

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Aged Care Industry Changes**

**Improving Workforce  
Conditions**

**Award Changes**

**Aged Care Funding Review**

**COVID Management**

**Funnies For You**

## COMMUNITY NURSING SERVICES

Personal Care

Medication Prompts

Catheter Management

Wound Care

Medication Administration

Bowel Care

***All Gold Card Holders are eligible  
for any of the above services and  
they are free of charge***



## **AGED CARE INDUSTRY CHANGES**

The government's May Budget had a focus on the future of aged care particularly resulting from the fact that Baby Boomers are now experiencing care services in higher numbers than ever before. A Minister for Aged Care presented to the National Press Club for the first time ever which is testament to the fact that aged care now has a national priority status.

The aftermath of the Royal Commission into Aged Care is creating havoc in the industry as the outcomes provide drivers for change. It is also highlighting the fact that governments over the years have failed to understand this environment especially from a funding and workforce perspective. The increased focus on the sector is now playing out in the industry and causing significant concern for service recipients and providers.



## **IMPROVING WORKFORCE CONDITIONS**

The aged care industry is already one of Australia's largest service industries and the Royal Commission, in its final report, made several important recommendations to improve care providers' capability and staff working conditions.

In 2018 care providers delivered services to around 1.3 million people when there were roughly around half a million workers of the Australian workforce employed by the aged care sector (approximately 2.5%). Because of the small number of workers this resulted in a lack of people and time for supporting the elderly with their daily needs and activities. The report called for better wages and training for workers to improve care worker standards and working conditions to enhance interest in the sector.

## **AWARD CHANGES**

The Australian Government and the Fair Work Commission have announced that they acknowledge the importance of care work and support workers by providing significant increases in award rates for many workers to lift sector standards. The Australian Government has provided a 15% pay rise and the Fair Work

Commission, as part of its annual wage review, has awarded staff a 5.75% pay rise to commence from the first pay period after 30 June and 1 July respectively. As a result care and support staff will now receive a 21.16% increase as of their first pay period after the above dates and this is on top of the 25% increase they received in July 2022.

Hopefully this will increase the number of people seeking to work in the industry because, in an environment where you have an unemployment rate of only 3.6%, recruitment is a significant challenge for all providers, especially when competing against every other employer in the State for staff.

***The Department of Veteran's Affairs have increased fees paid to providers to cover these increased costs for Veterans' Home Care and Community Nursing service recipients.***



### **AGED CARE FUNDING REVIEW**

As highlighted in the Royal Commission Report, many of the issues in the industry are due to a lack of funding, overworked and underpaid staff, lack of resources and lack of technological innovation to enhance efficiency. Aged care services, workers, and providers endeavor to provide high quality care and support to all their clients, whether in residential homes or in their own home.

The intent for positive experiences, personalised care and a sense of compassion is there. However, without an acceptable amount of funding, the execution is going to miss the mark.

The fact is, with an ageing population, more money is going to be needed to provide the level of care elderly Australians deserve.

As well as addressing wage rates for care staff the Minister for Aged Care has set up a taskforce to solve the questions the Royal Commission were unable to answer, that is about how to pay for higher standards of care. The group assigned this

task are to report by December. As this will impact on both service recipients and providers, we will await the outcomes with interest and keep you abreast of recommendations flowing from the report.

### **COVID MANAGEMENT**

We are now experiencing another spate of COVID cases and it is important that we all adhere to the isolation rules in WA. If you have COVID-19 or are a close contact you should:

- stay at home for at least 5 full days and until your symptoms resolve
- not visit high-risk settings such as: hospitals unless urgent medical care or treatment is required

While wearing masks is no longer required, we are still requesting that our Support Workers continue to wear their mask when providing services if clients ask them to do so.

### **FUNNIES FOR YOU ☺**

"This is your great-grandma and great-grandpa", I told my grandson as I handed him a photo of my parents. "Do you think I look like them?" He shook his head and said "Not yet"!

I'm not saying that my grandfather is old, but he did invent the rearview mirror.

I'm not saying that my grandmother is old, but she does have a walker... and a driver's license.

The best way to avoid wrinkles is to pick your parents very carefully.

