



# BUILDING THE AGED CARE WORKFORCE

**Full project name:** Certificate III in Individual Support

**Project lead:** Chisholm Institute

**Stakeholders:** Various aged care providers

**Delivery location:** Wonthaggi

## SPIRALLING DEMAND – THE CONTEXT

There is a shortage of workers at more than half of Australian aged care homes, according to a 2017 federal government report. Shifting demographics are expected to make the situation still more urgent in the coming years. Chisholm Institute consulted its industry partners in the sector in the Bass Coast region and found they have an immediate need for young, skilled recruits, because a big proportion of their workers are nearing retirement age.

## TARGETING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS – THE SOLUTION

A recurring theme of Chisholm's industry consultation was the need for aged care homes to hire and retain local workers. Chisholm wanted to target school leavers, mature students, parents returning to work, people with disabilities and people looking to change careers.

Chisholm aimed to provide a launching pad for students' careers with revamped delivery of the Certificate III in Individual Support, the mandatory entry-level requirement for such roles.

To support this, it successfully applied for up to \$116,000 from the Regional and Specialist Training Fund. This included a higher subsidy to ensure quality delivery and \$40,000 in grant funding to pay for equipment and resources to help promote the course and retain students.



## A CLEAR PATH – THE OUTCOMES

The first cohort started in a freshly refurbished part of Chisholm's Wonthaggi campus in mid-2018. Ten students completed that initial program, and six of them have validated employment in the industry, while two others have requested references to help them secure jobs.

One of the students has moved on to commence a Certificate IV in Leisure and Health and will work in the industry as she studies part time.

Further marketing and student recruitment activity led to a new intake of students in 2019, with 11 students completing their placement to meet the full requirements for the qualification.

Teacher Gayle Van Seters says some of those on placement are being guided by 2018 graduates and she is optimistic that the success of the project will snowball in the coming years.

## **“I’VE GOT THREE ON PLACEMENT AND IF THEY APPLY, I’LL GIVE THEM ALL JOBS”**

### **Employer case study: Rosemary Pace**

The general shortage of aged care workers is felt particularly keenly on Philip Island, where Rosemary Pace is the residential manager at Grossard Court, an 80-bed assisted living facility in Cowes.

*“I’m interviewing every second week on average,” she says. “It’s a demanding role. Some staff move on to home care, we’ve got an ageing workforce, and we get fewer staff from overseas than we used to.”*

*The high-quality graduates coming through the Certificate III at Chisholm are starting to ease the strain.*

*“Thanks to this course, we’re getting younger workers coming through,” she says. “Chisholm runs a very good course, you can see that students have that skill, they’ve got that background in areas such as manual handling.*

*“You can see by the students that it’s a good course, they come here with a good understanding of aged care and it’s clear they want to be here. I’ve got three on placement and if they apply, I’ll give them all jobs.”*

The Regional and Specialist Training Fund is a targeted *Skills First* funding stream that supports training for specific skills in regional and specialist areas that are not being met by the current training market. Training providers who hold a current *Skills First* VET funding contract are eligible to apply for higher subsidies and one-off grant payments for selected courses in specific regions to meet local industry demand or specialised occupations. Funding will be considered where there is a strong connection between industry, training and job outcomes.

To find out more visit:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/funding/Pages/rstf.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/providers/funding/Pages/rstf.aspx)

or email the RSTF team at:

[rstf@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:rstf@edumail.vic.gov.au)

## **“IT’S NICE FOR TEACHERS TO HAVE FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE”**

### **Student case study: Emma Perry-Bolt**



Emma Perry-Bolt wanted to emulate her mum and work in aged care for a long time but there was a problem: tuition fees.

*“With two young children, a five-year-old and an eight-year-old, I’ve never been able to afford it,” she says.*

But the Free TAFE initiative changed that, and after Emma started the course at Chisholm in February, she “really enjoyed it”.

She lives on Philip Island, half an hour from the campus, and because she was going there three days a week, she could combine work and study without having to pay for extra childcare.

Ms Perry-Bolt says her enjoyment of the course has made her enthusiastic about education and she plans more study in the future to develop her career.

*“The course was fantastic, the teachers were very knowledgeable,” she says. “They’d both worked in the industry so they could add little inputs. It’s nice for teachers to have that first-hand experience.”*

*She got the placement she wanted at Grossard Court. She is still working there and is likely to take on full-time hours in the coming months.*

*“A lot of nurses who worked with my mum still work there and I’d heard good things about it,” she says. “I work in high-needs care which I’ve enjoyed, it has the benefit that you’re working with a partner, which is nice if you’re unsure of anything.”*

*“I like that everyone works as a team, and I like putting a smile on the residents’ faces.”*