

Longitudinal Study of Student Outcomes – Aged Care Wave 2 Insights

[PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED IN LATE 2019, PRIOR TO COVID-19]

Introduction

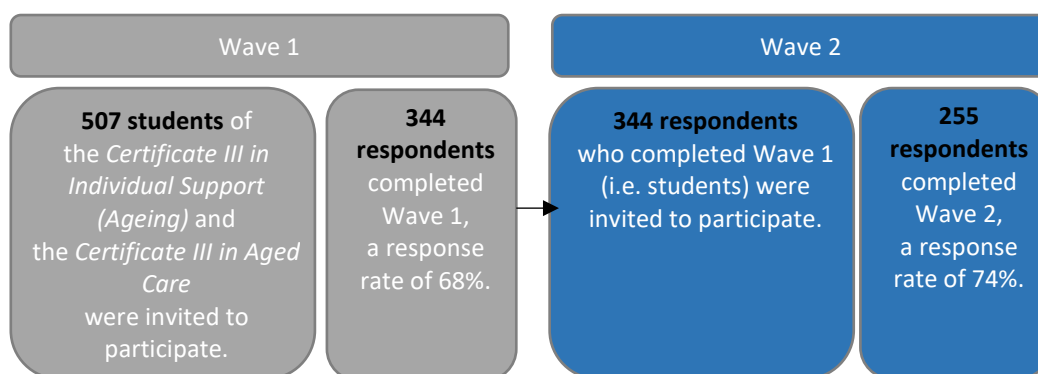
Job satisfaction amongst recent Aged Care graduates is high, with the vast majority enjoying the work, as well as the relationships they have with the other staff and the people for whom they care.

Aged Care workers provide vital support for older Australians. As the baby boomers move into retirement and beyond, forecasts indicate strong increases in demand for Aged Care workers (Aged Care and Disability Care workers are forecast to increase from 177,200 to 222,300 by 2024).¹ Vocational Education and Training (VET) is available to support these workers to provide quality care in line with best practice.

In 2018 students and recent graduates of Aged Care VET qualifications² were invited to take part in Wave 1 of a longitudinal study to explore their experiences as they moved into the workforce. Wave 1 revealed that a passion for helping and caring for others, and the ability to get a job, were reasons for undertaking the qualification. Wave 1 also found satisfaction with the qualification was high.

Wave 2 focused on employment outcomes and explored the experiences of graduates working in the Aged Care sector.

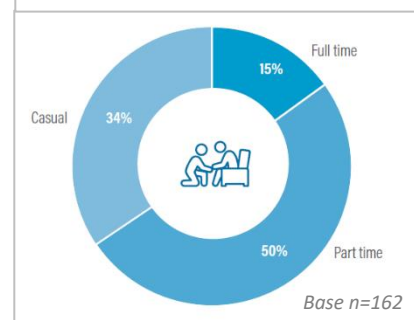
Figure 1: Longitudinal Study into Student Outcomes – Wave 1 and Wave 2 Recruitment and Completion



Employment Status

- Nearly all students had completed their qualification by Wave 2 (95%) and **two-thirds (65%) were employed in the Aged Care sector**
- **Casualisation of the workforce was high**, with half (50%) in part-time roles and another third (34%) working on casual contracts
- One in five (21%) were **working in two or more jobs**
- **Average no. of working hours** - 20–29 hours per week
- **Average annual income** - \$40,000 to \$50,000 (pre-tax and excluding superannuation).

Figure 2: Is your main job full time, part time, or casual?

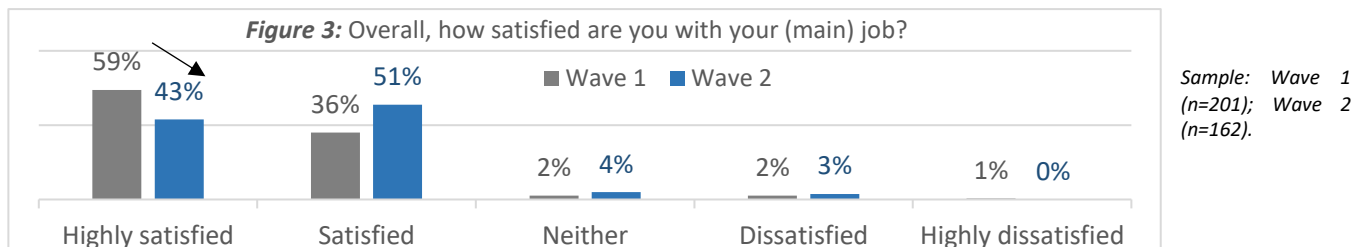


¹ Department of Education, Skills and Employment (2020) 2019 Occupational Projections – five years to May 2024. Available at: <https://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/EmploymentProjections> [Accessed 28 July 2020] NOTE: These forecasts were made prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

² Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) and Certificate III in Aged Care.

Insight 1 - Job satisfaction

- **Job satisfaction is very high** amongst those respondents working in the Aged Care sector. Whilst job satisfaction has remained high across Wave 1 and Wave 2 (95% and 94% respectively), **incidences of 'highly satisfied' have fallen** from 59% to 43% (see **Figure 3**). The levels of enthusiasm for a job in Aged Care seem to have diminished over the duration of employment.



- **Workplace and motivational factors used to measure job satisfaction were scored as follows in descending order** (net satisfaction rates displayed):

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. 86% Interpersonal relations | } | Key <u>workplace factors</u> influencing job satisfaction and retention which scored highly |
| 2. 86% Work conditions | | |
| 3. 84% Work schedule | | |
| 4. 80% Opportunities for autonomy | } | Key <u>personal motivational factors</u> influencing job satisfaction and retention which also scored relatively highly |
| 5. 79% Opportunities for challenge | | |
| 6. 71% Opportunities for growth | | |
| 7. 69% Recognition of work | } | An important <u>workplace factor</u> where a sizeable proportion indicated dissatisfaction with pay (net dissatisfied 15%). |
| 8. 65% Pay | | |

- **Interpersonal relationships**, such as friendships with staff or the care recipients, emerge as an important factor that makes this work and job role positive and rewarding. Individuals enter the profession to make a difference, and they enjoy being with the people with whom they work.

Insight 2 - Likely to recommend the Aged Care sector

- **Students and recent graduates are highly likely to recommend the Aged Care sector** (net likely to recommend 89%). The main reasons for recommending the industry include the fact that it is a personally rewarding/satisfying industry (48%), that it is a growing industry (23%), and that it offers good career/job opportunities (21%).

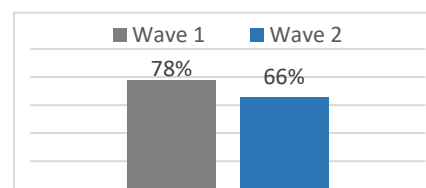
'There is a lot of satisfaction knowing that you are helping in creating a better life for an elderly individual. In short, it is very rewarding in that aspect.'

'There are so many positions in this field available and organisations will hire you without the need for past work experience.'

Insight 3 - Reasons for leaving the Aged Care sector

- A small number of respondents had decided to leave the industry in Wave 2 (n=17 respondents). Reasons for leaving included **pay**, the **work hours being incompatible** with their lifestyle, and **mistreatment in the workplace** by a colleague or employer.

Figure 4: Proportion of respondents that plan to be working in the sector in one year's time.



Insight 4 – Intention to stay in the Aged Care sector

- **Intention to stay in the Aged Care sector decreased between Wave 1 and Wave 2** (from 78% to 66%) (see **Figure 4**).

CONCLUSION: Whilst recent graduates and workers in Aged Care remain relatively satisfied with their jobs, early insights show that negative experiences over time with workplace factors such as **pay**, **work conditions**, **work schedules**, and **mistreatment in the workplace** are prompting individuals to leave the sector.