

Markets, Migration & the Work of Care



FACT SHEET 3: Aged and Disabled Carers

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This fact sheet draws on data from the 2016 Census. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of aged and disabled carers in Australia increased from 106,101 to 129,343. Most aged and disabled carers are female. They are also more likely to be older, born overseas or identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). Aged and disabled carers work fewer hours and have a lower median income than the average worker.

Demographics

Gender

Aged and disabled care is a feminised occupation. 80.1% of Australia's aged and disabled carers are female, whereas women make up 47.5% of the total Australian workforce.

Age

Aged and disabled carers are typically older than the rest of Australia's workforce (Figure 1). The median age for aged and disabled carers is 47 years compared to 40 years for the general workforce.

Indigenous Workers

A higher proportion of the aged and disabled care workforce identify as ATSI (2.6%) compared to the total workforce (1.7%).

Overseas Born

37% of aged and disabled carers were born overseas, compared to 30.6% within the total Australian workforce (Figure 2). Further, 26.4% of aged and disabled carers were born in non-main English-speaking countries, compared to 20.1% across the total workforce. The top ten countries of birth for those born overseas are: England, India, the Philippines, New Zealand, Nepal, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Kenya.

Who are Australia's Aged and Disabled Carers?

ABS Occupational Definitions (ABS 2018)

Aged and disabled carers provide general household assistance, emotional support, care and companionship for aged and disabled persons in their own homes.

Tasks include:

- Accompanying aged and disabled persons during daily activities;
- Assisting clients with their mobility; preparing food for clients;
- Arranging social activities;
- Performing housekeeping tasks such as vacuuming and cleaning;
- Assisting in personal hygiene and dressing;
- Providing companionship, friendship and emotional support.

Figure 1: Age of Aged and Disabled Carers and Total Workforce, 2016

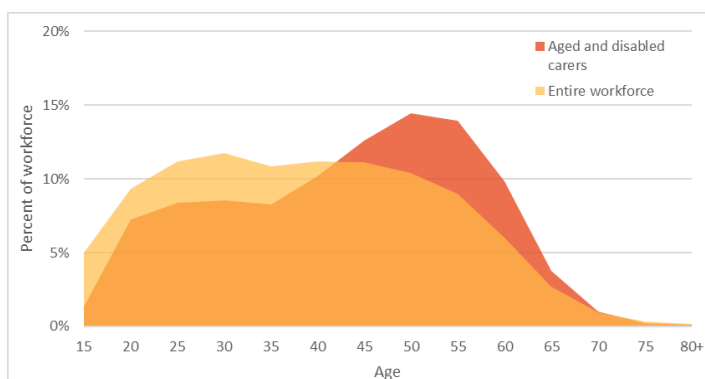
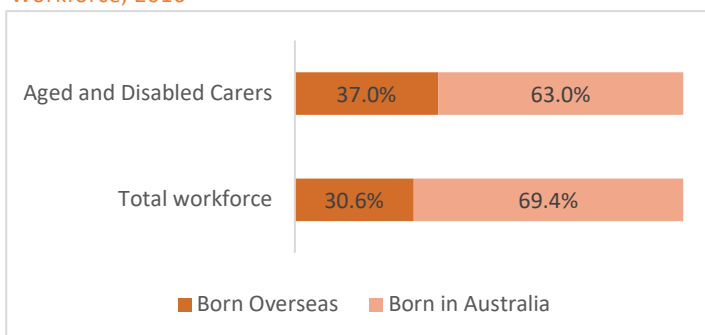


Figure 2: Location of Birth, Aged and Disabled Carers and Total Workforce, 2016

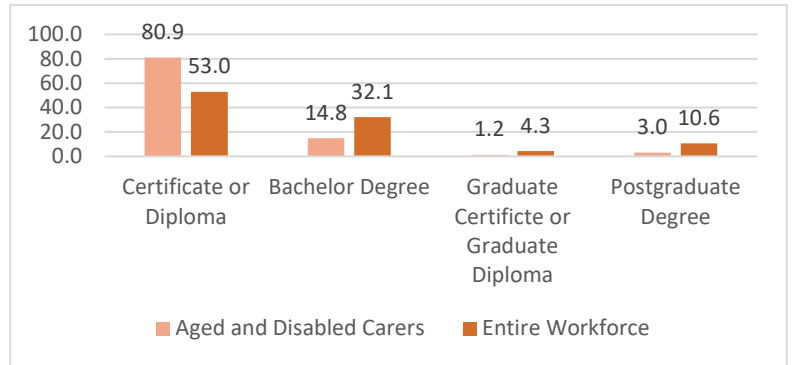


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Education

A high proportion of aged and disabled carers have vocational qualifications and are more likely than other Australian workers to hold a certificate or diploma, but less likely to hold a bachelor degree, a graduate certificate or diploma, or a postgraduate degree (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Post-School Qualifications of Aged and Disabled Carers vs the Total Workforce, 2016

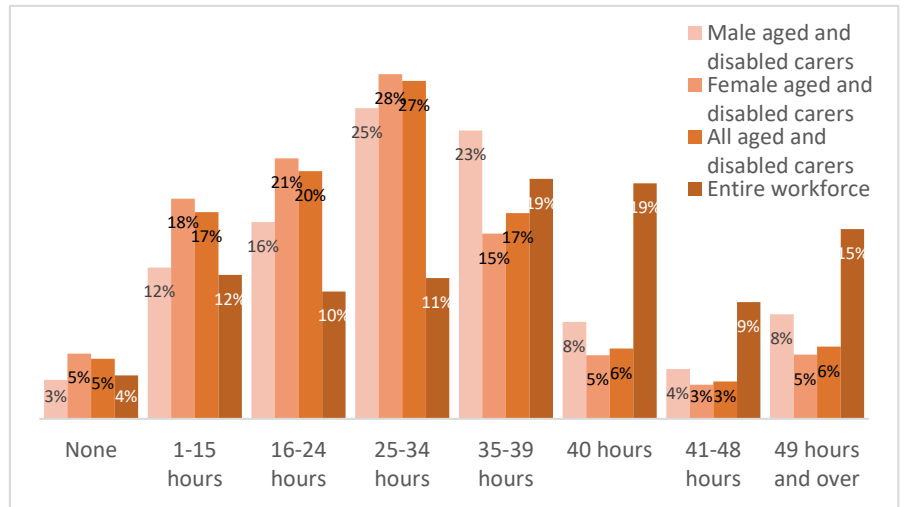


Employment and Income Characteristics

Part-Time Work

Two thirds of aged and disabled carers work part-time (67.3%); almost double the percentage of part-time workers in the total workforce (34.5%). More female (70.4%) aged and disabled carers are part-time than males (55.0%). Aged and disabled carers are most likely to be working between 25-34 hours a week.

Figure 4: Hours Worked in All Jobs during Previous Week, Aged and Disabled Carers and Total Workforce, 2016



Working Hours

Figure 4 shows hours worked by male and female aged and disabled carers compared to the total workforce. A far higher proportion of aged and disabled carers work very short part-time weekly hours (1-15 hours) compared to the total workforce (17% vs 12%). Female aged and disabled carers are more likely than male aged and disabled carers to work very short part-time hours (18% vs 12%). Aged and disabled carers are also much more likely to work short part-time hours (16-24 hours) than is the case for the total workforce (20% vs 10%).

Income

Aged and disabled carers report lower incomes than the total workforce (Figure 5), with a median income category of \$500-649 per week (\$26,000-\$33,799 annually) compared to a median income of \$1,000-\$1,249 per week (\$52,000-\$64,000 annually) for the total workforce. Female aged and disabled carers have a lower median income than their male peers, reflecting the higher proportion of females working fewer hours. The median income for male aged and disabled carers is \$800-\$999 per week (\$41,000-\$51,999 annually) whereas for females it is \$500-\$649 per week (\$26,000-\$33,799 annually).

Figure 5: Weekly Income, Aged and Disabled Carers and Total Workforce, 2016

