

The Allied Health Assistant Workforce in Victoria



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Health Workforce

Key Challenges

- **Factors influencing workforce demand**
 - Increasing service demand
 - Changing technology and evolving models of care
 - Increasing client complexity
- **Factors impacting workforce supply**
 - Changing workforce demographics
 - Changing working patterns and mobility
 - Shrinking pool of workforce entrants

Situation Analysis

Victoria in Future 2008

- Between 2006 and 2036 the number of people in Victoria:
 - Aged **less than 15** years will increase by **250,000**
 - Aged **15-24** years will increase by **160,000**
 - Aged **25-34** years will increase by **212,000**
 - Aged **35-64** years will increase by **735,000**
 - Aged **65 and over** will increase by **910,000**

National Health Workforce Strategic Framework

- Increase workforce **supply**
- Improve workforce **distribution**
- Create **attractive workplaces**
- **Cohesive** action between stakeholders
- **Optimal use** of workforce skills
- **Evidence-based** policy and planning

Supply and Distribution

Allied Health Recruitment and Retention Initiatives:

- Rural scholarship support
- Locum support
- Professional support (CPD and Mentoring)
- Building regional capacity and coordination for allied health workforce recruitment and retention.

Workforce Redesign

Better Skills Best Care (BSBC)

Workforce Redesign: ensure that the knowledge, skills sets and workforce structures necessary to provide high quality care in the most efficient way are available and used effectively.

Workforce Restructure: provide the most effective structure and associated processes to maximize service and program effectiveness.

Workforce Planning: raise the profile of partnerships across sectors, vocational groups and organisations and promote a workforce planning approach which is integrated with service and financial planning and focus's on medium and longer term strategic planning as well as short term issue resolution.

Better Skills Best Care

Better Skills Best Care

- **Stage 1** Individual role pilots
- **Stage 2** Service-wide projects
- **Stage 3** Projects
- **Stage 4** Projects

New and Amended Roles involving and supporting Allied Health Professionals

- Advanced practice physiotherapists in outpatient orthopaedic surgery clinics
- Initiatives to share skills between allied health disciplines to improve access
- Eg. Speech and Dietetics (swallowing, screening and intervention)
- Fibreoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) Service

Better Skills Best Care – Stage 1

- Piloted 36 role-specific projects to examine locally based opportunities for workforce innovation in 2005-06
- Pilots involved the introduction of support and professional roles in a variety of settings
- The Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance (Cert IV in AHA) was introduced into the Health Training Package in 2007.

Environmental Scan – Barriers

- **Rural Specific Factors**
 - Staffing shortages
 - Required to travel long distances to attend training
 - Lack of critical mass of learners
 - Shortage of allied health professionals
 - Not enough work available to support a full EFT AHA position
- **Metropolitan Specific Factors**
 - Clinical placement programs already saturated
- **Common Factors**
 - Limited understanding of VET sector
 - Perception that training is driven by training sector alone
 - Limited EFT available inside current staffing establishments and budget to support Grade 2 and Grade 3 AHAs.

Statewide Rollout of Support Roles

- **Workforce Redesign Roadshow** that emphasised the importance of assistant workforce models that maximise the use of the current professional and support health workforce and sought to empower Health and Community Services to negotiate training that meets local needs.
- **Partnership Grants** to support the development and delivery of the Cert IV in AHA and resources to support training and AHA clinical placements
- **Training Grants** to facilitate the uptake of the Cert IV in AHA training
- **Mentoring Grants**
- **Allied Health Assistant Scoping Project**

AHA Scoping Project

Aimed to:

- Ascertain the current use and practices of AHA in a sample of Victorian health and community services
- Identify the current supply and future demand of AHAs within the sample,
- Examine barriers to using AHA within health and community services
- Uncover ways in which AHA roles can be supported and enhanced.

AHA Scoping Project – Key Findings

Projected Demand for AHA by discipline:

- Physiotherapy
- Multidisciplinary
- Occupational Therapy
- Podiatry

Projected Demand for AHA by setting:

- Community Health
- Rehabilitation
- Aged Care
- Acute

AHA Scoping Project – Barriers and Strategies

- Education
- Recruitment and Retention
- Professional
- Developmental

Current Work

- **Barwon Health:** Developed a framework to support the development of industry relevant training for Cert IV in AHA
- **Melbourne Health:** Developed a Cert IV in AHA workplace training resource to support AHP taking on Cert IV in AHA Clinical Placements
- **Alfred Health & Central Gippsland Health Service:** Piloting a decision making matrix which assists AHP with delegation decision making

Future Work

Future Work