

5 talent challenges in aged care



By 2050, 22% of the world's population (or 2.1 billion people) will be aged over 60, an increase from 12% in 2015. The number of persons aged over 80 is expected to triple by that date. With the world's population ageing, demand for aged care services will escalate.

In countless ways, the repercussions of COVID-19 are still being felt. Many workers left the industry, burnt out, never to return. In addition, poor pay and conditions, a high regulatory burden and the pressure of maintaining compliance standards are taking a toll on both providers and workers.

With the existing workforce in this sector already stretched, providers will need to revisit the foundations of talent attraction, engagement and retention.

Governments and aged care providers are having to think outside the square to cope. Some experts suggest the only way forward to attract and retain workers is a multi-pronged approach including a mix of migration, upskilling local workforces and incentivising workers to join the sector.

Here are 5 key people-related challenges facing aged care providers, and how HR technology can help.

1. Talent shortages

Population ageing has outpaced growth in the supply of aged care workers in three-quarters of OECD countries.¹ To attract talent from adjacent industries and widen the pipeline of new recruits entering the sector, employers should aim to create a compelling employee value proposition (EVP). A positive, supportive culture that prioritises high-quality care will resonate with many workers in the sector, who are often motivated by altruistic reasons.

Research shows:



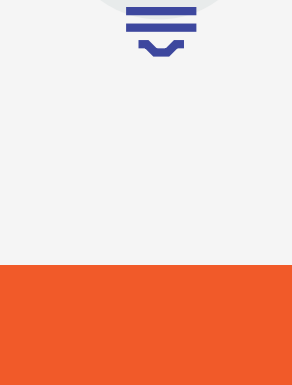
48%

of long-term care and home care workers reported staffing to be their top concern, while 73% said that inadequate staffing had an impact on their ability to deliver high-quality care.²



US\$2,500

– that's the conservative estimate of the direct cost of turnover per elderly care worker in the US. Indirect costs might include training new hires and overtime for existing staff.³



A brilliant employee experience (EX) starts with effective onboarding. Humanforce [Onboarding & Offboarding](#) enables managers to create customisable onboarding workflows based on each employee's role, department and location. Digital preboarding can also get new hires up to speed quickly.

2. Employee health and wellbeing

Aged care roles are demanding, with work often physically and emotionally draining. Poor workplace design and working conditions can further hamper the ability of workers to fulfil their duties, while ongoing talent shortages add to the burden for existing employees. Opportunities exist for employers to improve communication and occupational support, and offer more autonomy, flexibility and consistency in where and when people work – leading to better work-life balance.

Research shows:



60%

of elderly care workers across OECD countries report exposure to physical risk factors at work, while 46% report the same for mental well-being risk factors.⁴



83%

of hourly workers would be more likely to stay in their current job if they had more control over their work schedules.⁵



Smart rostering and empowering staff to take more control of their work hours can play a key role in improving work-life balance and overall health and wellbeing. Humanforce's [Work App](#) enables workers to update their availability, apply for leave, check their roster (and pay), and bid on available shifts.

3. Pay and benefits

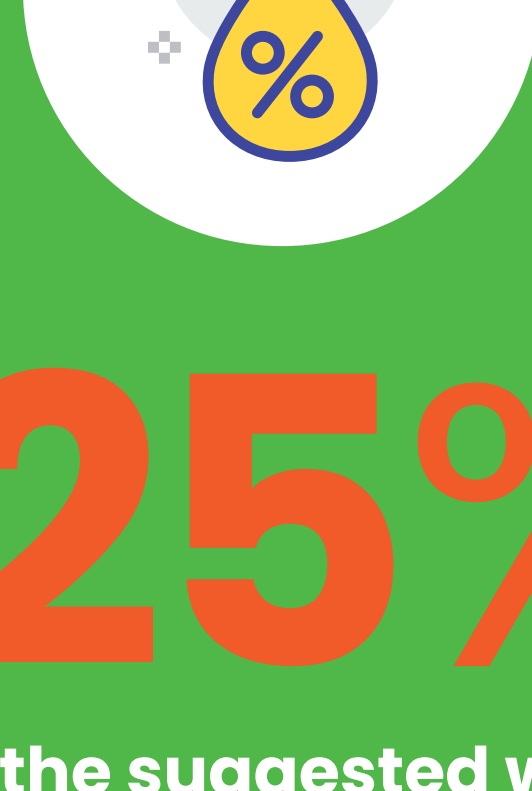
Society at large has been slow to acknowledge the critical role that aged care workers play, and this is reflected in the generally poor pay and conditions in the sector. Due to worker concerns about job and income security, it's not unusual for individuals to be employed by multiple providers. While fair and competitive pay should be considered table stakes, employers can provide other benefits such as childcare, transport subsidies, and financial and retirement planning.

Research shows:



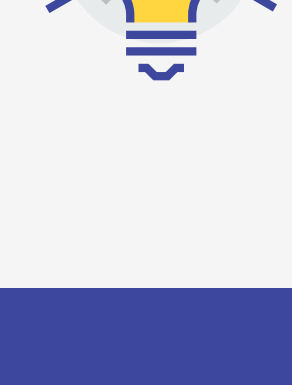
35%

– that's how much less aged care workers earn in median hourly wages than hospital workers doing the same job. Temporary contracts are common, meaning paid sick leave and health insurance benefits are not offered.⁶



25%

– that's the suggested wage rise required to attract and retain personal care workers in Australia (which would cost \$2.2 billion over four years at current staffing levels).⁷ Low pay and lack of recognition are global issues in this industry.



Humanforce's [Thrive Wellbeing](#) app offers a range of benefits and resources to boost financial literacy, stretch incomes further, and improve the overall financial wellbeing of employees. Features include earned wage access, tailored financial education, and cashback rewards on everyday purchases.*

4. Professional development

Do you know why your employees stay with you? A consistent motivator in aged care is a desire to continuously grow and learn. Whether it's mandated training and certifications, specialty education in areas such as dementia and palliative care, or improving digital and soft skills, there are proven links between professional development, provider compliance and the delivery of care. Employers can support upskilling with mentoring programs, job shadowing, and eLearning.

Research shows:



51%

of surveyed residential and aged care nurses requested to extend their role by using more of their skills or experience; 32% were denied that request. Of those denied, 23% were told it was because there was no financial benefit to their employer.⁸



32%

of surveyed nurses describe new staff as unprepared and in need of extra training/supervision to prevent risk to residents; 4% describe new staff as so unprepared that they pose a risk to residents even with extra training and supervision.⁹



In Humanforce's [Compliance Management](#) solution, CPD training can be logged and points calculated. That way both employees and managers can ensure they have completed required training by a set date. Audit-ready data exports can also be done so that leaders can track mandatory training completions. In Humanforce's [Rostering & Scheduling](#) solution, managers will not be able to roster any employee who has an expired qualification.

5. Compliance burden

HR-related compliance in aged care is more than a box ticking exercise; it can ensure society's most vulnerable people are well cared for. However, compliance comes at a price. Whether it's tracking mandatory care minutes, ensuring qualifications are up-to-date, juggling rosters, or producing reports for government authorities, the compliance burden often falls upon already-stretched frontline workers and managers.

Research shows:



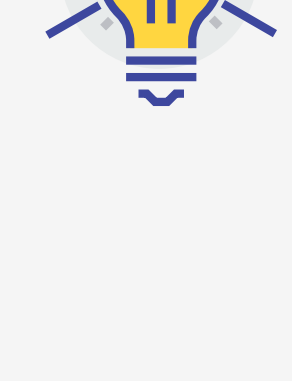
34%

of providers in the UK have difficulty collating information for regulatory bodies, while 38% say that ensuring they have the required number of staff within a setting at any given time is a challenge.¹⁰



55%

of Australian aged care workers are confused by their reporting obligations, with 38% describing their obligations as "somewhat confusing" and 17% describing them as "very confusing".¹¹



Humanforce [Workforce Analytics](#) helps site managers make better decisions with robust analytics and reporting that transforms your Humanforce data into actionable insights. This allows users to view key datapoints in real-time to ensure your organisation remains compliant with industry regulations and government legislation. Aged care providers in Australia also benefit from Humanforce's [AN-ACC Real-Time Dashboard](#), which provides real-time visibility of adherence to care minute targets, based on time rostered and time worked, and a range of other metrics.

Find out how Humanforce's HCM suite can help your aged care business engage and retain its frontline and flexible workers, while also streamlining HR operations, strengthening compliance, and providing deeper data-driven insights.

[Schedule a demo](#)

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AUS 1300 886 698
NZ 0800 005 498
UK 0800 014 8841

contactus@humanforce.com
humanforce.com

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Sources

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- See note 1
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*Thrive Wellbeing is only available to Australian Humanforce customers