



MEDIA RELEASE

Aged and community care training under the microscope

20 November 2012

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has launched its strategic review of vocational education and training (VET) in the aged and community care sector.

ASQA Chief Commissioner Chris Robinson said the Productivity Commission's August 2011 report, *Caring for Older Australians*, identified a number of concerns with the training provided for workers in the sector.

Media contact

media@asqa.gov.au

"These concerns included the variability in the quality of training provided by registered training organisations (RTOs) and the need for better regulation; and fast-tracking of qualifications, for example, delivering a Certificate III qualification in less than a month," Mr Robinson said.

"The Productivity Commission called for an independent and comprehensive review of aged care-related VET courses and their delivery by RTOs.

"The establishment of ASQA in July 2011 as the national VET regulator means it is well-positioned to undertake such a review."

Mr Robinson said over one million older Australians currently receive aged care services. This number is expected to rise to over 3.5 million by 2050.

"As the number of older Australians rises and the demand for aged care services increases, there will be an increase in demand for a well-trained aged care workforce," he said.

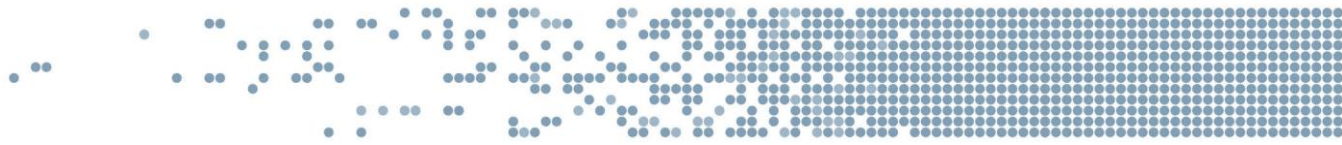
"In its report the Productivity Commission found that there were around 260,000 working in the aged care sector in late 2007. It estimated that the sector would need around 980,000 workers in 2050 to meet this demand.

"It is essential that we prepare for this growth now by ensuring those undertaking VET-level qualifications are equipped with the right skills.

"ASQA's audit process is already identifying RTOs that are non-compliant and influencing change in these organisations.

"This strategic review will take a whole-of-sector view to aged and community care training and identify issues and formulate solutions."

A management committee has been established to oversee the review. The committee comprises representatives of the Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council; Health Services Union; Department of Health and Ageing;



Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research & Tertiary Education; Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency; and health care employer Feros Care.

Mr Robinson said ASQA had already surveyed all RTOs delivering aged care training that fall within its jurisdiction, with the results of the survey helping to shape the review.

“Targeted audits of RTOs will also be undertaken and these will be supplemented by the information available from the audits of Aged & Community Care training providers already undertaken by ASQA,” he said.

Mr Robinson said the review would be completed by June 2013, with ASQA preparing a report of its findings and the action it intends to take and, where appropriate, providing recommendations for further action to be undertaken by other agencies and stakeholders.

The strategic review of the aged and community care sector is one of three reviews to be undertaken by ASQA during the 2012–13 financial year. A review of the entry-level work health and safety training required to work on construction sites in Australia is already underway while inappropriate practices and marketing by registered training organisations will also be reviewed.

More information on ASQA’s strategic review program is available by emailing StrategicReviews@asqa.gov.au.