



VET and Aged, Disability, Health Care

Health Care and Social Assistance is the fastest growing industry sector in Australia. Tasmania, with its aging demographic, is at the forefront of this transformation. This sector is the greatest contributor to the Tasmanian economy and the largest employer.

Health Care and Social Assistance accounts for 16% of the Tasmanian workforce with a 21% increase in jobs in the past 5 years¹. The industry has the largest proportion of the workforce employed part-time and 80% of workers are female. Post-school education is generally required with more than 80% of workers having either a VET or other higher education qualification².

This industry sector is underwritten by public investment, with the private sector still being extensively supported by Australian Government subsidisation of Health Care in all its forms. The expansion of the sector has been accelerated by the introduction of the NDIS, which requires a significant increase to the workforce³.

Perception of Training

- Depending upon the sector the perception of training is varied.
- Aged care and disability have a mandatory qualification (Certificate III in Individual Support) and other sectors, such as Allied Health, have preferred qualifications.
- The Tasmanian Hospital Service has 13,000+ employees and is a large organisation with well-defined health professional pathways. Due to ongoing service and activity expansion, they are always undertaking some degree of recruitment. Administrative roles vary, such as Health Information or Clinical Coding Professionals, and there is an opportunity for school-age learners to be guided to these pathways. Other administrative roles would not require tertiary qualifications.
- Right-fit people are critical. Just having a qualification is not enough to work in this sector. The sector peaks strongly advocate screening of participants before they

¹ [Tasmania | National Skills Commission](#)

² [Health Care and Social Assistance | National Skills Commission](#)

³ [Health, aged and disability services | Skills Tasmania](#)

undertake training and there are several tools available that detail the key personal attributes of workers within the sector.

- Delivery of these qualifications is only supported when providers ensure access to quality and relevant work placements in a health setting.
- A selection process should be undertaken before enrolment to ensure students have a suitable level of maturity to work in this industry. There are opportunities to focus on particular units rather than the full qualification.
- Training needs to be linked with employers and not delivered in isolation. Traineeships are the preferred model for training. If traineeships are not able to be delivered, then close linkages with employers are still essential, with work-placements occurring throughout the training to ensure the theory is linked with the practical workplace.
- Caution should be exercised in choosing electives in some of the qualifications as some may not be suitable for secondary students.

Attributes for New Entrants

- Attainment of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE), and the assurance of the associated literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills, are key requirements for any person seeking a career in the community sector.
- It is a highly regulated sector so school leavers need the ability to understand the technical nature of mandated national laws and regulations which require a good standard of literacy and numeracy.
- The Royal Commissions into both Aged Care and Disability, along with the requirements of the NDIS, has seen an increasing regulatory and reporting framework for all workers within the sector.
- Employability skills are critical. Workers need to have a level of maturity to work without close supervision, to be able to make informed 'big' decisions about people's health and welfare, and to have the ability to understand when there is a need to escalate.
- Kindness, compassion, and the ability to establish clear boundaries, self-awareness and empathy are key attributes needed for many roles in the community sector. These personal attributes often mature with increasing age.
- Teamwork, problem solving and emotional intelligence, along with cultural competency, are also needed.
- The skills that are valued in school leavers include communication, a willingness to learn, foundation medical terminology, basic technology and an understanding of the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards.
- Driver's licence is often stipulated by employers as a requirement of employment.

Preferred Training and Pathways

- It is strongly recommended that students undertaking any of these qualifications do relevant work placements in a suitable workplace. If delivery is undertaken in a school environment, strong linkages with employers are needed and vocational placements should be spread throughout the qualification.
- Some qualifications also have minimum work practice hours as a requirement. Suitable work placements for secondary students may be difficult to find.
- The sector is supportive of years 9 to 12 students engaging in the sector but work is needed to pinpoint the touch points to ensure safety and quality standards are met and resource constraints are considered.

- The school-based business administrative traineeship model is not highly utilised as there has been a low completion rate and the impost outweighed the net benefit. Post-school traineeships and permanent staff positions have had better long-term outcomes.
- Career pathways are varied across the sector with many entry points, and a TCE is strongly encouraged to enable access to further training and career opportunities. Students who have the right-fit personal attributes, who have good levels of numeracy and literacy and have a passion for the sector, will find work and fulfilling careers.
- Further identification of career pathways right across the sector is being undertaken. The delivery of industry taster programs and industry endorsed skill-sets are recommended and industry peaks have spent considerable time in defining and developing these programs.
- Training needs to be linked with employers and not delivered in isolation. Traineeships are the preferred model for training. If traineeships are not able to be delivered, then close linkages with employers are still essential, with work-placements occurring throughout the training to ensure the theory is linked with the practical workplace.
- In some workplaces, a Certificate III qualification that has been delivered in school, but outside of a traineeship model, can be a disadvantage to the student in gaining employment post-school as many employers prefer traineeships. Qualifications delivered under traineeships provide financial incentives to employers and, better-quality training outcomes.
- Certificate II in Community Services is a generalist qualification and should not be used as the only entry pathway into the sector and certainly not as a pre-requisite or as an advantage for a school-based traineeship. In fact, some sectors have shown that this qualification is of little relevance.
- Enrolled Nursing and Registered Nursing pathways require further training post school. The Bachelor of Nursing that is needed for Registered Nursing requires an ATAR, however, students who have not received an ATAR will be considered on a case-by-case basis, such as by the Schools Recommendation Program.
- The Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance is the qualification supported by the Allied Health Professionals in the Tasmanian Health Service. This is the pathway to a Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance which is the qualification to become an Allied Health Assistant.
- Certificate IIIs are not mandatory in entry-level ancillary positions, however, the Certificate III in Health Services Assistance can be a pathway to employment as the skills/knowledge could provide youth with an advantage over others with experience as it shows a desire to work in the industry.
- Certificate III in Individual Support is the mandatory qualification for aged and disability sectors. Institutional delivery to secondary students is not supported as the level of knowledge and skills required by industry cannot be achieved through this option. This may also present challenges securing the required work placements within the sector.
- The sector has concerns with the completion of Certificate III Community Services in school/college. There are limited direct employment outcomes for this qualification and its attainment can limit access to funding for other qualifications within this sector, which have more specific employment outcomes.

