sector, because it’s just getting all too hard.”

My work is appreciated by my current or most recent employer

0 - 5 6 - 7 8 - 10
0 = strongly disagree / 10 = Strongly agree



appreciation by clients

Conversely, COVID appears to have significantly affected whether health and community services respondents felt appreciated by their clients or patients. Respondents across health and community services generally felt less appreciated by their clients, with aged care having experienced the biggest drop in appreciation rating.

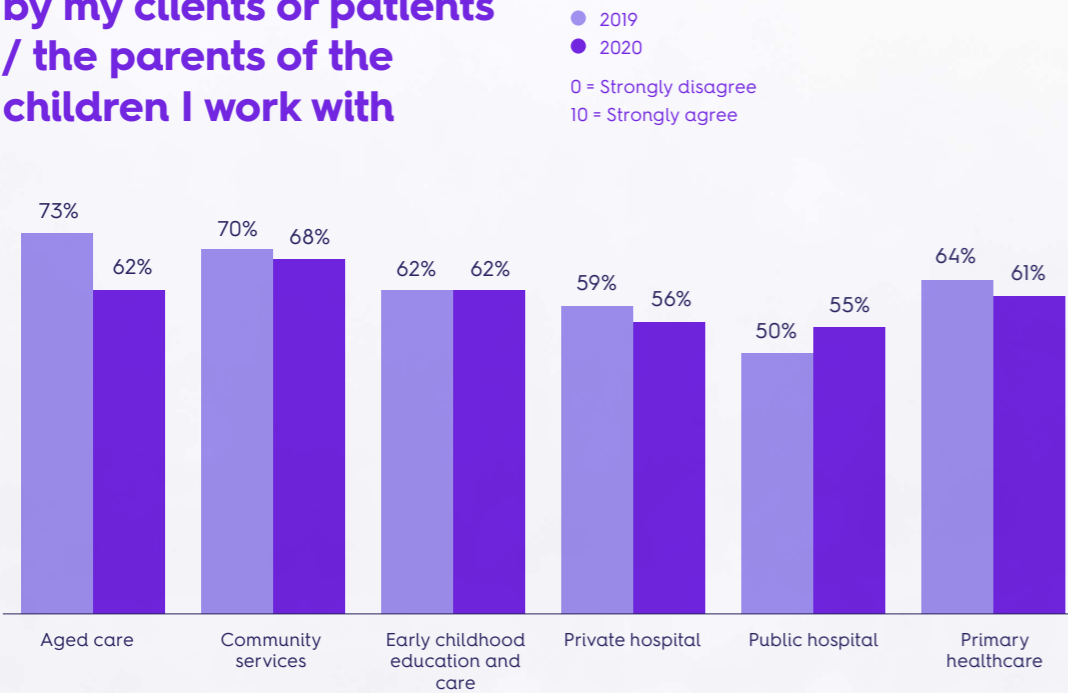
Discussions with industry representatives indicated the levels of appreciation felt by aged care professionals may have been influenced by the visitor restrictions placed on aged care facilities and their flow-on effects for families.

But while residential aged care facilities were urged in March 2020 to implement visitor restrictions, Victoria's increased visitor restrictions to only allow carers had not yet taken effect at the time the majority of survey responses were received.

"Particularly around visiting when there were lockdowns and stuff like that, there was a lot of narkiness, particularly with families. Which is totally understandable. But I know that providers felt that really significantly. So, staff on the ground would have as well."

In community aged care, the reluctance of clients to continue services due to safety concerns, breaking that continuity of care and regular interaction, may have also impacted appreciation levels.

I feel appreciated by my clients or patients / the parents of the children I work with



industry pride and job satisfaction

The aged care workforce is prouder to work in their sector according to the survey findings obtained during COVID.

While there were substantial increases in pride scores across health and community services in 2020, aged care experienced the biggest jump in average pride score compared to the other sectors. The aged care sector returned the highest average pride score (8.4 out of 10) second only to community services (8.6).

"Maybe it's the sense of people in the sector going, 'Yeah, my job is really important, not just because what I do is business as usual, but because there is a pandemic and there's an added level of importance and value to what I do in keeping people safe in residential care and then providing essential services to people in their homes.' Maybe that's what's at play because to me, the thing that changed most between (the two research snapshots) was the pandemic."

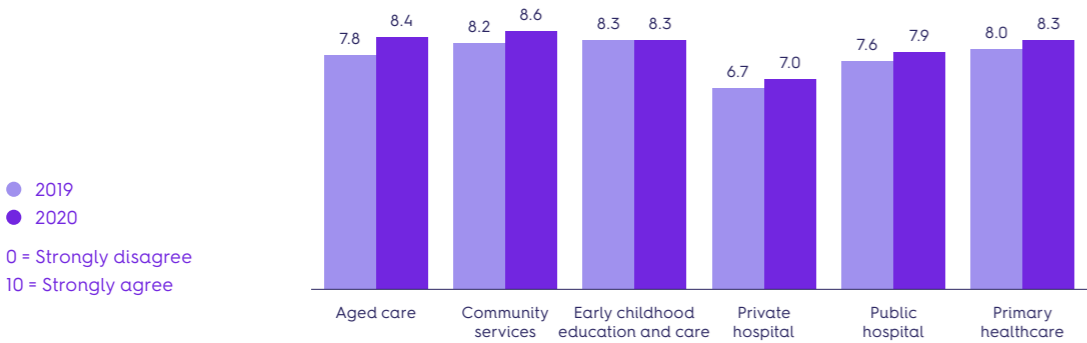
While most aged care professionals returned similar average pride scores, nurses in aged care had a significantly lower average score of 7.8. Lifestyle coordinators and care workers were the proudest to work in aged care, with respective average scores of 8.7 and 8.6.

Given the significant challenges the sector had faced over the period the surveys were conducted, industry representatives were surprised at the improvements in pride score for the sector.

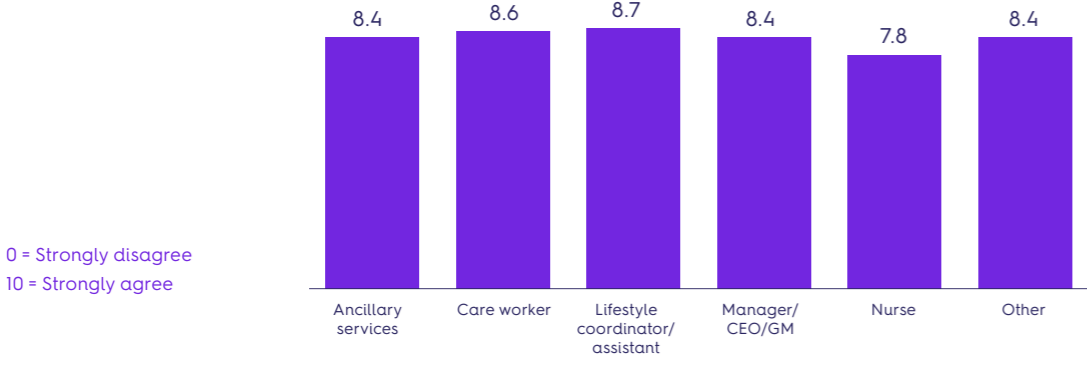
One industry representative said:

"Staff, particularly when the Royal Commission was announced, they'd be out and they'd have the uniform on, and someone would have a crack at them. Which is why overall, this is surprising."

I feel proud to work in this Industry



I feel proud to work this Industry



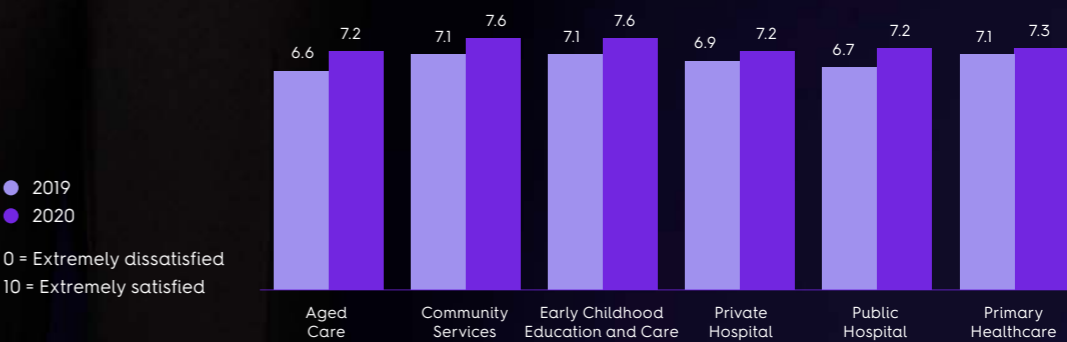
Respondents also appeared to experience higher job satisfaction during the pandemic.

Approximately half of health and community services respondents said they felt satisfied with their role at their employer. While aged care professionals returned the lowest average satisfaction rating for their role (7.2), they experienced the biggest jump in average score within the sector. Having an average score now exceeding seven was also a positive for the industry, as it indicated overall stronger positive sentiment.

Residential aged care professionals were the least satisfied with their role (7.1) compared to community aged care professionals (7.5) and those working across both areas (7.7). Nurses in aged care also showed significantly lower levels of job satisfaction.

The challenges nurses face in terms of workload, support and staffing numbers are well documented. Discussion of the findings with unions have also indicated career development pathways are particularly important to nurses, with many looking to upskill into the hospital sector where pay and conditions are seen to be better. While professionals in other roles returned an average score for job satisfaction between 7.2 to 7.6, nurses reported an average score of 6.7 out of 10.

How satisfied are you with your role at your employer?



a typical HESTA member
in aged care



218,090

HESTA members in aged care

gender

HESTA's aged care members are predominantly women.

84.5%

women

15.5%

men

age

The aged care workforce is the oldest cohort of HESTA members. **43% are over the age of 50.**

This is higher than community services (37.4%), early childhood education and care (23.4%) and private hospitals (39.8%).

A greater proportion of professionals **aged 65+** work or have worked in aged care compared to other health and community services sectors.

0.1%

28.4%

28.5%

32.1%

10.9%

< 18

18 - 34

35 - 49

50 - 64

65 +

salary

The estimated median salary for HESTA members in aged care is **\$47,127** per year before tax.

39.3%

of aged care members

are estimated to **earn less than \$50,000 a year** before tax - the greatest proportion behind early childhood education and care professionals (40.6%).

retirement readiness

HESTA has developed a model to measure the retirement readiness of its members. Aged care professionals are the least prepared for retirement. **Just 23.8% of aged care members are retirement ready**, compared to 28.1% of early childhood education and care members, 29.6% of community services and 38.2% of primary health.

AGED CARE :

23.8%

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE :

28.1%

COMMUNITY SERVICES :

29.6%

PRIMARY HEALTH :

38.2%

super balances

Aged care professionals have the **lowest median super balances** across health and community services.

While working women in aged care have a higher median balance compared to men, their median super balance **at retirement is 13.3% lower.**

working

retired

Women

\$22,496

Men

\$15,611

Women

\$136,861

Men

\$157,935

where they work

53% / 47%

METRO / REGIONAL

NT 0.2%

QLD 13.2%

NSW 36.0%

VIC 26.4%

SA 10.5%

TAS 3.2%

ACT 1.4%

WA 9.0%

*Unknown: 0.2%

HESTAs aged care members work or have worked mainly in metropolitan areas and along the east coast of Australia.

what kind of work

HESTAs aged care members work or have worked predominantly in residential care.

RESIDENTIAL CARE :

76.9%

COMMUNITY CARE :

13.8%

RETIREMENT VILLAGES :

9.3%

as at 28 February 2021

22

23

job intentions

With a dwindling supply of younger professionals entering the workforce and a generation of aged care professionals about to retire,¹² staff shortages present a significant challenge for the sector given the growing demand for aged care services. HESTA’s 2018 report, *Transforming Aged Care*, indicated nearly a quarter of the workforce may be intending to leave the sector entirely within the next one to five years.¹³ This is potentially a significant barrier for the sector in developing a skilled workforce of a size sufficient to meet Australia’s future aged care needs.

This research investigated the short-term career plans of aged care employees, including the top reasons behind employees wanting to stay in or leave the sector, as well as the aspects of their roles they liked and disliked the most. These findings may help the sector improve attraction, retention and development of skilled aged care professionals.

While there was a general decrease across health and community services in the intention to leave the industry in the short term, the biggest year-to-year change was evident in the aged care workforce results.

The intention to leave the aged care industry dropped from 27% in 2019 to just 17% in 2020. In addition, there was a corresponding 10% increase in respondents who said they intended to stay with their current employer rather than move within the industry.

It is important to note the survey was undertaken in July 2020 when there was still very high levels of economic uncertainty and job insecurity across the community. The increased ‘stickiness’ of employees to their employer and industry may therefore have been influenced by perceptions of the job security of the sector relative to other industries that have typically drawn those seeking to leave health and community services.

An industry representative told HESTA:

“There’s a lot of uncertainty around the economic situation generally. If they’re in stable employment, they may potentially feel safer where they are than if they look at what’s happening in competing industries.”

Which of these best describes your short-term plans (i.e. for the next year or two) for your role at your employer?

Industry	Stay with employer	Move within industry	Leave industry
Aged Care	75% (65%)	6% (8%)	17% (27%)
Community Services	73% (71%)	10% (9%)	17% (20%)
Early Childhood Education and Care	76% (67%)	6% (15%)	19% (18%)
Private Hospital	76% (71%)	3% (3%)	21% (26%)
Public Hospital	76% (70%)	9% (10%)	16% (20%)
Primary Healthcare	76% (68%)	7% (10%)	17% (22%)

Numbers in brackets are 2019 results

Casual and part-time employees were more likely to plan on leaving the industry (21% and 20%, respectively) than full-time professionals (17%). A significantly higher proportion of residential aged care professionals (21%) is planning to leave the industry in the short-term compared to community aged care professionals (8%).

The research also showed it could be a challenge to keep younger professionals in aged care.

These professionals were the most likely to plan on exiting the industry, with 35% of professionals under 29 and 25% of professionals aged 30 to 39 indicating they plan to leave aged care in the next couple of years.

Nurses in aged care were the least likely to stay with their current employer (65%) and were also the most likely to plan to leave the industry (26%).

reasons for wanting to stay with or leave employer

A lack of skills development and wanting to try something different was a big driver of dissatisfaction across aged care and health and community services generally in 2020, with aged care professionals citing pay as their third reason why they would choose to leave their employers. Pay was the top reason for community aged care professionals wanting to leave their employer – perhaps unsurprising as aged care professionals are among the lowest paid in health and community services.¹⁴

“You’re asking people to do what is incredibly emotionally and physically arduous work, so there does have to be at the outset a sort of higher level of motivation to do that nature of work when you’re not being paid particularly well,” an industry representative said.

The research also showed differences by age. A lack of skills development and wanting to try something different were key reasons for younger aged care professionals (aged 39 and under) who flagged they wanted to leave their employer, while older employees cited dissatisfaction with the organisation, pay and not getting the training they need as the top reasons to leave.

Providing employees with more variety of work could potentially be a low-cost way for employers to fulfil the desire to try something different and increase job satisfaction. Training and development opportunities and pay can be harder to change due to business constraints, time and resourcing. Developing strategies and starting conversations with employees around ways to incorporate greater variety into their roles can potentially be implemented more quickly and at comparatively much lower cost than other long-term drivers of dissatisfaction.

Conversely, the top three reasons in 2020 for those wanting to stay with their employers were because they derived personal fulfilment from their job, the location of their employer and because they enjoyed working with their colleagues or co-workers.

These reasons were consistent for aged care across 2019 and 2020.

Location featured prominently across health and community services generally, potentially indicating more personal care pressures during COVID.

Industry	Top three reasons to leave their employers		
	1.	2.	3.
Aged Care	I want to develop new skills	I want to try something different	I’m not paid enough
Community Services	I want to develop new skills	There are not enough career opportunities	I want to try something different
Early Childhood Education and Care	I want to develop new skills	I want to try something different	I’m not paid enough
Private Hospital	There are not enough career opportunities	I’m not happy with the organisation I work for	I want to try something different
Public Hospital	I want to develop new skills	I want to try something different	There are not enough career opportunities
Primary Healthcare	I’m not paid enough	I’m not happy with the organisation I work for	I want to try something different

Industry	Top three reasons to stay with their employers		
	1.	2.	3.
Aged Care	Job is personally rewarding	Location	Colleagues / co-workers
Community Services	Job is personally rewarding	I like the company I work for	Colleagues / co-workers
Early Childhood Education and Care	Colleagues / co-workers	Location	I like the company I work for
Private Hospital	Colleagues / co-workers	Location	Job is personally rewarding
Public Hospital	Colleagues / co-workers	Job is personally rewarding	Location
Primary Healthcare	Colleagues / co-workers	Location	Job is personally rewarding

12. Suzanne Hodgkin, Jeni Warburton, Pauline Savy and Melissa Moore, ‘Workforce Crisis in Residential Aged Care: Insights from Rural, Older Workers’ (2017) 76 *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 93, 93 <<https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/system/files/2020-06/RCD.9999.0256.0017.pdf>>.
13. HESTA, *Transforming Aged Care* (2018), 14.

14. Sandy Cheu, ‘Union launches case to lift aged care wages’, *Australian Ageing Agenda*, 12 November 2020 < <https://www.australianageingagenda.com.au/executive/policy/union-launches-case-to-lift-aged-care-wages/>>.

employee likes and dislikes about role

Across health and community services, purpose, culture and convenience, or having work fit into the broader life demands of a professional, were the consistent drivers of satisfaction.

Health and community services professionals generally agreed the rewarding nature of their job and their colleagues or co-workers were the most-liked aspects of their roles.

Location also featured strongly in the top three reasons for liking their job in 2020.

This may have been driven by concerns around avoiding public transport due to the pandemic. Economic impacts disrupting households may have also seen caring demands increase for this predominately female workforce, which we know already bears the burden of unpaid care responsibilities.

For the aged care workforce, what they liked about their role was consistent with their reasons for staying with their employers. This was also consistent between different aged care role types and for residential aged care professionals, however nurses named their colleagues and co-workers as their top choice, followed by location.

Those working in community aged care were more likely to mention flexibility of hours and liking the organisation for which they worked as the most-liked reasons. Location and the proximity of multiple clients who may need services in a shift may also have been a factor in this satisfaction driver featuring prominently for this cohort.

The challenges the sector faces in providing employees with high-quality, appropriately valued work was clearly demonstrated when it came to the top reasons members gave for disliking their work.¹⁵ Members identified salary as the most-disliked aspect of their jobs, followed by a lack of opportunities for growth or promotion and benefits.

Pay was identified by the Royal Commission as a clear barrier to attracting the quality and quantity of people that will be required to enter the sector to meet predicted future demand and lift standards of care.

There was unanimous agreement on the need to lift wages and conditions in the sector when HESTA spoke with industry representatives. There was also widespread uncertainty about how this would be funded, with many saying it rested with government to put the system on a more sustainable, long-term footing.

Union representatives noted the sector had been relying on the commitment many working in the sector had for their clients, with many employees staying in the sector despite long-term unhappiness with pay.

“Aged care workers doing it for the love not the money is just a very long-standing and consistent theme,” one union representative said. “So, it’s interesting that the intention to leave the sector is down but it’s I guess not particularly different to what we already know. Aged care workers do actually tend to stick around in the sector for quite a long time.”

Other industry representatives talked about the need to push for health sector parity when it came to pay but talked about the overall cost of such a move as being a barrier. Attracting nurses to work in the sector for example is challenging, with an industry representative noting it was typically younger nurses starting out in their career who were more likely to work in the sector.

Industry	Top three most-liked aspects of members’ work		
	1.	2.	3.
Aged Care	Job is personally rewarding	Colleagues / co-workers	Location
Community Services	Job is personally rewarding	Colleagues / co-workers	Flexibility of hours
Early Childhood Education and Care	Colleagues / co-workers	Job is personally rewarding	Location
Private Hospital	Colleagues / co-workers	Job is personally rewarding	Location
Public Hospital	Colleagues / co-workers	Job is personally rewarding	Location
Primary Healthcare	Job is personally rewarding	Location	Flexibility of hours

Industry	Top three most-disliked aspects of members' roles		
	1.	2.	3.
Aged Care	Salary	Not enough opportunities for growth	Benefits
Community Services	Not enough opportunities for growth	Salary	Benefits
Early Childhood Education and Care	Salary	Not enough opportunities for growth	Benefits
Private Hospital	Not enough opportunities for growth	Salary	Benefits
Public Hospital	Not enough opportunities for growth	Salary	Hours not flexible
Primary Healthcare	Salary	Not enough opportunities for growth	Benefits

Note: the survey response ‘none of the above’ has been excluded.

However, they noted a nursing job in aged care lacked the prestige and pay of jobs in the hospital sector, particularly the public sector. More experienced nurses in the sector typically had ‘put up’ with lower levels of pay as they were dedicated to caring for their clients.

“It’s very common, particularly through the Royal Commission, for us to hear from our members that they’re very dedicated to the residents,” an industry representative told HESTA. “They do the work because they have a long-term relationship with the people that they’re providing the care for. So, they’ve basically accepted the lesser rate of pay because they feel what they’re doing is really important.”

For aged care professionals planning to leave their employer or industry, not having enough opportunities for growth or promotion was the top dislike, followed by salary. Nurses also flagged the lack of opportunities to develop new skills.

Having clear career progression and clarity around what professionals need to do to progress was an aspect flagged in the Royal Commission’s final report in relation to building the aged care workforce. The Royal Commissioners said they heard evidence that current career paths were non-existent in aged care for most direct care staff, and they encouraged a collaborative approach between the Federal Government, education providers, aged care providers and unions.¹⁶ The report also flagged rewarding career pathways as a key component for the sector in relation to improving the attraction and retention of aged care professionals.

Industry representatives consistently noted the lack of career pathways and skills development as an ongoing challenge for the sector. One representative said: *“If we’re talking about why people intend to leave the sector or why is it happening, we already know they leave because they upskill out of the sector.”*

Job intention	Top three most-disliked aspects of members’ roles		
	1.	2.	3.
Stay with employer	None of the above	Salary	Not enough opportunities for growth
Move within industry	Not enough opportunities for growth	Salary	Benefits
Leave industry	Not enough opportunities for growth	Salary	I do not get to develop new skills
Other	Salary	Not enough opportunities for growth	Benefits

15. The survey response ‘none of the above’ has been excluded.
16. Commonwealth, Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, *Final Report: Care, Dignity and Respect* (2021), vol 1, 125.

advocating for aged care

Sentiment among the aged care workforce towards their industry, employers and leaders was highly negative in 2019. This was particularly the case for employer-related metrics, especially when compared to other health and community services sectors. Highly negative scores were also more likely for residential aged care professionals and aged care nurses.

Despite an incredibly challenging year for the sector due to COVID, the aged care sector experienced significant improvement in employee Net Promoter Scores, albeit off this negative base. Improvements were returned across all measures, including how likely it would be for the workforce to recommend a career in the industry, work for their employer and recommend their services and recommend their leaders.

While sentiment improved across health and community services, aged care measures typically also showed significant improvement compared to other health and community services sectors. If competition between sectors increases for skilled, experienced caring professionals this could support aged care to retain and attract people to work in the sector from other health and community services industries. Combined with perceptions of stronger job security of aged care jobs compared to other disrupted industries, this improved personal advocacy from those in the sector may help compete for talent outside of health and community services.

highly polarised workforce

While aged care showed the greatest improvement in the 2020 Net Promoter Scores, the aged care sector still had some of the lowest scores across health and community services. The research showed aged care had a highly polarised workforce. Scores for aged care in 2020 are still low negative or low positive, indicating there are even numbers of detractors (those who would advocate against the sector strongly) and promoters (those who are strong advocates for the sector) with fewer numbers of passive respondents.

In HESTA's discussions with industry representatives, the significant numbers of detractors were a cause for concern. One industry representative told HESTA: *"My biggest concern is those detractors – that they're not happy with their employer, they're not happy with the leadership,*

and they're not recommending those services to others. And then you've got another third that to be honest are ambivalent. That to me is an issue."

It's clear the sector still has work to do to address the systemic barriers towards creating a strong and skilled workforce. The lower number of passive respondents, compared to other health and community services industries, may also point to a challenge in terms of improving Net Promoter Score as it is generally easier to convert someone with neutral attitudes than to convince a detractor to become a promoter.

competing for talent

Nevertheless, this improvement in scores in a relatively short time and in a highly negative and challenging external environment is significant. Compared to 2019, aged care providers may be much closer to achieving stronger scores and may have an opportunity to cultivate a greater proportion of the workforce who will advocate for the sector and help attract strong talent. These findings potentially indicate that resources spent now to increase engagement may be particularly effective as the attitudinal environment may be conducive. This also has implications for reduced staff turnover, the amount of money spent on recruitment and training, as well as workforce productivity.

In March 2020, the Aged Care Workforce Industry Council launched a new campaign designed to encourage people to consider a career in aged care. The "Bring Your Thing" campaign highlights that aged care can provide rewarding career opportunities that allow people to bring their skills, talents and passions to their work. The campaign is part of a drive to triple the aged care workforce from around 366,000 in 2021 to 980,000 by 2050. Industry representatives with whom HESTA talked raised the potential to attract people from COVID-impacted industries such as tourism and hospitality, where professionals had applicable people skills and may be suited to working in aged care.

"There was an event that I was involved in where a care worker got up and said:

'We're in the middle of this pandemic and you've got hospital workers being seen as the heroes and somehow aged care workers are the villains.' And I was just struck by that and that's stuck with me."

career in the sector

The workforce during COVID was more likely to recommend working in health and community services compared to 2019. There were substantial increases in employee Net Promoter Score in 2020 across the different sectors.

For aged care, the Net Promoter Score increased by 14 points from -13 to +1. While this increase in score was not as large as for other health and community services sectors, the improvement is significant given the specific external challenges the sector has faced.

Professionals working in residential aged care were less likely to recommend a career in the industry. These professionals scored -4 compared to +22 for community aged care professionals. Care workers were most likely to recommend a career in the industry (+10) compared to nurses (-15), lifestyle coordinators (-14) and managers (-9).

The overall aged care workforce had a significant detractor base (38%), although this was still lower compared to early childhood education and care (43%) and private hospital (45%).

“There’s a lot of uncertainty around the economic situation generally. If they’re in stable employment, they may potentially feel safer where they are than if they look at what’s happening in competing industries.”

employers and their services

There was considerable negative sentiment shown by the aged care workforce in 2019 towards their employer and their employer’s services, with employee Net Promoter Scores of -46 and -36 respectively.

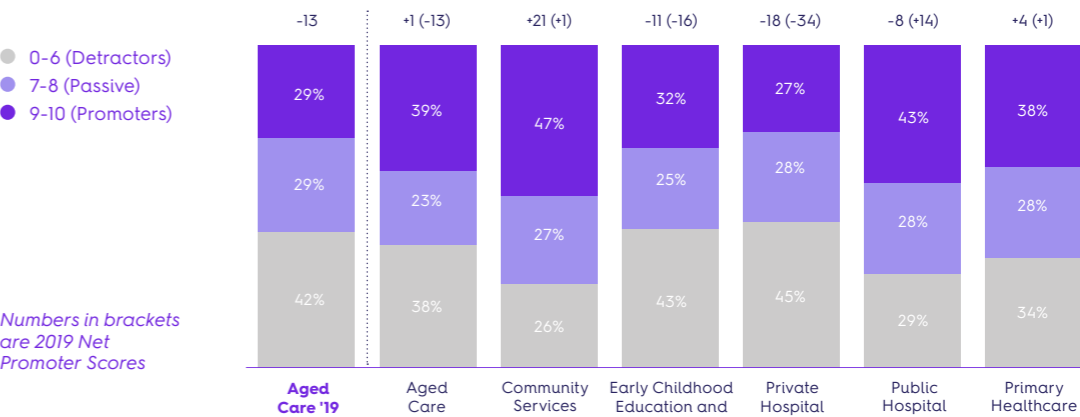
These 2019 scores were also significantly worse compared to all other health and community services sectors. An employer’s people remain their best advocates in terms of attracting new clients, as personal recommendations can be crucial. Confidence among employees in the quality of their employer’s services can also assist in the effective management of care concerns that may arise among families of clients.

The differences between these scores over the course of a year and during the challenges of COVID is startling. In 2020, the score jumped 38 points to -8 in relation to recommending working

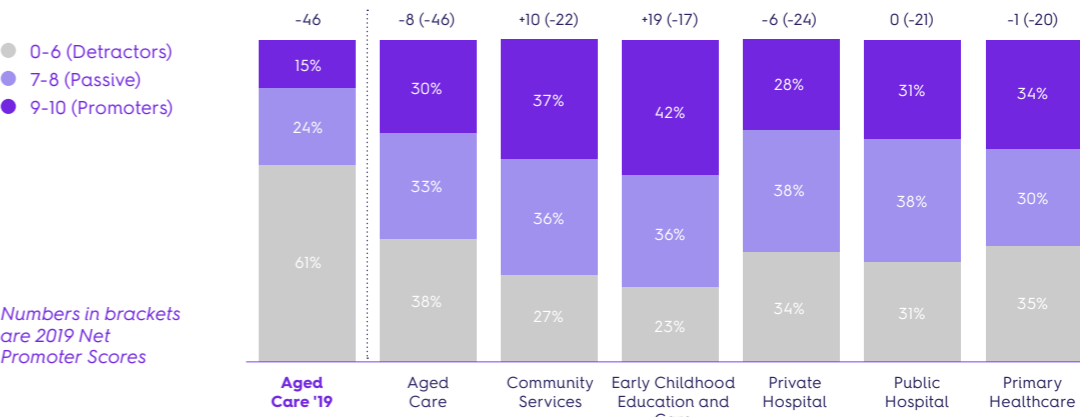
at their employer and increased by 39 points to +3 for recommending their employer’s services.

It is important to note the overall scores for aged care are the lowest in health and community services. Industry representatives flagged the significantly large detractor base for aged care compared to the other health and community services sectors as a potential issue, as well as potentially being a considerable barrier to building the needed future workforce.

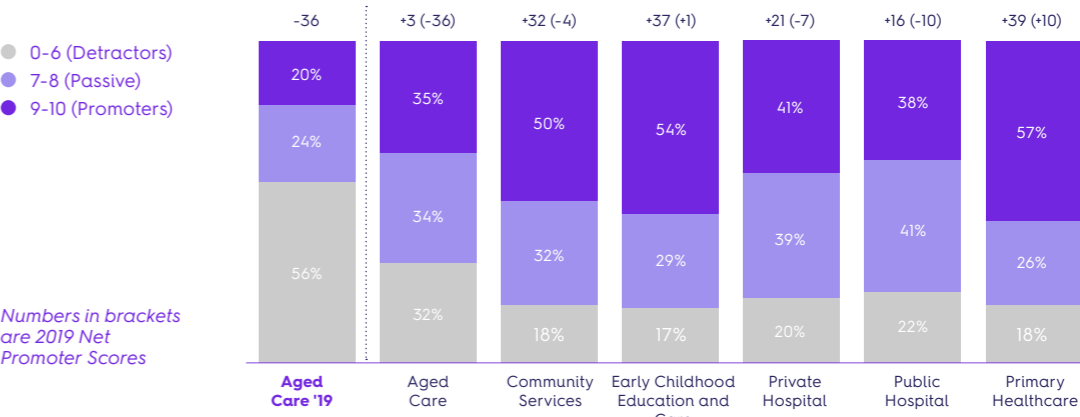
I would highly recommend a career in this Industry



How likely would you be to recommend working at your employer to a family member or friend?



How likely would you be to recommend your employer’s services to a family member or friend?



leaders and managers

It's clear leaders and managers in health and community services were under significant pressure during COVID.

Disruption to facility operations, staff shortages and changing infection control practices all contributed to an extremely challenging and stressful environment for management.

"The message I get across the board is 'We're just tired, and now you're asking us to go to the well again and get excited about creating a brand-new aged care system.' That's a big ask in the current context. That's where the leadership piece becomes really important."

There were substantial increases in employee Net Promoter Scores for recommending their leaders and managers, potentially indicating the workforce recognised the incredible pressure leaders were under during COVID and appreciated the work they were doing to manage these challenges. One industry representative told HESTA: "We need leadership to be able to navigate what comes next, particularly hopefully the whole re-imagining of care for older people, and then translating that into a totally different system is going to be heavily dependent upon formal and informal leaders. And we've got to find a way to support them and then support the people that are going to deliver the work."

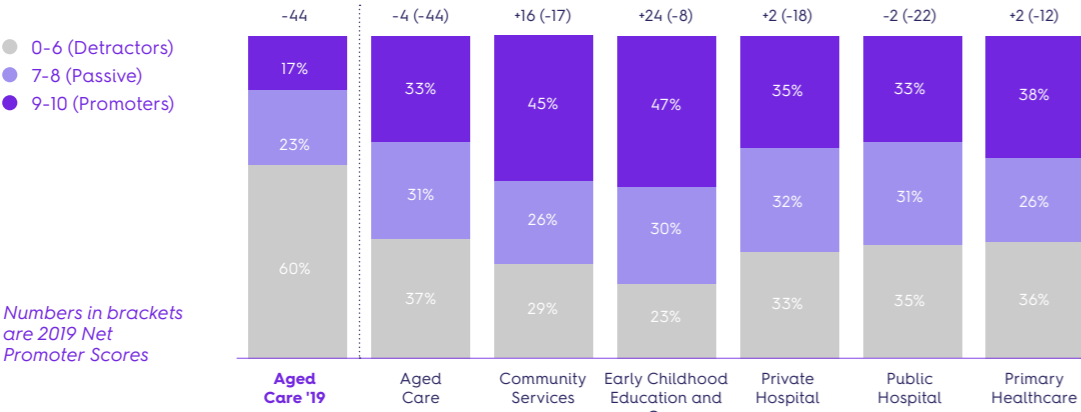
While the aged care workforce was still less likely to recommend their leaders compared to other health and community services sectors in 2020, aged care experienced the biggest improvement in Net Promoter Score, jumping from -44 in 2019 to -4.

The future challenge to retain and develop current and future leaders was a common theme in discussions with industry representatives. There was concern that leaders, who had already had to deal with the pressures of COVID, were going to be required to meet a raft of very significant reforms and regulatory requirements flowing from the Royal Commission's recommendations. For many leaders, this may lead to them choosing to exit the industry.

One representative said: "We've also really been hearing in the last 12 months is mid-level, and in some cases, senior level management leaving the sector. And that's a double-edged sword. On one hand that does create opportunity for renewal, but we also know that we're coming into a period of just transformational change in the sector on the back of the Royal Commission and we need leaders to be able to help us transform this system."

The data, however, did not reflect this anecdotal evidence. Our research showed 15% of CEOs, managers and general managers said they planned to leave the industry within one to two years - the smallest proportion compared to aged care professionals in other roles.

How likely would you be to recommend **your leader or manager** as a person to work for, to a family member or friend?



"We've also really been hearing in the last 12 months is mid-level, and in some cases, senior level management leaving the sector. And that's a double-edged sword."

conclusion

It’s been an incredibly challenging time for the aged care sector. As well as facing yet another searching inquiry, this time in the form of a probing Royal Commission, the industry was slammed by COVID. Discussions with representatives from across the sector talked of it being a year like no other they had experienced.

improvements in just one year

Throughout the research our members were telling us that the experience of facing these challenges together has forged stronger bonds. A key takeout is the strong uplift in positive sentiment of aged care professionals towards their employers, role, leaders and industry.

The research revealed our members are feeling proud to work in sector. They had the second-highest average pride score (8.4 out of 10) behind community services. They also felt more appreciated by community and employer. Most aged care respondents (84%) felt their employers supported them during COVID.

These are startling improvements from 2019. That there has been such considerable and consistent improvement in just a year across almost all measures is significant. However, these improvements in sentiment, do not negate the sector’s systemic issues. A week was a long time during COVID, and much may have changed since HESTA took this snapshot of the sector in July 2020. We hope future iterations of this research can shed further light on this extraordinary year’s impact on the workforce.

mixed signs for the future

Despite the positive improvements, there are some warning signs for the sector. The 2020 Net Promoter Scores for aged care were still among the lowest across health and community services, despite aged care showing the greatest improvement in these measures. The 2018 *Transforming Aged Care* research showed the industry faces strong competition from other health and community services industries for talent. Aged care professionals wanting to leave the industry were most likely to want to go the hospital sector. While aged care’s Net Promoter Scores are still low in comparison to other health and community services sectors, the improvements have taken the sector from strongly negative scores to low negative or neutral. In the context of competing for talent across the caring economy, the sector is now within touching distance of competitors.

Given the need for the workforce to grow dramatically to meet future demand, this is an encouraging base from which to build.

Amid this positivity, however, there remains a strong theme of polarisation among the workforce. Throughout the Net Promoter Scores there were often almost even splits between detractors and promoters. Generally, over a third of respondents were detractors, scoring six or less out of 10. Compared to other health and community services sectors, there remains significant numbers of the workforce who would not recommend a career in their industry or their employer or leader. Nor would they recommend their employer’s services to family or friends.

This is a key challenge for the sector as it looks to build its workforce. Industry representatives all flagged this detractor base as a potential barrier to attracting people. The lower number of passive respondents, compared to other health and community services sectors, may also point to a challenge. To improve Net Promoter Scores it’s typically easier to convert someone who is more neutral than convince a detractor to become a promoter.

attracting and retaining more professionals

Despite this cautionary note, it’s encouraging members felt more committed to their employer and industry. Members indicated that they were less likely to leave their employer and their industry. This ‘stickability’ points to a strong opportunity for employers and a potentially limited window of opportunity that may narrow as economic conditions improve. The most compelling advocates for the sector remain those who are positive about working in aged care. This improvement in personal advocacy for the industry and a greater connection with the employer represents a strong foundation for employers to build on talent retention and attraction strategies. Resources committed now to these strategies may be particularly effective.

Discussions with industry representatives revealed that attracting and retaining people remains a key challenge for the sector. Many worried about the impact of 2020, noting that implementing the reforms and regulatory requirements flowing from the Royal Commission may be a bridge too far for a generation of leaders and frontline aged care professionals. The number of aged care professionals telling us they planned to leave the industry in the short term fell 10% compared to 2019. However, industry representatives told us they expected this to increase as industries from outside health and community services that traditionally compete for people – hospitality, retail and tourism – recover and the changes resulting from the Royal Commission take hold.

It’s clear the sector still has work to do to address the systemic barriers towards creating a strong and skilled workforce. Pay and conditions in the sector remain a key challenge that all sides of the industry now recognise need to be improved. Salary remains among the top three reasons why aged care professionals are dissatisfied with their role, along with not enough career opportunities – possibly also a proxy for pay. Improving pay and conditions requires a much bigger discussion with government and the community around what we are prepared to pay for the dignity and high-quality care for older Australians. And how we value appropriately the vital work our members and aged care professionals across the country provide.

We understand that, for resource-stretched employers, providing greater career opportunities and addressing pay may be challenging to improve without looking at this broader funding picture. However, the research findings point to things employers could do now to improve talent retention that come at relatively lower cost. Wanting to try something different was one of the top reasons to leave. Strategies that aim to provide employees with more variety of work could potentially be a cost effective way for employers to fulfil the desire for variety and increase job satisfaction. This might take the form of secondments, or job-sharing arrangements that could also be linked to capacity building and mentoring approaches.

the post-COVID era

Finally, it’s important when considering these findings to remember the dynamically changing environment of COVID. The 2020 snapshot was taken in July 2020 and the overall effect of COVID is yet to be seen in the data. We acknowledge the bulk of responses came in prior to or around the time when Victoria had just announced more severe restrictions. These included single-site work and visitor restrictions that may have impacted workforce satisfaction measures and perceptions of client and community appreciation.

We are interested to see if the substantial improvements in sentiment can be sustained and what the workforce impact will be from implementing reforms flowing from the Royal Commission. Aged care was already a fast-changing industry before COVID and the Royal Commission. Most in the industry expect the pace of change to get even faster in the coming years and be considerably more broad ranging. A lack of timely and consistent workforce data remains a challenge and one the Royal Commission identified. HESTA hopes to continue to deepen and improve our workforce research in the coming years to help the sector meet these considerable challenges. We hope over time to develop insights that complement workforce surveys employers are already conducting, providing valuable context around what’s happening across roles and within the workforce at a state and national level.

Clearly, how the aged care sector meets its workforce challenges will impact the experiences of our members working in the sector. We continue to work with our longstanding partners across the industry to help facilitate this very important conversation and support efforts to build the skilled and engaged workforce needed to re-imagine aged care in this country.



For more information, please visit hesta.com.au/agedcarereport21