



## **JOBS IN CARE SECTOR CAN DRIVE COVID ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

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A new Catholic Social Services Australia report says bolstering the under-resourced disability, aged care and social services workforces could hold the key to Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The national peak body for Catholic social service agencies today published *Strong Economy, Stronger Australia – Building Our Prosperity to Serve the Common Good*. The report outlines the detrimental effects of the pandemic, including those felt by some of the country's most vulnerable workers, and offers a series of strategies to support a person-centred economy.

Among the recommendations of the report is the delivery of job within the care sector.

"The aged care and disability sectors support some of Australia's most vulnerable people, but there are significant concerns about the capacity of those sectors to support all those who need that support," CSSA chief executive officer Ursula Stephens said.

"The interim report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has underlined some of the key challenges that sector faces, including in attracting and training staff, and those aren't unique to aged care."

CSSA's report notes that with many of the workforce issues common across community health, aged care and disability organisations, there is an opportunity for focused initiatives to have widespread benefits.

"The Government must look at how targeted investment in training and skills development, as well as more favourable employment conditions, can boost the care sector while also boosting the economy."

Among the report's other key recommendations are reform of Australia's welfare system, including the establishment of an independent expert panel to advise on the adequacy of welfare payments.

CSSA has also called for an extension of the current Coronavirus Supplement to continue until at least mid-year, which will allow those supported by the social security systems to live with dignity.

Dr Stephens said the report pulls together a number of key statistical data to demonstrate the failings of the Australian economy before the COVID-19 pandemic, including underemployment, instability of work, slow wages growth and some immoral behaviour by employers.

"Many people are speaking of a 'bounceback', but we are focused on seeing our country continue to emerge from the pandemic in a way that delivers better outcomes for all Australians," Dr Stephens said.

"Our nation has experienced a sense of solidarity and togetherness in fighting a serious health battle over the past 12 months. The economic recovery should be a challenge we tackle as a nation as well, in pursuit of the common good."

Download the full *Strong Economy, Stronger Australia* report at [www.cssa.org.au](http://www.cssa.org.au)

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