



DUTY OF CARE: HOW TO FIX THE AGED CARE WORKER SHORTAGE

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**DUTY OF CARE: HOW
TO FIX THE AGED CARE
WORKER SHORTAGE**

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Duty of care: How to fix the aged care worker shortage calls for more action to be taken to address Australia's shortage of aged care workers. It recommends that the Federal Government introduce an essential skills visa for occupations facing severe and ongoing worker shortages in the care sector, starting with aged care. This report contributes to the wellbeing, security & participation focus area of CEDA's Progress 2050 vision for a better future for the next generation of Australians.



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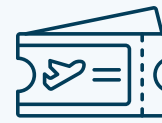
400,000
additional workers
needed in aged care by 2050

1 in 6 personal
care workers
are on temporary visas
Aged care relies on migrant workers

Australia's aged care industry needs:



**Sustainable
domestic pipeline
of workers**



**Migration of
international
workers**

We can't meet demand via one path alone

2.5 million people over 65 will
need care
by 2050
Up from 1.5 million now

Aged & disability carers projected to be
**Australia's highest
growing occupation**
over the next decade

Aged Care Industry Labour Agreements (ACILA)

Less than 4%
of temporary migrants
in occupations covered
by ACILA are employed
on a labour agreement
ACILA isn't increasing workers

It can take
up to **12**
months
to negotiate
ACILA access

Essential skills visa



Proposed removal of
labour market testing



Proposed
cost reduction



Fast-tracks
access



Supports worker
changing employer



Consistent process
across Australia



Increases aged care
worker numbers

We're suggesting a more streamlined process

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aged care sector has faced large structural workforce shortages for many years. As the population ages, the need for aged care workers will continue to grow. But without a strong workforce, we cannot provide older Australians the quality of care they deserve.

CEDA has previously shown Australia will require at least 400,000 additional workers across residential and in-home aged care by 2050 to meet growing demand¹. There has not been enough progress to close this gap. This is a long-term challenge that requires a bold response.

The solution to the shortage is multifaceted. Australia must build a sustainable domestic pipeline of aged care workers as a priority. But this alone will not be enough. We must also continue to explore how to optimise migration to sustainably grow the sector's workforce. Given the size of the shortages, it is not feasible to meet demand through domestic training and hiring alone.

The Federal Government acknowledged the strong role migration plays in the sector in its 2023 Migration Strategy, committing to looking at an essential skills visa pathway for lower wage migrant workers in sectors with critical workforce shortages, such as personal care workers in aged care². CEDA advocated for such a visa in its submission to the Migration Review³. There has been no noticeable progress on this pathway.

The Government has sought to respond to the need via labour agreements, initially through company-specific agreements and then by introducing the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement (ACILA), which covers three key occupations: nursing support worker, personal care assistant and aged or disabled carer.

These agreements aren't bringing in anywhere near enough workers to fill the gap and do not meet the underlying need for a new visa pathway. We estimate that in the June quarter of this year, less than four per cent of temporary migrants in these occupations were in Australia on a labour agreement⁴.

Most migrant workers continue to come into the sector as sideways entrants. The vast majority of migrant workers in the occupations covered by the agreement came to Australia on temporary visas for other purposes, such as student, partner or working holiday visas.

We've found providers are using labour agreements to retain a small number of existing staff already in the country, rather than increasing the overall number of workers in the sector by attracting additional staff from overseas.

The ACILA is not meeting the needs of the sector – it is not bringing in enough workers to meet demand. Consultation with industry also suggests there is unlikely to be a significant increase in uptake of the scheme.

This approach must change if we are to meet the aged care workforce needs of the future.

This is not a short-term problem in need of a temporary fix. It is long-term in nature. We need to pull all levers, including migration, to increase the workforce.

The Government should pursue an essential skills visa for aged care workers as a priority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Federal Government should introduce an essential skills visa for aged care occupations below the wage thresholds in recognition of the ongoing shortage and anticipated growth in demand for workers. The visa would provide a pathway for the same occupations as the aged care industry labour agreement.
2. Labour market testing should be abolished for the three occupations covered by the agreement, as they face critical shortage. It can be replaced by regular evaluation of the visa's effectiveness every three to five years.
3. The Government should consider waiving or reducing the Skilling Australia Fund levy for employers sponsoring a worker on an essential skills visa. It should also only be payable once per migrant in cases where the worker moves from one sponsored visa to another, such as from temporary to permanent sponsorship visa.
4. The Government should consider making employers' sponsorship costs payable pro-rata, rather than upfront. This could be in the form of a loading paid to the Government in addition to employees' regular pay for the duration of the sponsorship.
5. The Federal Government, either through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Bureau of Statistics or the Department of Health and Ageing, should provide nationally consistent annual data on the aged care workforce, to better support workforce planning.

THE AGED CARE WORKFORCE NEEDS TO GROW RAPIDLY

As Australia’s population ages, more people will require aged care. We estimate around 2.5 million people aged 65 and over will need some form of care by 2050⁵, up from 1.5 million now⁶.

Jobs and Skills Australia projects aged and disability carers to be the highest growth occupation in Australia over the next decade based on general demand for these services (Figure 1)⁷, consistent with CEDA’s 2021 projections of significant shortages in the sector over the next 25 years⁸.

These projections are all likely to be on the conservative side, as they don’t take into account the Federal Government’s legislated increase in the quality and quantity of care, particularly through in-home care, where aged care is provided at a person’s home rather than in a residential facility. This will further increase demand for workers.

More needs to be done to attract workers

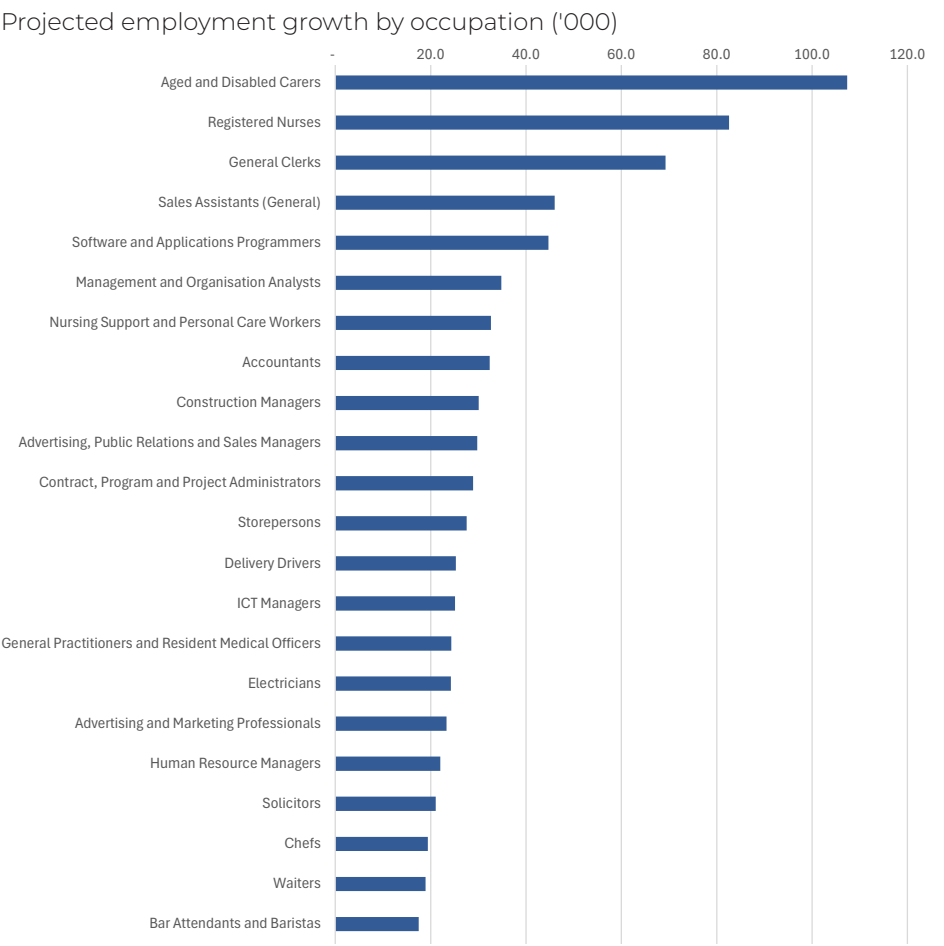
There has been some improvement to conditions in the sector to attract and retain both Australian and migrant workers. In July 2023, the minimum wage was increased by 15 per cent for aged carers, nursing support workers and personal care assistants, bringing wages more into line with those for disability workers and higher than those for retail or beauty therapy workers⁹. CEDA advocated for higher wages in 2021¹⁰.

In the nearly two years since the wage increase, the national aged and disability carer workforce grew by 35 per cent¹¹. Due to a lack of detailed data, we don’t know how much of that growth has been in aged carers specifically.

Consultation suggests that the wage increases have improved retention and turnover, but are not attracting significant numbers of new workers. We are still well short of the number of workers required, particularly as demand for services continues to increase.

Pay and employment conditions will need to improve further to build a larger, more sustainable pipeline of Australian workers.

Figure 1: Aged and disability carers to be highest growing occupation over the next decade



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, 2024

Providers also need to increase training of both new and existing staff, and to invest in new technology and innovation. The full recommendations of CEDA's 2021 report should be implemented across each of these areas.

Given the magnitude of the challenge, however, the Australian workforce alone will not be nearly enough to reverse the shortage.

Aged care relies on migrant workers

Aged care has traditionally relied heavily on migrant workers. We estimate that around 70,000 – or one-in-six – personal care workers in the sector are on temporary visas¹². This is a conservative estimate.

Aged care is not alone in having a large proportion of migrant workers. Industries such as healthcare, community services, construction and information and communication technology all employ large numbers of temporary migrants to help ensure they can reliably deliver the services Australians need and expect.

Where there are genuine shortages of workers, as is clearly the case in aged care, the system should enable more streamlined and targeted migration.

A push to attract more migrants into aged care should consider the impact on both the Australian labour market and on the migrant's home country. While source countries may lose workers through increased migration to Australia, they can benefit from the further training workers receive in Australia if they return home. They also benefit from the remittances that workers often send home.

Migration must be part of the answer to the workforce shortage, alongside improved working conditions, a strong domestic training pipeline and upskilling the current workforce.



LABOUR AGREEMENTS ARE NOT THE SOLUTION

The aged care occupations facing the most severe shortages, primarily personal care workers, do not qualify for other skilled migration visas as their annual salary is below the minimum rate, which currently sits at \$76,515¹³.

As a result, aged care providers have had to use labour agreements to bring in workers. Initially, each provider had to negotiate a bespoke company-specific agreement with the Government and unions to sponsor a migrant. The process was slow, and uptake was low.

Recognising this, the Government introduced the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement (ACILA) in May 2023 (Box 1).

The agreement enables migrants to fill vacancies in three occupations at the heart of the aged care workforce:

- Aged or disability carers;
- Personal care assistants; and
- Nursing support workers.

Its aim is to streamline the negotiation and sponsorship process for employers, who can access the agreement by signing a memorandum of

understanding (MoU) with the relevant union: the Health Services Union (HSU), the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) or the United Workers Union (UWU).

In the two years since the ACILA was introduced the number of agreements has risen from 10 company-specific agreements to a total of 142 at the end of June 2025, encompassing both company-specific agreements and ACILA¹⁴.

While it is positive that more agreements are in place, Department of Home Affairs data indicates that just 2426 temporary migrants were sponsored under all agreements in the sector at the end of June 2025¹⁵. This figure also includes some workers in Australia under an additional regional labour agreement.

In other words, less than four per cent of all temporary migrants working in the three qualifying occupations have been sponsored under a labour agreement. This is less than one per cent of all workers in these occupations, both Australians and migrants¹⁶. This is not a meaningful contribution to fixing the shortages in the sector. Most migrants working in aged care continue to enter the sector through other visa streams.

Box 1: Aged care industry agreements

The Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement is a standard agreement template that any aged care provider can access after negotiating and signing a MoU with the relevant union.

It contains standardised employment conditions and replaces the requirement for a provider to undertake tripartite negotiations with the Federal Government and unions under company-specific agreements.

Visa costs are the same under the agreement as on other employer-sponsored visa types.

The agreement's guiding principles are to:

- Acknowledge an unprecedented workforce shortage;
- Offer additional hours, predictable rosters and decent wages and conditions to current employees;
- Provide a temporary solution, but not the sole or first solution, to workforce shortages;
- Ensure wages and conditions meet industry standards; and
- Prioritise the recruitment and training of local carers.

Labour agreements are too burdensome

Consultation with aged care providers suggests the low uptake has been driven by the difficulty of implementing agreements.

The ACILA was intended to streamline processes. In practice it is burdensome and complex to negotiate and implement. It requires demonstrating that occupations cannot be filled in the domestic market and cumbersome negotiations with local unions that must satisfy a range of criteria. It can take more than 12 months in some instances.

The process is also inconsistent across states and varies according to the unions involved. This means there is no ability to streamline the process across the industry or build on agreements already in place.

There is little guidance for providers on how to navigate the process effectively across jurisdictions. Given the inconsistent advice and lack of information, employers cannot rely on previous negotiations as an indicator of current or future processes.

Given this burden, many employers have chosen not to use the agreements.

AGREEMENTS ARE RETAINING RATHER THAN ATTRACTING NEW WORKERS

Although the aged care labour agreement was intended to encourage providers to sponsor migrant workers from overseas, many providers are using the agreement to sponsor existing staff already in Australia on temporary visas such as student, partner or working holiday visas.

Department of Home Affairs data shows that in 2024-25, only 10 per cent of the sponsored temporary visas granted under an aged care labour agreement went to applicants outside Australia¹⁷. In other words, 90 per cent of visas under the agreement went to workers who were already in Australia. This shows the agreement is barely adding to the overall size of the workforce.

While growth in the number of workers sponsored under labour agreements accelerated after the ACILA was introduced, it has since slowed, with the rate of growth slower in the June 2025 quarter than in the preceding three quarters (Figure 2).

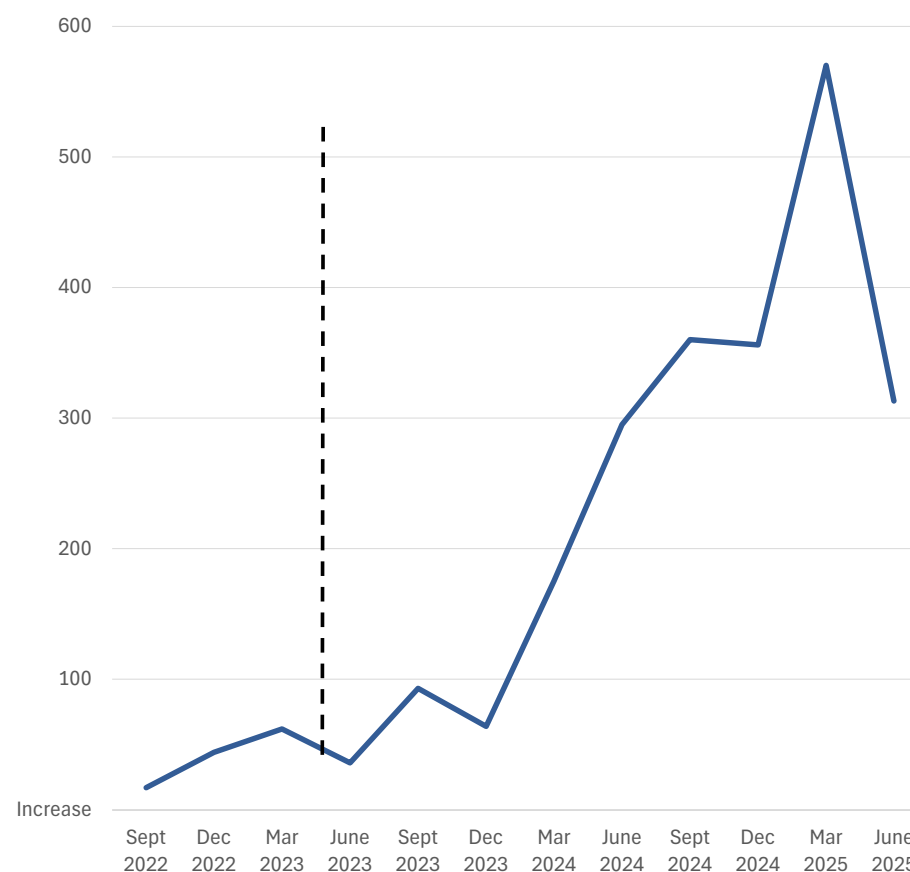
Providers told us they use the agreement sparingly to sponsor high-performing personal care workers to keep them in Australia, as sponsorship offers a pathway to permanent residency.

They also said they did not intend to use the agreements to bring in new workers from overseas, unless they had no other option to fill critical vacancies (See case study). They said the high costs of sponsoring a visa made it too risky to bring in new, untested employees.

The agreement is clearly not achieving its objective of streamlining the recruitment of qualified workers from overseas where qualified Australians are not available¹⁸. It is neither meeting the needs of the industry, nor significantly reducing workforce shortages.

Instead of relying so much on sideways entrants to the workforce, Australia should actively target migrants with appropriate qualifications and experience who want to come to the country to work in aged care.

Figure 2: Quarterly growth in labour agreement visa holders is slowing



Source: Department of Home Affairs, *Temporary Work (skilled) Visa Holders*, June 2025

Labour agreements restrict worker mobility

While migrants sponsored under the aged care agreement can change employers, they can only work for an organisation that also is party to the agreement. This limits their options, given the relatively small number of agreements in place¹⁹.

This not only creates rigidities in the labour market and reduces worker mobility, it also increases the possibility of exploitation of workers who are unable to secure alternative employment.

Stability is important for both employers and employees. However, restricting mobility is not the answer. Instead, we should do more to fix the broader underlying issues causing poor staff retention, such as low pay and challenging working conditions.

The recommendations of the aged care royal commission have addressed some of these issues. Employers are also using other measures such as above-award pay, access to professional development and training and flexible working conditions.

Abolishing the aged care labour agreement in favour of another standard visa available to all aged care providers would also help to improve mobility.

Visa costs are too high

In our consultations, providers consistently nominated cost as the biggest disincentive to sponsoring migrant workers, whether through a labour agreement or not. The lengthy negotiations required for a labour agreement create an additional burden on top of the financial cost of a visa.

Costs can vary but generally exceed \$3000 each for both the employer²⁰ and the migrant²¹, comprising application fees, nomination charges and the Skilling Australia Fund levy. This is before any agency, legal, or English-literacy fees are incurred.

The Skilling Australia Fund levy of \$1200 to \$1800 per year of sponsorship makes up a substantial part of the employer's costs. Its purpose is to ensure Australia has the resources to provide training in areas of skills shortage. All employers nominating a sponsored migrant on any skilled visa type must pay the levy upfront²². They pay it twice if a worker moves from a temporary sponsorship visa to permanent residency.

There is always going to be a cost to the Government for providing visas and we should continue to ensure cost recovery. However, the costs here are likely to outweigh the sector's actual training costs. The Government should consider waiving or reducing the Skilling Australia Fund levy for employers sponsoring a worker on an essential skills visa, and it should only be payable once per migrant.

The Government also should consider making employers' visa costs payable pro-rata, rather than upfront. This could be in the form of a loading paid to the Government in addition to employees' regular pay for the duration of the sponsorship. In this way, if the worker moves employers, the hiring employer does not bear the full cost of sponsorship.

CASE STUDY: UNITING NSW.ACT

Aged care provider Uniting NSW.ACT signed up to the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement in 2023 to ensure it had a range of options to plan its workforce and fill vacancies, and because the Agreement was the only way to sponsor aged carers and care support workers.

As one of Australia's largest not-for-profit providers, Uniting NSW.ACT employs more than 8000 people in Seniors Services, which includes residential and home care.

To ensure it could meet its workforce needs it started negotiating a company-specific labour agreement in 2021. It had just been finalised when the Government announced the Aged Care Industry Labour Agreement.

Uniting NSW.ACT Chief People & Strategy Officer Dr Anat Hassner said: "In the end we opted to sign up to the industry agreement, rather than our company-specific agreement, to ensure we were not left behind in a competitive market.

"Having the agreement in place gives us a competitive advantage and sends a signal to good workers that we can help them gain a pathway to permanent residency."

Once the agreement was in place, Uniting NSW.ACT received overwhelming interest from current staff without permanent residency.

"We use the aged care labour agreement to reward and retain good workers. Many of our current employees are very keen to be sponsored," Dr Hassner said.

Uniting NSW.ACT has around 1000 aged carers and nursing assistants on temporary visas, approximately 200 of which are sponsored via the aged care labour agreement.

"Given the investment we put into our workers, we use sponsorship to help retain top-performing staff," she said.

"It sends a strong message that hard work for the benefit of older people in the community will be rewarded.

"For this reason, we don't look outside the organisation when looking to sponsor a worker. Only if the job market tightened significantly would we use the labour agreement to sponsor workers directly from overseas."



LABOUR MARKET TESTING IS NOT EFFECTIVE AND SHOULD BE REMOVED

It is quicker, easier and less costly to hire Australian workers than bring workers in from overseas.

Despite this, employers in all industries must undertake labour market testing before sponsoring a migrant worker or signing up to a labour agreement.

This is to ensure local workers have adequate opportunity to apply for a vacancy and to confirm that there are genuine shortages of local workers.

Employers must advertise vacancies for a minimum of four weeks and show they have exercised due diligence in trying to secure workers domestically.

Labour market testing has been simplified for the ACILA. Nevertheless, it is still an additional compliance obligation that takes up administrative resources and lengthens the time it takes to start sponsoring a migrant worker.

Further, by law and under enterprise agreements, Australians and migrant workers must receive the same pay and conditions. It is illegal to pay a migrant worker less than an Australian.

The cost of visa sponsorship further increases the incentive for employers to seek Australian workers before looking overseas.

Industry consultation suggests labour market testing is an additional compliance burden and generally seen as unnecessary, potentially resulting in tokenistic job advertisements in aged care, given the chronic shortage of Australian workers in the sector.

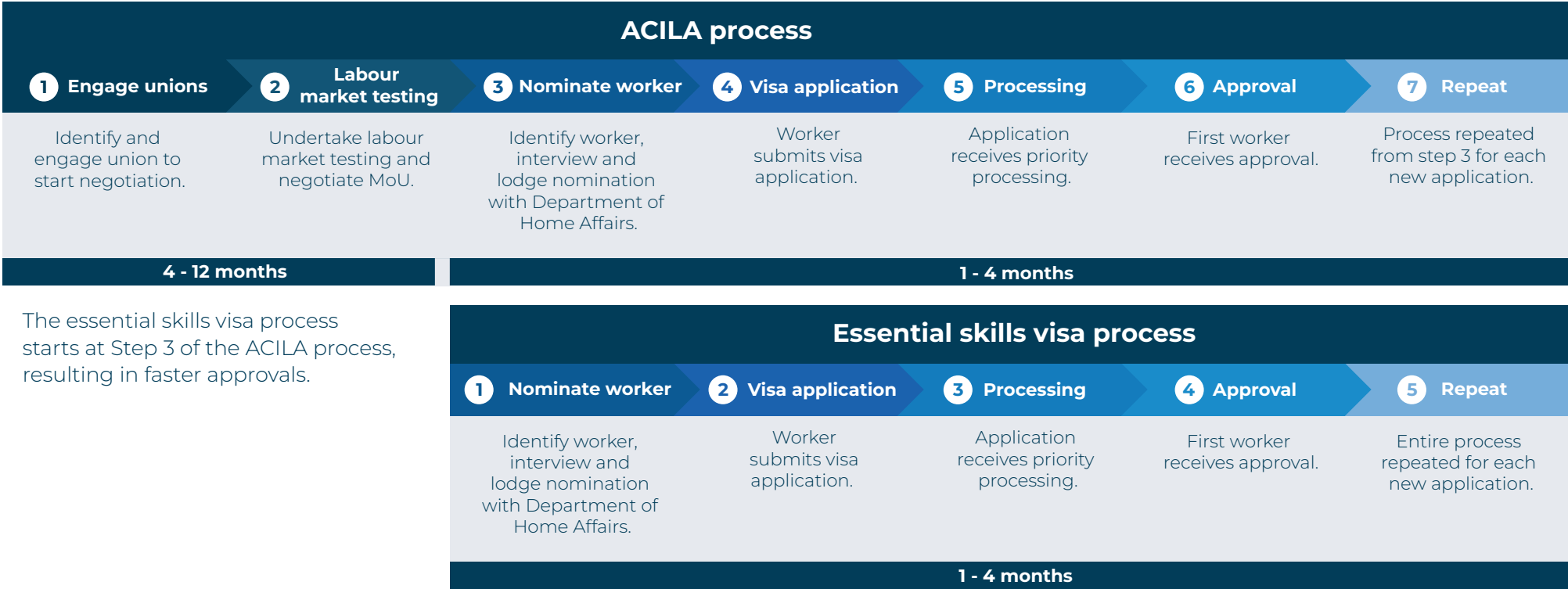
Labour market testing should be abolished for the aged care sector.

AN ESSENTIAL SKILLS VISA IS A MORE STREAMLINED APPROACH

Our proposed essential skills visa would target the same occupations as the ACILA but would enable all aged care providers to offer sponsored visas in both residential and in-home care without having to go through the negotiations required under the labour agreement (Figure 3). This would save substantial time and resourcing upfront – in some cases a year or more – and resourcing required to negotiate an MoU under the ACILA. It would be a direct and streamlined process across the industry, rather than by individual negotiation.

If implemented well, including a reduction in the cost of sponsoring workers, this visa would help to address the sector’s acute worker shortages by increasing the number of migrants who come to Australia to work in aged care. Workers already sponsored under the ACILA could transfer to the new visa. It would also allow greater mobility for workers, as any aged care provider could sponsor their visa.

Figure 3: Comparing application processes



BOX 2: HOW AN ESSENTIAL SKILLS VISA COULD WORK

Under our proposal, an essential skills visa would be available for occupations below the wage thresholds for other skilled visa categories (currently \$76,515), with pathways to permanent residency, where there is a severe and ongoing shortage of workers.

An independent national body such as Jobs and Skills Australia, which already maintains a list of occupations in shortage, could determine which occupations qualified for the visa. Aged care must be the priority, and the visa should start with the same occupations as the ACILA.

The application process would involve the following steps:

- 1** A provider registers its intent to apply for essential skills visas to fill vacancies for specified occupations. This notifies the Federal Government of a provider's intention to sponsor migrant workers on the visa and triggers Federal Government oversight and compliance procedures to prevent exploitation and misuse, including informing and educating workers about their rights.
- 2** Once registered, employers can nominate workers for sponsorship under the visa. This would be restricted to specified occupations, in this case personal care workers in residential and home-care settings.
- 3** The nomination process draws from eligible migrants who have registered their interest in sponsorship and demonstrated relevant experience, appropriate qualifications and English proficiency, assessed through an accredited assessment body.
- 4** Applicants would need a job offer from an Australian employer, with pay and conditions at least equivalent to local workers.
- 5** After the visa has been issued the relevant union should be notified of the migrant's employment to ensure employers provide equal pay and conditions to Australians and migrant workers.
- 6** Processing is fast-tracked, recognising the immediate need to fill these occupations.
- 7** Minimum four-year initial visa term, with commitment to renew for a further four years, or pathway to permanent residency.
- 8** Workers should not be location-restricted. They should be free to change employer or location of employment within their designated caring sector.

The Government should enable employers to find qualified migrants through an online system such as the Department of Home Affairs' SkillSelect²³ website.

Prospective migrants would use the system to register their interest in being nominated for a skilled visa and provide details of their experience and qualifications. Employers would use it to identify suitable applicants and start a sponsorship process after assessing the applicant's suitability.

Having such a platform to assess overseas applicants should encourage employers to bring in more workers, rather than relying so heavily on migrants already in Australia. This would further enhance the essential skills pathway.

SkillSelect is currently used for regional and independent business visas, rather than employer-nominated temporary visas, although it can support applications for these visas. It should be used for the essential skills visa.

The scheme should collect data on migrant experiences and career pathways, with built-in evaluation. This will help to ensure the visa is effective and enable changes to be made if required.

Every three to five years, a review should evaluate whether industries and occupations still have workforce shortages big enough to qualify for the visa category. It should also ensure the visa is not having unintended consequences such as suppressing wages, discouraging training of local workers, or otherwise disadvantaging local workers. Any employers found to have breached employment conditions for Australian or migrant workers should no longer have access to the scheme.

The evaluation should also consider where migrants are coming from under the scheme, and monitor the impact on the source countries.

More timely and targeted data

Workforce planning is challenging in aged care as there is little nationally consistent and representative data on the workforce.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare carries out a biennial survey and census on the aged care workforce, however the releases have been inconsistent and the data is not comprehensive enough to allow for good decision-making.

Given the worker shortages in the sector, developing consistent, annual national data should be a priority to enable analysis of the workforce, including visa status and vacancies.

To be most effective, annual surveys on the aged care workforce need to be nationally consistent and representative of the whole workforce. This would allow proper evaluation of new initiatives, including the ACILA and an essential skills visa, and better targeting of future strategies.

Data and evaluation will be supported by new ABS data currently being developed that disaggregates disability and aged care occupations, however more surveys are required for a detailed picture of the workforce.

CONCLUSIONS

The solution to the aged care workforce challenge is multifaceted.

Providers and the Government should continue efforts to build a sustainable pipeline of Australian aged care workers as a priority, ensuring that pay and conditions are appropriate to attract new workers while also retaining the existing workforce.

CEDA has previously made recommendations to improve domestic training, retention and technology to increase the size of the workforce²⁴. But this alone is not enough.

Where shortages persist, our migration system should be able to respond rapidly.

Despite the good intentions behind its creation, the aged care industry labour agreement has not been effective at bringing new workers into Australia. It has helped providers retain existing migrant staff by offering them a new visa sponsorship pathway, and this is a positive outcome. But there are other ways to retain staff, including better career progression, training, pay and conditions and flexible working arrangements.

An essential skills visa should be introduced, along with an online system to match prospective workers overseas with Australian employers, to help ensure its success.

Rigorous evaluation should be undertaken to ensure the visa pathways are meeting their objectives and that migrants, Australian workers and providers are all benefiting.

Acknowledgements

CEDA would like to acknowledge its members and other organisations that have contributed to this report.

- Ageing Australia
- Aged Care Remote Workforce Accord
- Australian Unity
- Brightwater
- Bupa Aged Care Australia
- CEDA Skills and Migration Member Advisory Committee
- Fragomen
- Hall and Prior
- Settlement Services International
- UnitingCare
- UnitingNSW.ACT
- UnitingSA

APPENDIX A - CALCULATIONS FOR KEY FIGURES

1. Projected number of elderly requiring aged care assistance (endnote 5):

Productivity Commission Report on Government Services 2025 (2023-24) for non-Indigenous people 65 years and older and First Nation's people 50 years and older:

- Residential care, permanent – 254,049 people
- Residential care, respite – 82,480 people
- Home Care, levels 1-4 – 335,535 people
- Commonwealth Home Support Programme – 834,981 people

Total requiring some form of care: 1,507,045 people.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Population Projections, 2023 (medium):

- 2023-24: 4,749,334 people aged 65+
- 2049-50: 7,847,270 people aged 65+

Growth in population aged 65+:

$$\text{Growth rate} = \frac{\text{Population 65+}_{2049-50} - \text{Population 65+}_{2023-24}}{\text{Population 65+}_{2023-24}} = \frac{7,847,270 - 4,749,334}{4,749,334} \approx 1.67$$

Estimate of population aged 65+ requiring care:

$$\text{Current population in care}_{2023-24} * \text{growth rate} = 1,507,045 * 1.67 \approx 2.5m$$

2. Estimated increase in aged and disability carer workforce (endnote 11):

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Detailed (Quarterly), Employed by Occupation, sum of:

Worker type	4-digit ANZSCO code	Aug 2023	May 2025
Personal Carers and Assistants	4230	100	1400
Aged and Disability Carers	4231	273,700	374,700
Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers	4233	101,300	130,900
Total		375,100	507,000

$$\frac{\text{ANZSCO (4230 + 4231 + 4233)}_{\text{May 2025}}}{\text{ANZSCO (4230 + 4231 + 4233)}_{\text{Aug 2023}}} - 1 = \frac{507,000}{375,100} - 1 \approx 35\%$$

3. Temporary migrants working in personal care in aged care sector (endnote 12):

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Aged Care Workforce Survey, 2023:

Aged Care Workforce survey data 2023	Citizen/PR	Student visa	Other temporary visa	Unknown	Total
Personal care worker (Inc. Assistant in nursing)	147,741	11,753	20,114	89,815	269,423
Personal care worker (formal traineeship)	7682	249	175	1837	9943
Total	155,423	12,002	20,289	91,652	279,366

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Proportion of personal care workers on temp visa} \\
 &= \frac{\text{Student visa} + \text{Other temp visa}}{\text{Citizen and PR} + \text{Student} + \text{Other visa}} = \frac{12,002 + 20,289}{155,423 + 12,002 + 20,289} \\
 &= \frac{32,291}{187,714} \approx 17\%
 \end{aligned}$$

Apply proportion to the number of workers whose visa status is unknown:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Estimated unknowns on temporary visa} = \text{Proportion PCW on temp visa} * \text{Unknown} \\
 &= 0.17 * 91,652 \approx 15,766
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Total estimated on temporary visas (2023)} = 15,766 + 32,291 = 48,057$$

Extrapolate to 2025:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Total on temp visas (Feb/March 2023)} \\
 &* \text{growth in aged and disability care workforce (Feb 2023 to May quarter 2025)} \\
 &= 48,057 * (1 + 0.42) \approx 68,268
 \end{aligned}$$

Given uncertainty in estimating, we can say “approximately 70,000”.

4. Estimate of proportion of temporary migrants on labour agreement sponsorship and as a proportion of all personal care workers in the sector (endnote 16):

Department of Home Affairs Temporary Resident (Skilled) Visa Holders (labour agreements stream):

Labour agreement visa occupation	6-digit ANZSCO code	Number as at 31 March 2025
Aged and Disability Carers	423111	648
Nursing Support	423312	370
Personal Care Assistant	423313	1408
Total		2426

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Percentage of temp migrants on labour agreement sponsorship} \\
 &= \frac{\text{Labour agreement temp visas}}{\text{Total estimated temp migrants}} = \frac{2426}{68,268} < 4\%
 \end{aligned}$$

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Aged Care Workforce Survey 2023:

- Personal care workforce (directly employed), 2023 = 279,366

Extrapolated to May quarter 2025:

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Total personal care workers (Feb/March 2023)} \\
 &* \text{growth in aged and disability care workforce (Feb 2023 to May quarter 2025)} \\
 &= 279,366 * (1 + 0.42) \approx 396,858
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\text{Percentage of labour agreement temp migrants of all personal care workers} \\
 &= \frac{\text{Labour agreement temp visas}}{\text{Total personal care workers}} = \frac{2426}{396,858} < 1\%
 \end{aligned}$$

5. Proportion of workers granted a visa under labour agreement while in Australia (endnote 17):

Department of Home Affairs Temporary Resident (Skilled) Visa Granted (labour agreements stream):

Labour agreement visa occupation	6-digit ANZSCO code	Number of visas granted under aged care labour agreements, 2024-25	
		Granted to applicants in Australia	Granted to applicants outside Australia
Aged and Disability Carers	423111	351	50
Nursing Support	423312	306	30
Personal Care Assistant	423313	917	86
Total		1574	166

Proportion of temporary skilled visas granted under labour agreements to migrants within Australia:

$$Proportion = \frac{Total\ granted\ to\ migrants\ in\ Australia}{Total\ granted} = \frac{1574}{1574 + 166} \approx 90\%$$

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CEDA – the Committee for Economic Development of Australia – is an independent, member-based public policy think tank. Our membership base spans all sectors and every state and territory.

Our purpose is to achieve sustainable, long-term prosperity for all Australians.

For more than 60 years, CEDA has influenced Australia's public policy debate and been a catalyst for change on economic and social issues.

Led by Chair Christine Bartlett and Chief Executive Melinda Cilento, CEDA carries on the legacy of renowned economist Sir Douglas Copland, who founded CEDA in 1960.

Our work is guided by our Progress 2050 vision, which supports our purpose.

What we do

- We welcome members who want to engage in informed debate and explore innovative policy solutions.
- We host events that bring together thought leaders, experts and stakeholders to foster dialogue and develop solutions.
- We produce rigorous research by engaging with government, business, academia and the broader community to address long-term challenges and deliver better outcomes for Australia.



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