



Australian  
Aged Care  
Collaboration

## Media Release

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### **COST OF LIVING PRESSURE PUSHING AGED CARE WORKERS TO THE BRINK OF POVERTY LINE, FUELLING WORKFORCE SHORTAGE**

The Australian Aged Care Collaboration (AACC) has today launched its election campaign by with a report showing the wages for aged care workers have failed to keep up with the cost of living.

The analysis shows that after expenses:

- A single aged care worker has \$112 per week
- An aged care worker in a two-parent household with two children has \$17 per week
- An aged care worker in a single-parent household cannot afford basic essentials, with weekly costs exceeding income by \$148 each week.

The aged care workforce has been on the frontline of the pandemic response in Australia. Several waves of outbreaks and the delayed roll out of vaccines placing severe strain on the sector.

The Covid pandemic has worsened the workforce crisis in aged care. While the aged care workforce is skilled and dedicated, the skills shortage in the local market means a support worker can earn more in hospitality or retail.

Older Australians cannot get the best available support and care without respect and support for aged care workers.

Aged care workers deserve better pay to keep up with cost-of-living pressures, and career certainty. The Royal Commission recognised this when it called for higher wages, better qualifications, and more time for workers to spend with older people.

The AACC is calling on all parties and independent candidates to join representatives of older people and their carers, providers, unions, and health professionals in a partnership to support the aged care workforce.

Key reform asks include:

- **A Workforce Partnership Fund** for providers to spend immediately on increasing wages, training, minutes of care, 24-hour nursing and COVID-19 prevention and workforce retention costs.
- **A minimum wage increase for aged care workers** by funding the Fair Work Commission Work Value Case, and award wage increases from July 2022.
- **A commitment to a multidisciplinary workforce** by putting in place an allied health needs assessment and funding model by July 2024.

## Background

### Living costs of aged care

- Weekly earnings for a full-time aged care worker are \$773 per week
- Australia's average weekly rent is \$425 per week for a unit or \$571 per week for a house
- The average cost of weekly groceries range from \$135 for a single person to \$361 for a family
- Average weekly transport costs are \$113 for a single person or \$338 for a family
- The average weekly cost of education or childcare, after subsidies, are up to \$122 each week.

### Aged care wage comparison<sup>i</sup>

- The median hourly wage for a support worker is \$28.41
- The median hourly wage for a home care worker is \$28.99
- The median hourly wage for a bartender is \$30
- The median hourly wage for a customer service rep is \$30.50
- The median hourly wage for a restaurant host is \$30.77
- The median hourly wage for a cashier is \$31.79

### The following representatives of the AACC are available for interview:

Paul Sadler CEO Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA)	Sean Rooney CEO Leading Age Services Australia (LASA)
<b>Media contact:</b> <b>Jane Garcia (Essential) 0455 111 593</b>	<b>Media contact:</b> <b>Kate Hannon 08 6311 7809</b>

### About the Australian Aged Care Collaboration

The AACC is a group of six aged care peak bodies: Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA), Anglicare Australia, Baptist Care Australia, Catholic Health Australia, Leading Age Services Australia (LASA) and UnitingCare Australia. Together, the AACC represents more than 1,000 organisations who deliver 70 per cent of aged care services to 1.3 million Australians, either in their own homes or in communal residential settings.

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<sup>i</sup> According to average advertised salaries on Talent.Com.Au