

Recruiting high quality aged care workers

The recruitment process can be long and overwhelming, but don't let that get in the way of finding the right person.

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Aged care workers play a critical role in the care experienced for older citizens, so finding the right employee is imperative. The following are some tips on how to attract the ideal candidate and what to look for in a potential employee.

Attracting applicants

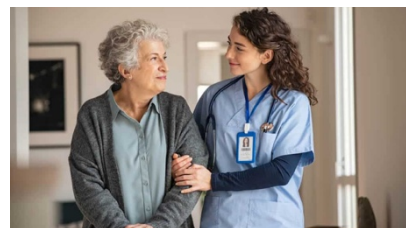
The backbone of a successful aged care facility with a high standard of care is having high quality, passionate staff. The challenge many facilities are facing is where to find such candidates. One way to optimize the potential to find the right fit for your facility is to align yourself with a training provider. There are three main recruitment approaches that could result in excellent outcomes through this partnership:

1. Aligning your facility with a training provider may allow you to gain access to recent graduates who are suitably qualified and eager to start in the industry.
2. Offering traineeship programs through the training provider has various benefits for both the trainee and employer. The trainee will have the opportunity to earn as they learn the practical hands-on skills required to work in aged care while the employer will increase staff ratios, train prospective employees to the standards and culture of the facility and observe if the trainee would be a good fit before going through the formal recruitment process.
3. Becoming a practical placement provider can also increase the level of care your facility offers by increasing staff numbers while helping to educate the future of the sector at the same time. This can also be another great way to discover potential employees to permanently join your team.

Once you have implemented one or perhaps all these processes with the goal to find suitable candidates for long term employment, it is important to remember what it is that will make an exceptional member to your staff.

Quality and skills

Regardless of the method used to find an applicant, it is useful to know what quality and skills you are looking for to make the right recruitment choices.



Soft skills are highly regarded in the aged care sector and any new job applicant should be able to demonstrate that they possess these skills. Examples of soft skills include patience, compassion, empathy, communication, emotional intelligence and problem-solving. There are various soft skills that make an applicant more suitable to an aged carer's role, so selecting and outlining which are of the highest value for your facility could help save time in the recruitment process.

Soft skills are often characteristic of those who are particularly interested in caring for others. The possession of these skills is part of what makes an exceptional aged care worker and will in turn improve the overall level of care that your facility provides.

While formal education is important when considering prospective employees, some educational gaps are not necessarily problematic when on the job training can be provided. In fact, an advantage for an applicant who has had extensive formal training is to also have had practical hands-on experience where theory was applied to real life situations.

Aligning values

Each aged care facility will have its unique values and it's important to find employees who can align themselves with the values of your facility. Often people are attracted to caring for others for altruistic reasons, so outlining the morals and values that your facility holds in high regard may assist in finding the right candidate. Employment in a rewarding role and in an environment that reflects your morals and values will contribute to staff wanting to remain in the position long term.

Elderly residents and staff in aged care are often from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. To provide the highest most comprehensive care for an increasingly diverse population, it's crucial to consider the applicant's ability to ensure every individual is treated with dignity and respect, and their identity, culture and diversity is valued.

Members of staff with practical capacities, compassion and understanding will support your facility to become more culturally competent and it will consequently meet the needs of the residents and staff more holistically.

Dispelling myths

The range of misconceptions about working in aged care propagated by the media are well-known myths that have led to negative views of the industry and have contributed to shortage of aged care workers. These inaccurate descriptions ignore the positive influence aged care workers have on the lives of elderly people who are unable to live on their own. Staff in aged care communities often find it an extremely rewarding career, one that is not limited to personal care of the elderly but includes undertaking advanced care and treatment such as rehabilitation, mental health support, and activity management.



Addressing these more realistic points in an interview and communicating the important and positive aspects of working in aged care can alleviate an applicant's concerns, especially for those just entering the field. This is a good opportunity to highlight the supportive culture that your facility fosters for the health and wellbeing of the staff.

Finding the right person to join your aged care team may be time consuming, but taking the right steps is important. By aligning your facility with a training provider to attract job seekers and having a clear idea of what you will look for in a candidate are important parts

of the process. Following these ideas may save you both time and money in attracting and hiring the right person for the job.