

Build Beyond Bricks



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Western Sydney Community Forum

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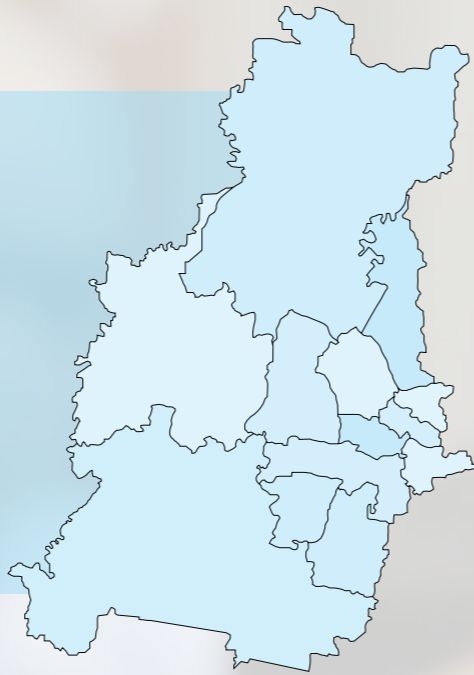
Western Sydney 2036

Building a Better Future

A Choice while Ageing

Western Sydney Community Forum is the regional social development council that leads and shapes social policy and service delivery to foster and sustain thriving and inclusive communities. It stands for close to 2.4 million people and a community services industry that invests over 2.7 billion dollars each year in the Western Sydney regional economy.

2.4 million people
\$2.7 billion community services industry

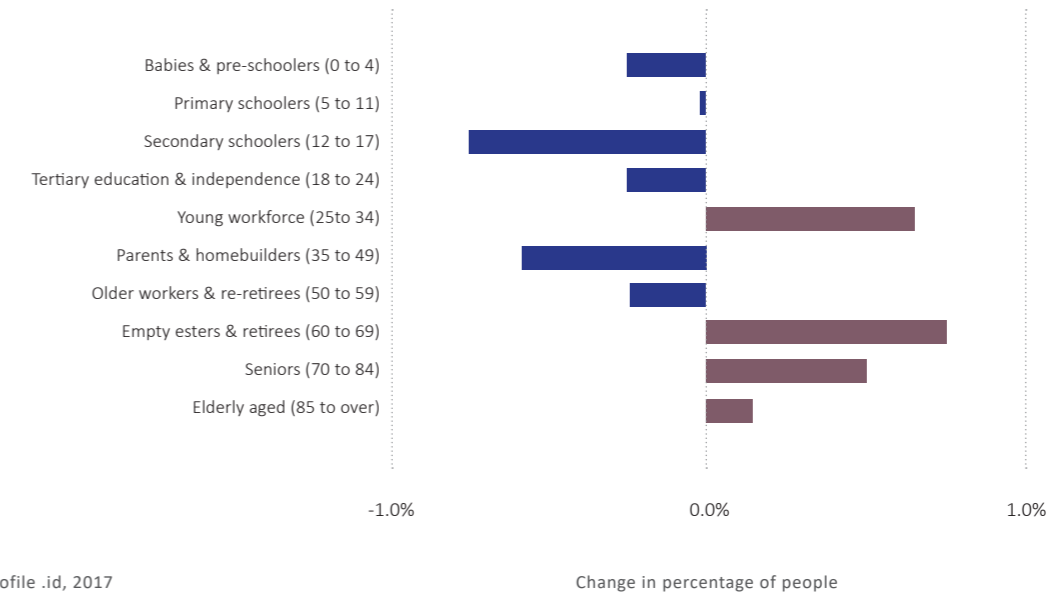


A CHOICE WHILE AGEING

Recommendations

- \$1.25 million over five years to drive collaborative service planning and development that addresses the growing demand for aged care services in Western Sydney
- \$300,000 learning and development fund over three years to embed wellness and reablement approaches across the service industry in Western Sydney
- \$3 million participation fund over five years to grow opportunities for older people to connect face-to-face and digitally with their communities, local activities and services
- \$500,000 over two years to co-design strategies with consumers and the community care sector in Western Sydney to address barriers that constrain access and choice for consumers, particularly for special needs groups

Change in age structure – 2011 to 2016



Source: profile .id, 2017

‘This is particularly relevant to an area like Western Sydney where important cultural and socio-economic considerations can impact access.’

Western Sydney’s ageing population will affect the future of Sydney as a whole. Home to approximately half of the Greater Sydney population, and with an expected average growth rate over the next 20 years of 2.4 per cent; the need to plan for the opportunities available for older people has become increasingly important.

In Western Sydney, the aged population is projected to grow by 2 per cent per annum compared to 1.2 per cent for NSW for the period 2011 to 2021, including a 40 per cent increase in people aged over 65. South Western Sydney is expected to have the highest population growth in the 70 – 84 year old cohort, making their health needs a priority.

The transition to a consumer directed model of care for older people has been challenging for both consumers and providers. The My Aged Care platform provides a gateway to services and it is vital that consumers can locate and navigate this platform to access services. It is also critical that providers receive adequate referrals that match service availability. This is particularly relevant to an area like Western Sydney where important cultural and socio-economic considerations can impact access. To support the transition to consumer directed care, a comprehensive strategy needs to be developed to maximise opportunities for older people to remain in their homes for as long as possible.

This growing and diverse population highlights the need for an adequately trained and resourced workforce. The aged care sector is rapidly changing, and the industry is facing significant challenges with a continuing loss of staff, eroding the carer to client ratios in nursing homes and home care, with consequences for the quality of life of older people and their capacity to participate. Adequate investment is required to build and sustain a labour force to meet the needs of a growing and ageing population.

Collectively, government currently funds 112 services for every 1,000 Australians aged over 70 years. For some this means being placed on a long waiting list, while for others it results in inadequate levels of care. Most Australians report they would rather age in their homes than move into a residential care facility. Much of the investment however goes to supporting people living in residential care. It is less disruptive and more cost efficient for people to remain in their homes where possible, with wellness and reablement approaches being vital to improve older people’s independence and quality of life.

A commitment to greater government, not-for-profit and private investment in the region is necessary to keep pace with the expected growth in the number of older people and to ensure a level of service to meet the demands of an ageing population and improve participation and inclusion within the community.