## A Life Changing Life

### Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Working in the Care and Support Sector

## Working in the care and support sector

The care and support sector is one of the fastest growing job markets in Australia.

Jobs are available now across aged care, disability support and veterans' care.

Clinton, a young support worker for the disabled, sitting on a bench and smiling.


Image 1, Clinton, Disability support worker

### Why choose to work in care and support roles?

Working in the care and support sector provides many opportunities for meaningful jobs that can help to change lives of the people you support, their families and community. It can also provide many benefits to you, both personally and professionally.

Care and support workers often build rewarding relationships with the people they support. The work you do will not only make a difference to those you support, but can also enrich your own life and open the door to other opportunities in the future.

There are a wide range of roles and career paths for you to choose from and the work varies within them. That means one day will often not be the same as the next.

The work hours and arrangements are flexible, so you can balance work, study, home and community life. You can arrange the work to suit your own needs and responsibilities.



Image 2, Denise and Clinton

### Who will I provide care and support for?

* You can support older people, helping them remain independent in their homes, or be comfortable in residential aged care.
* You can choose to work with people with disability, helping them meet their goals, develop their capabilities and build their family and social support networks as well as their independence.
* You may also provide care and support to veterans. These are people who have served in the Australian Defence Force. They may be of any age or gender, and some may be living with disability.
* You may work with people from diverse backgrounds, cultures and life experiences, including people from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Clinton watching Denise draw a picture.


Image 3, Denise and Clinton

### What is the work like?

There are many types of jobs available in aged care, disability support and veterans' care, which makes up the care and support workforce.

#### Personal care and support worker

Support workers help people with daily activities so they can live more fully and independently. Personal care and support work can be a one-on-one individual role or you can work as part of a team in residential aged care.

Different people will need support for different reasons. Some will need help with everyday tasks like eating meals, personal hygiene and getting dressed. Others may need help getting out in the community and socialising or going to work. Having someone to support people with these jobs helps them to stay in and maintain their own home and in their community.

#### Domestic assistance

Domestic assistance workers help older Australians, people with disability and veterans with the domestic tasks required to keep their home running. This might include shopping, cleaning, gardening, or preparing meals.

#### Allied health or other specialised professionals

Allied health or other qualified professionals usually specialise in a particular type of support and usually have extra qualifications such as university degrees.

These roles include most allied health professionals, such as speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, physiotherapists, behaviour support specialists, dietitians and counsellors.

#### Registered and enrolled nurses

Registered or enrolled nurses provide nursing care to people. For example, they might give treatments or medications, operate medical equipment, monitor vital signs and perform first aid.

Nurses have tertiary qualifications (Diploma or Advanced Diploma in Nursing for enrolled nurses, and a Bachelor of Nursing for registered nurses). Both Enrolled and Registered nurses must be formally registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.

#### Other roles

There are a wide range of roles that work alongside support workers, such as support coordinators and advocacy workers.

There are also jobs available for managers, team leaders and supervisors, and for administrative staff working in finance, human resources, reception, data entry and other business areas.



Image 4, Denise, NDIS participant

### How do I get into the care and support sector?

There are many pathways to start personal care and support work. While you need formal qualifications for some roles, such as nursing and allied health, you don’t for many other roles, such as support workers.

For employers, often finding the right person with the right attitude and outlook can be just as important as finding someone with the right qualifications. Your personal qualities, such as your compassion, flexibility and approachability, make you a good fit for the work and are what employers want.

As an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, you bring a unique perspective and life experience to provide care and support to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who would benefit from the knowledge and understanding you bring to the job. This could help them to feel more comfortable and increase their trust in the services they are provided.

For jobs involving direct care, you may need a worker screening check, which includes a police background check. Your employer may arrange this for you before you start your job. You may also need a First Aid Certificate or a driver’s licence.

Many employers provide on-the-job training for people with no experience. For people returning to work, or wanting a career change, your prior learning and experience can often be recognised. There are many options to increase your skills, or to improve your job readiness, numeracy and literacy skills if needed.

To find out more, visit   
[**careandsupportjobs.gov.au/skills-and-training**](http://careandsupportjobs.gov.au/skills-and-training)

### The care and support sector welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The care and support sector can be right for people in many different situations and from many backgrounds. Caring for others in the family and community is an integral part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Your knowledge, understanding and experience could mean care and support work is just right for you.

You may be leaving school, thinking about returning to work, looking for a career change, or simply wanting to find a job that fits with your values and gives you a greater sense of fulfilment.

### Find a job and start a life changing life

To find out more about the care and support workforce, and to search for jobs available right now, visit   
[**careandsupportjobs.gov.au**](http://www.careandsupportjobs.gov.au/)



Image 5, June, Aged care recipient