

HACC Workforce Project

Information Sheet 1 August 2009

This is the first information sheet designed to update Home and Community Care (HACC) funded projects and HACC stakeholder groups in NSW about the HACC Workforce Project being conducted in the latter half of 2009. This information sheet should be circulated to:

- Board and committee members of NSW HACC funded projects
- paid staff of NSW HACC funded projects, including employees of the Home Care Service of NSW
- volunteers working in NSW HACC funded projects
- community care industry peak bodies
- Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) officers of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care

Project Background

The Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, a jointly funded Australian and NSW Government initiative, aims to prevent inappropriate or premature admission to residential care by providing a range of community support services to frail older people, people with a disability and their carers. These services include domestic assistance, social support, personal care, centre based day care, meals, respite, case management, home modification and maintenance, linen, transport, goods and equipment and counselling/information/advocacy. In addition, HACC funds a range of allied health and nursing care projects which are outside the scope of this HACC Workforce Project.

A wide range of bodies are contracted to deliver HACC services. They include state and local government, large charitable organisations and medium to small non-government agencies. These organisations may manage single or multiple HACC or other projects. All face challenges in recruiting, developing and maintaining a skilled workforce able to support HACC clients and their carers.

The HACC workforce is large and diverse. People who work in HACC can be paid or unpaid for their services. They can assist in overall management of the project through participating on boards and committees. They may be employed in managerial, co-ordination or administrative roles. The majority are in service provision, directly supporting HACC clients and their carers.

In September 2007, Age Communications and Tribe Research, conducted a survey of HACC funded projects and the workforce as part of the HACC Learning and Development Framework Project. Although the surveys' aims were to identify the areas of skill and knowledge required across the community care sector, the survey results also demonstrated the need for more comprehensive research on the HACC workforce and its current and future challenges.

Project Aims

The aims of the HACC Workforce Project are to:

- develop a comprehensive profile of the current paid and unpaid HACC workforce
- identify issues in the effective recruitment, development and retention of a dynamic and skilled HACC workforce
- recommend options and strategies to effectively meet these identified workforce challenges and to position the HACC sector for the future.

Project Methodology

The key project tasks are:

- (August to November) the identification and review of other relevant Australian research and findings on the community care workforce. This review will continue throughout the project
- (mid September) an initial on-line survey of HACC funded projects. The aim of this research is to:
 - develop a picture of the size of the workforce and the range of roles of paid and unpaid workers within the sector
 - identify the workforce recruitment, development and retention challenges currently faced by projects
- (late October) a comprehensive on-line and paper based survey of the paid and unpaid HACC workforce. The aim of this part of the research is to:
 - build a demographic profile of the current workforce and their career pathways and intentions
 - identify the key factors that attract people to the industry and motivate them to stay
- (late November/early December) industry consultations to explore research issues, future options and potential workforce strategies
- (January 2010) production of the draft NSW HACC Workforce Report and consideration by DADHC and the Project Reference Group
- (early February) production of the final report.

How you can help

There are a number of ways stakeholders can contribute to the project. You can contribute by:

- distributing this and subsequent Project Information Sheets to board and committee members, paid staff, volunteers and other stakeholders
- informing the Project Team of any existing research or initiatives relevant to the project. This could include national, state, regional, local or organisational research or reports
- ensuring that your HACC funded project participates in the initial agency survey. Look for links to the on-line version of the surveys on the Service Provider Portal which is on the DADHC website, <http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au>.
- encouraging all paid and unpaid staff to complete an on-line or paper version of the second survey.

The Project Team

The project is being managed internally by DADHC's Strategic Policy and Planning Branch, The contact officer is Teresa Ng.

A Reference Group has also been formed to provide advice to the project. It consists of representatives of DADHC's central and regional offices and industry peak bodies.

Age Communications, in association with Tribe Research, is conducting the project. The Project Manager is Glen Sorensen, Age Communications, glen@agecomm.net, Phone: (02) 9369 5542, PO Box 1232 Bondi Junction, NSW, 1355. Project enquiries should be directed to Glen.

We look forward to your participation in this project and to keeping you updated on progress.