Sector Profile
Health Care & Social Assistance

Hospitals
Medical & Other Health Care Services
Residential Care Services
Social Assistance Services

SHARE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Health Care & Social Assistance
2015 - 119,000
2025 - 152,000

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

According to the Commission’s projections, employment in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is expected to increase by approximately 2.5 percent per year, on average, between 2015 and 2025. This is the fastest rate of growth among the industry sectors, and well above the State average of 1.0 percent per year.

As a result, the industry’s share of the State’s total employment is projected to rise from 15 to 17 percent by 2025.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

2015
2005

EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

2014-15 to 2019-20
2014-15 to 2024-25

Gender

2015
2005

AVERAGE, ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

History Baseline Subdued Improved

2014-15 to 2024-25

History Baseline Subdued Improved

Employment (000s)
INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

In the year to August 2015 there were 120,500 people employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry, accounting for 15 percent of the South Australian workforce and a 17,000 person increase since 2010.1

There remains some uncertainty about the size of future job growth because of the unpredictability associated with increased consumer choice and the ongoing movement from institutional care into home based care. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) continues to be rolled out, the mental health space is evolving and dual diagnosis is becoming more common.

As a personal services industry, this growth pattern is expected to be consistent with population distribution and will continue as providers’ transition to new models of service delivery, largely driven by Governments introducing new funding models to improve efficiency while still providing choice and quality services to clients.

The ageing population is expected to increase demand for aged care and related services; population growth is expected to increase demand for early childhood education and care; and mental health services are predicted to increase between 135 and 160 percent by 2027.2

In a human services industry, technological advances, while significant, cannot respond to all needs. The direct interface between workers and consumers is critical to quality care, prevention of illness and injury, and to effective early intervention.3 For many prospective workers, foundation skills, particularly literacy, are weak, posing some unique challenges in terms of upskilling and training an increasingly casualised workforce. Sole traders make up a large proportion of the workforce raising concerns regarding quality, safety and compliance.

The share of female employment in this sector has held consistently at 78 percent since 2010 and 50.5 percent of the workforce is employed full-time.4

In general, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is older than the South Australian workforce, with higher proportions (50.2 percent) of people aged 45 years and older, compared to 42.2 percent of the South Australian workforce.5 This requires succession planning to effectively manage the transition and looking to opportunities to encourage older workers to continue and to retrain from other industries.

SKILLS NEEDS

The Training and Skills Commission’s report to Government on South Australia’s Industry Priority Qualifications (IPQ) released in March 2016, provided a unique opportunity for industry to identify their priority qualifications.

Health Care and Social Assistance industry respondents ranked the Administration and Support skills cluster as having the highest importance, followed by the Managerial and Leadership and then the Sales and Customer Service skills clusters. This is consistent with the service nature of this work and the moves to greater consumer choice, which is driving providers to differentiate themselves in the marketplace.

Entrepreneurial and Sustainability and Environmental skills clusters were ranked as lowest importance by the Health Care and Social Assistance respondents.

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<tr>
<th>Skills Clusters - Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Support</td>
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<td>Managerial &amp; Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Customer Service</td>
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<td>Work Health &amp; Safety (WHS)</td>
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<td>Information &amp; Technology</td>
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<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>Sustainability &amp; Environmental</td>
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<td>Entrepreneurial</td>
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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT THEMES & ISSUES

As industry adapts to a new funding and service delivery environment, there is evidence of increased demand for different roles and specific skills. It is expected that one in every four new jobs created between 2013 and 2018 will be in the Community Services and Health industry. There is also evidence of increased demand for specific skills including customer service, information technology, marketing, fitness and re-ablement as well as changing roles such as those required for a concierge approach and residential services.

The Health Care and Social Assistance industry is more qualified than the greater South Australian workforce, with 73.7 percent of people with Certificate III or higher qualifications, compared to the greater South Australian workforce with 55.5 percent. The acute health sector has a highly qualified workforce and access to workforce development funding, while the social assistance sector largely uses vocationally qualified people or those with a particular skill set. The latter needs to be agile to produce high quality and large numbers of entry level workers.

While the role of volunteers in this industry is developing, associated funding lags behind, particularly given the current and growing demand for compliance.

Management skills are changing as more work is undertaken by a mobile workforce in the client’s home. These home care services require new skills of workers in a relatively uncontrolled environment.

Training in regional areas raises unique concerns that parallel the challenge of regional delivery and service provision in thin markets. Online delivery is not always a good option due to technical difficulties, LLN standards and learning styles and ignores the need to train where the work is to ensure local industry requirements are met.

Concerns were raised regarding the need to balance working collaboratively to achieve outcomes required, for example under WorkReady (training/employment outcomes), versus the competitive environment being created under NDIS with fixed funding provided to the customer purchasing the service. The sector expressed concern in relation to risk to both quality and safety levels with the need for a quality framework raised.

Student work placements were discussed at length with industry concerns raised about:

- the capacity of the industry to facilitate the demand for student placements;
- cuts to funding of residential services impacting on student postings and placements; and
- the reluctance of people receiving NDIS and home care services to have students in their home.

Employers seek those with experience but are reluctant to invest in developing new recruits because of the complexity of employment practices as a result of regulatory requirements.

Service providers, who are largely not-for-profit organisations, need access to funding to support workforce development activities. Service providers in regional areas who are often particularly vulnerable to skills shortages need to invest in innovative and collaborative solutions to meet their workforce needs.

INDUSTRY PRIORITY QUALIFICATIONS (IPQ)
HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Tier 1 (Highest Priority)

- Advanced Diploma of Nursing (Enrolled/Division 2 nursing)
- Diploma of Nursing (Enrolled-Division 2 nursing)
- Certificate IV in Health Administration
- Certificate IV in Mental Health
- Certificate III in Aged Care
- Certificate III in Disability
- Certificate III in Home and Community Care

Tier 2 (High Priority)

- ADiploma of Leadership and Management
- Certificate IV in Aged Care
- Certificate IV in Disability
- Certificate IV in Leadership and Management
- Certificate III in Health Services Assistance
- Certificate III in Business
- Certificate III in Business Administration
- Certificate III in Community Services Work
- Certificate III in Health Administration
- Certificate II in Health Support Services

References:
3. Ibid
5. Ibid
Disclaimer: The material contained in this report has been developed by the Training and Skills Commission and was informed through a detailed survey of industry and consultations with key industry partners and groups. The information contained in this report does not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of South Australia or the Department of State Development, or indicate any commitment to a particular course of action.

The information contained in the report is provided in good faith and all reasonable care has been taken in its preparation. The Training and Skills Commission recommends users exercise care in interpreting this report and carefully evaluate the relevance of the material for their purpose and where necessary obtain appropriate advice specific to their particular circumstances.

A full copy of the Report on South Australia’s Industry Priority Qualifications can be accessed electronically at: www.tasc.sa.gov.au

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