

Actions the next government must take to strengthen the home and community health services sector (service providers, workers we employ, clients we serve) so we can deliver the care clients need, when they need it, removing variations in equity of access, experience of care, and the quality of service delivery.

Home and community health service providers deliver essential support for the elderly and other vulnerable clients every day across Aotearoa.

This workforce provides care that enables over 100,000 people to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible, in their own homes and communities.

The sustainability and quality of this essential home and community service is under threat and action is needed to ensure continued services for generations to come.

Key Message

1

Recognise the essential care and support we provide across Aotearoa



We are the workforce in people's homes every day. Our people are our greatest asset, and an integral and important part of the health and disability system. We are an essential workforce, and need to be recognised and valued as such.

Key Message

3

Act to ensure long term sustainability of the sector



Establishing a long-term approach to Commissioning, nationally consistent service specifications and a quality and improvement framework will support high standards of care, and increased sustainability of the sector.

Key Message

2

Enable services to meet the complex and varied needs of the clients we serve



Sustained investment is needed to implement better systems and data that informs workforce planning, service design and delivery, client experience of care and outcomes, through a te ao Māori framework and cycle of continuous improvement.

Key Message

4

Invest to recruit, retain and develop our workforce



We need support to help attract and retain new and also younger people into the sector, to increase the diversity of our workforce, profile career pathways, and continue to strengthen the national qualification structure.

Lack of comprehensive workforce data, and analytical commentary is an impediment to effective workforce planning, and will continue to inhibit the sector to meet the changing demands on our workforce and the physical and cultural needs of our clients. It is essential our home and community care providers have better systems and technology. To drive the development of a coherent national workforce dataset, a shared responsibility for ongoing investment and development is needed to ensure improved data and information for the sector and for funders, and to ensure te ao Maori concepts is a central focus to informing delivery of high quality care for the clients and the whānau we serve.

Ongoing, open and transparent dialogue is needed to agree a way forward and to co-design a long-term commissioning approach for a more integrated service and costing model. Establishing consistent and standardised service specifications, shared goals, outcomes, measures and data, aligned to a te ao Māori framework, will maximise governance, benchmarking and inform cultural safety and ongoing quality improvement. A quality and improvement framework, to complement Ngā Paerewa Health and Disability Services Standard, will ensure high quality care that is achievable and balanced with managing costs. This will ensure the sustainability of the sector and improved equitable access, experience of care and outcomes for our clients.

National effort must be given to valuing this sector, concluding pay equity and pay parity initiatives, profiling career pathways and strengthening the importance of the national qualification structure. Attracting and retaining a more diverse, culturally aware workforce is particularly important from a whānau voice perspective. With appropriate training and development our workforce can help to identify changes in health needs of the client and whānau from a Te Whare Tapa Wha perspective.