



SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL JOBS COMMITTEE



SUNSHINE COAST
HEALTH
SKILLS FORUM
RESULTS

4 February 2026, 7:30am to 9:30am
Sunshine Coast Health Institute, Birtinya

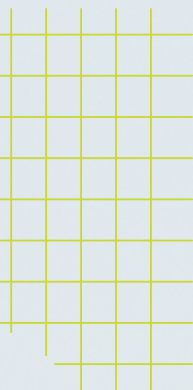
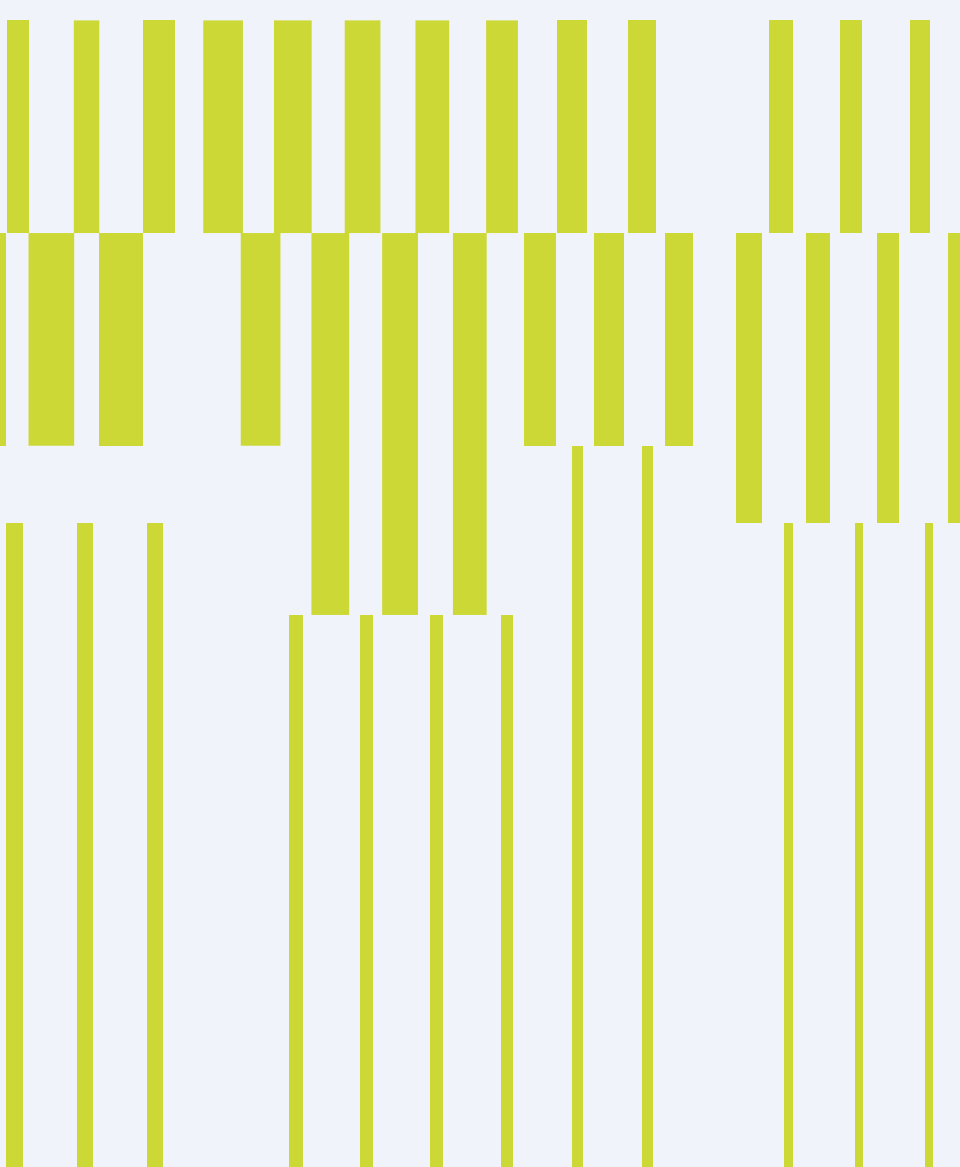




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Executive Summary

Common themes across all sectors, common themes emerged: workforce attraction and retention pressures, limited training pathway clarity, increasing demand driven by population growth and ageing, and the need for stronger industry–education alignment. While each sector faces distinct workforce dynamics, the system-wide message was clear—targeted, coordinated workforce development strategies are urgently required.

Clinical Sector

- Barriers to workforce participation include qualification complexity, placement capacity constraints, burnout, and limited regional attraction.
- Current and future skills gaps are emerging in specialised clinical roles and supervisory capacity.
- Transferable skills from adjacent sectors provide opportunity, but require structured bridging pathways.
- Existing training pathways are effective where clinical placement models are strong, yet constrained by supervision availability and funding.
- Stakeholders identified the need for clearer career progression frameworks and enhanced regional training pipelines.

Health Support Sector

- Participation barriers include low wage perception, limited career awareness, and competition from other industries.
- Immediate and projected skills gaps exist in foundational health support roles critical to service delivery.
- Strong potential exists to attract workers with transferable customer service, logistics, and administrative skills.
- Training pathways are available but often fragmented, with unclear progression routes.
- Solutions focus on career mapping, micro-credentialing, and improving sector perception

Allied Health Sector

- Workforce shortages are evident across multiple disciplines, particularly in regional and community-based roles.
- Skills gaps include both technical capability and soft skills such as interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Transferability from adjacent sectors offers recruitment potential but requires recognition frameworks.
- Training works well where industry partnerships are embedded; however, placement shortages and supervision pressures persist.
- Stakeholders called for improved pathway visibility and stronger local training pipelines.

Aged-Care Sector

- Strongly emphasised barriers include workforce perception challenges, emotional demands of care work, compliance burden, and remuneration constraints.
- Significant current skills gaps exist in personal care, leadership, and specialised care roles, with demand projected to accelerate.
- Transferable skills from hospitality, community services, and disability sectors represent opportunity.
- Training challenges include variability in quality, limited work readiness, and insufficient practical exposure.
- Priority solutions include improved career messaging, structured mentoring, recognition of prior learning, and stronger alignment with training and real-world practice.

Key Themes

The forum findings indicate that workforce challenges are structural rather than cyclical. Demand growth—particularly in Aged Care and Allied Health—will continue to outpace supply without coordinated intervention. Health Support and Clinical roles remain foundational to system resilience and require proactive pipeline development.

Clinical Sector

The Clinical sector is experiencing sustained workforce shortages across key professions, with projected demand growth intensifying pressure on already stretched services.

Implication: Without strengthened placement capacity, retention strategies, and clinical supervision investment, workforce gaps will widen.

Allied Health Sector

Allied Health faces increasing demand across community, disability, and preventative care settings

Implication: Sustainable growth requires coordinated planning between providers, educators, and workforce agencies to expand placement and supervision capacity.



01

Health Support Sector

The Health Support workforce underpins system functionality yet remains vulnerable to high turnover and low entry visibility.

Implication: Strengthening entry-level pathways and articulating career mobility will stabilise this essential workforce segment.

03

Aged Care Sector

Aged Care faces the most immediate and acute workforce pressures, amplified by demographic change and regulatory reform.

Implication: Immediate action is required to professionalise pathways, strengthen retention strategies, and elevate the sector's value proposition.

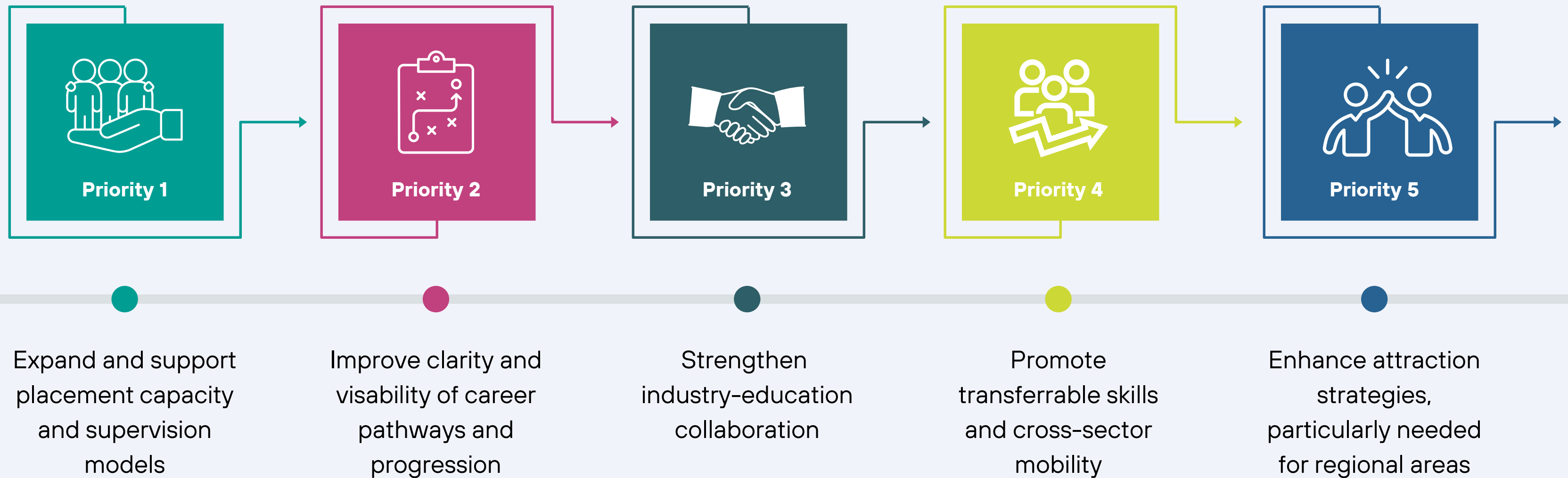
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04

Cross Sector Priorities Identified

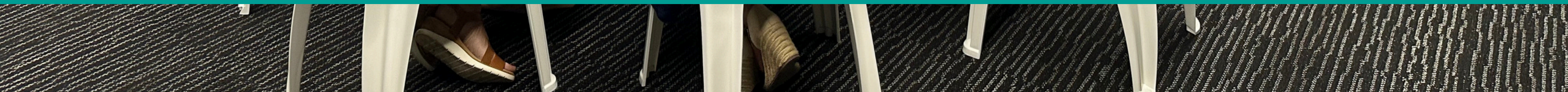
Executive Summary

Across all four sectors, stakeholders identified five system-level priorities:



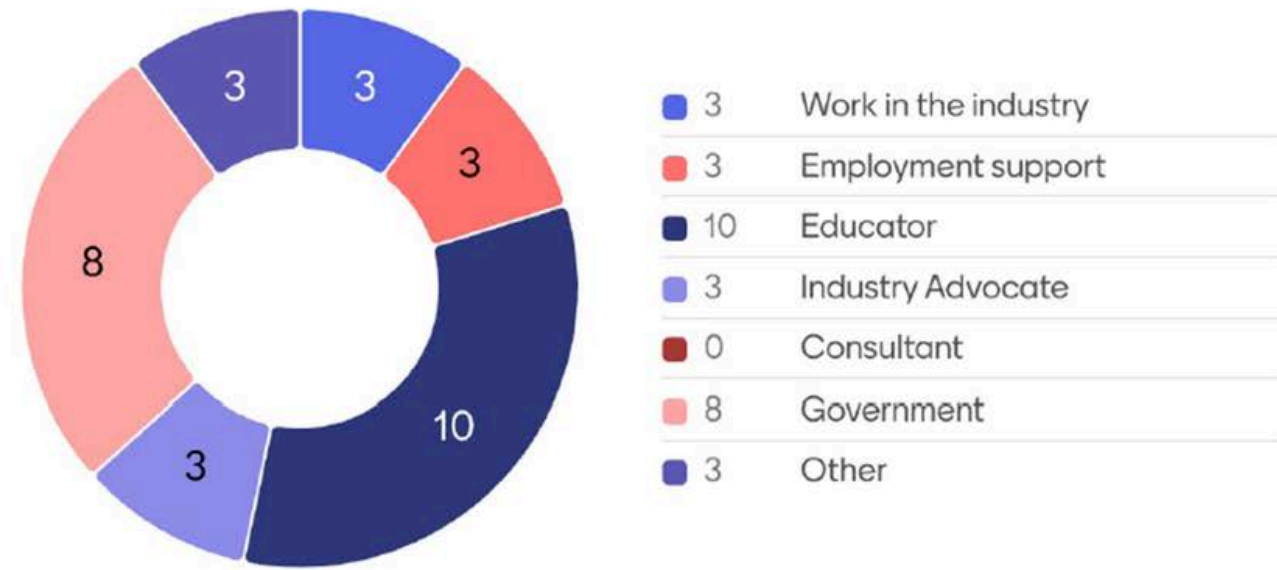


Attendee Feedback

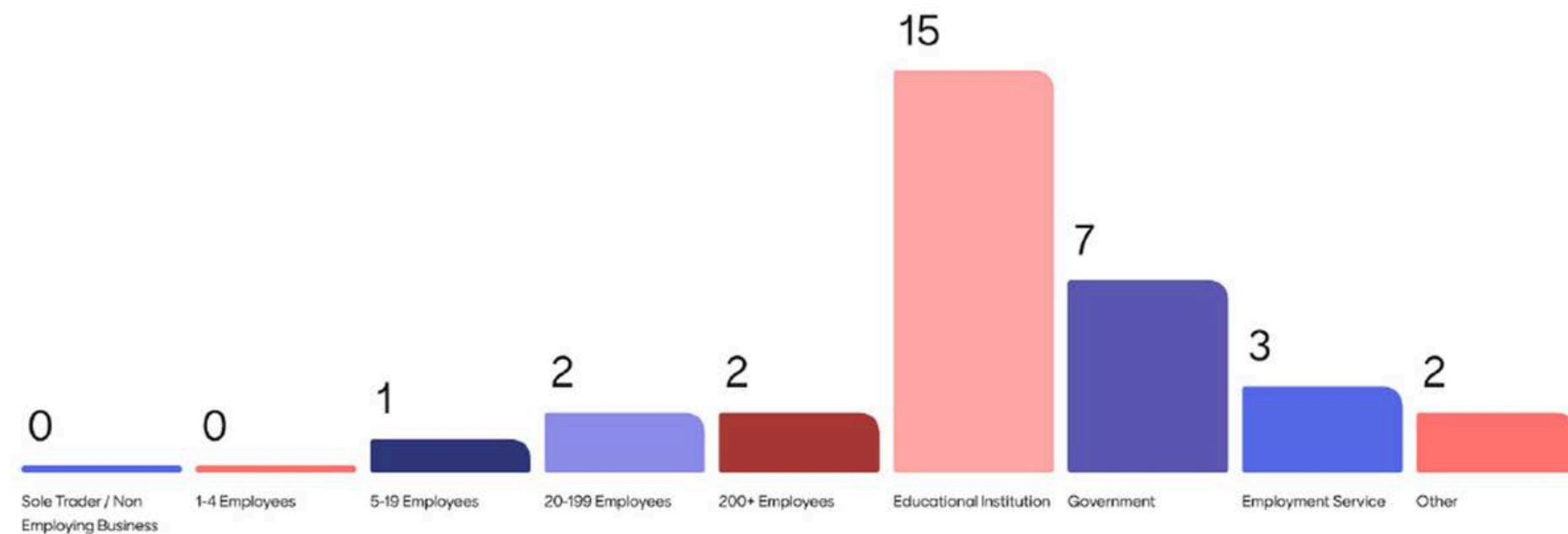


Identification

How would you identify yourself?



What type of business are you?



42 Registrations



Sector

Select the health sectors your role covers:



2 Clinical



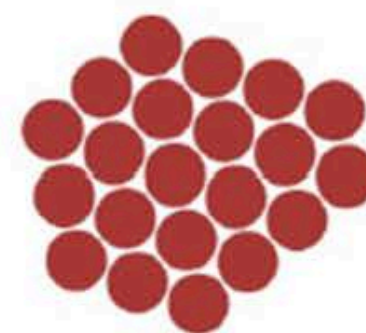
4 Health Support Worker



3 Allied Health

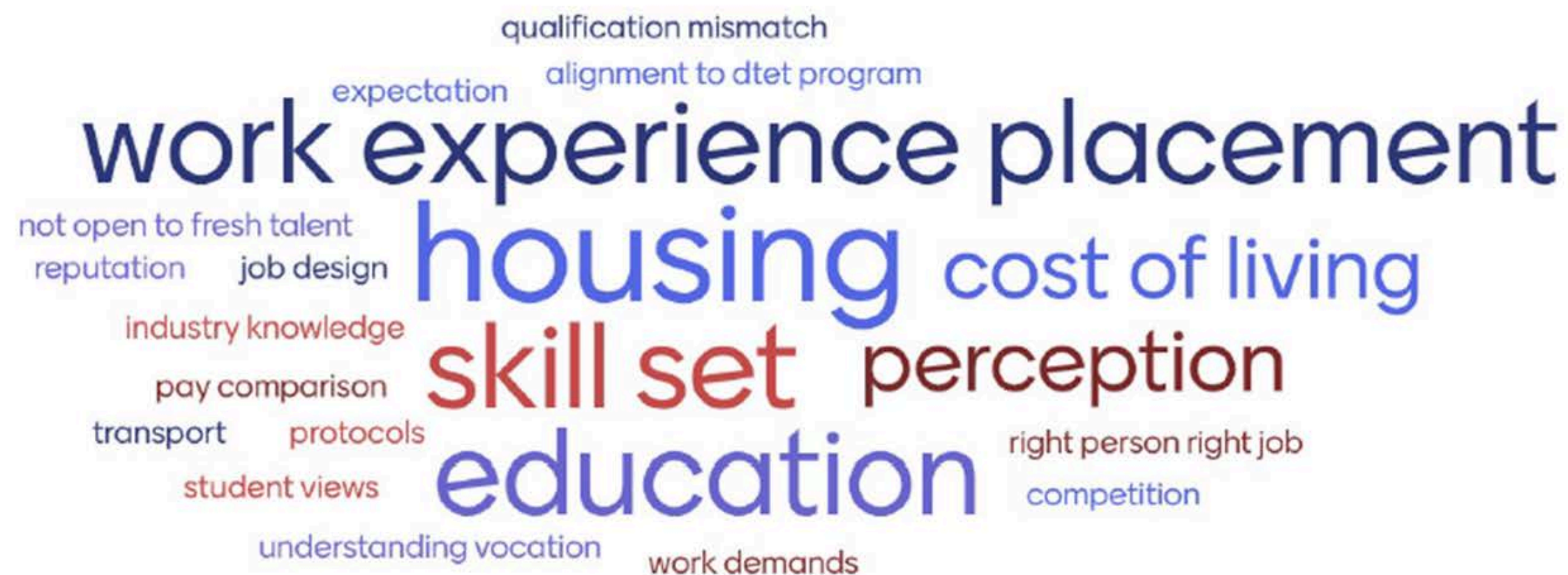


3 Aged care



21 Industry Supporter

What is the single biggest barrier you see in attracting workers to the Health/Care industry?



What skill is in demand in Health/Care but you rarely find in staff/candidates?



What is the most undervalued skill in the Health/Care industry?

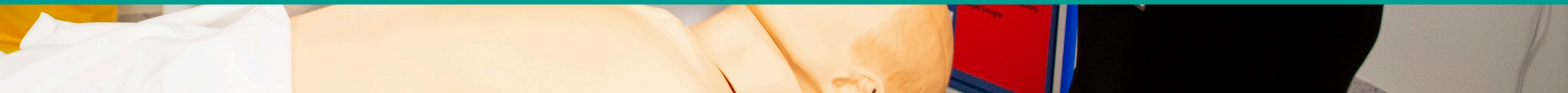


If you could wave a magic wand right now and fix one skill or workforce issue for the industry, what would it be?





Clinical Roundtable



CLINICAL BARRIERS TO WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES	MID MANAGEMENT ROLES	EXECUTIVE LEVEL ROLES
Links to curriculum	Burnout	Diversity of options
Traineeships	No training for career progression	
VET funding (limited to one course)	Money / remuneration	
Work experience access / Work placements		
Resilience		
Transport		
Education for parents / schools		
Eligibility for post-funded training		
Awareness of available pathways		
ATAR focus over personal interests		
Reduction in funded training		

CLINICAL SKILLS GAPS

CURRENT SKILLS GAPS		FUTURE SKILLS GAPS	
SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS
Resilience	Literacy and numeracy	Purpose-driven mindset	Literacy and numeracy
Lack of interest in work	Drivers licence	Work ethic	Drivers licence
Expectation v reality (social media influence)	Management skills	Work readiness	Management skills
Purpose-driven employment	Change management	Expectation v reality alignment	AI capability
Critical thinking	Technology	Creative thinking	Technology capability
Creativity	AI capability	Initiative	
Initiative			

CLINICAL SKILLS THAT TRANSFER WELL

TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS	SUITABLE SOURCE / SECTOR / WORKFORCE
Resilience	Hospitality
Capacity for physical activity	Customer Service
High-pressure tolerance	Early Childhood Care
Ability to work high-shift environments	Nursing
Critical thinking	Cert III Qualifications
Empathy	
Human-centred focus	
Education / trainability	

CLINICAL EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS & TRAINING

PATHWAYS & TRAINING THAT IS EFFECTIVE	PATHWAYS & TRAINING ISSUES
Diploma of Nursing (students have strong opportunities)	No links from Years 7 - 10 schooling
Pathways via RPL	VET funding limitations
Workplace-based SATs	School-based traineeship challenges
Paid Placements	Workplace placement availability
Sourcing vocational placements	Sourcing vocational placements
Industry immersions	Online programs lacking physical placement experience
Traineeships	Limited industry immersions
	ATAR-focused system

CLINICAL SOLUTIONS

SUGGESTED ACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding for placements (feed into DET advocacy)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocacy to State/Federal Governments on true cost of delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unified communication around available training pathways
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data sharing on sector needs + shared data systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stronger linking between industry and education (career talks, subject alignment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centralised communications



Health Support Roundtable

HEALTH SUPPORT BARRIERS TO WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES	MID MANAGEMENT ROLES	EXECUTIVE LEVEL ROLES
Understanding of commitment required	Lack of information about traineeships	Budget pressures
Course fees	Capacity constraints	Alignment with local needs
Funding constraints	Burnouts	Position creation
Transport barriers	Skills gaps	Succession planning
Lack of experience	On-the-job training gaps / lack of formal training	Acting roles / lack of decision-making ownership
Red tape	Limited relationship building with schools/pipeline	
Lack of exposure	Limited RTO capacity	
Lack of occupational awareness	Budget limitations	
Perception of the job		
Difficult application process		

HEALTH SUPPORT SKILLS GAPS

CURRENT SKILLS GAPS		FUTURE SKILLS GAPS	
SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS
Communication (human-centered, empathy)	Technology skills	Resilience	Updated qualifications (maintaining currency)
Critical thinking	AI literacy	Compassion and empathy	Applying knowledge into practice
Resilience	Automation	Communication	Non-clinical skills
Emotional intelligence	Leadership skills	Emotional intelligence	
	Administration skills		
	Microcredentials		
	Accreditation requirements		

HEALTH SUPPORT SKILLS THAT TRANSFER WELL

TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS		SUITABLE SOURCE / SECTOR / WORKFORCE
Interpersonal / Human Skills	Empathy	Social Workers / Counsellors
	Emotional intelligence	Educators
	Resilience	HR Workers / Recruitment
	Critical thinking	Government Agencies
Technical and Operational Skills	Tech skills	Disability Support Workers / NDIA
	Admin skills	Hospitality
	Non-clinical skills	Trades
Leadership Skills	Leadership skills	Business Services
		RPL Candidates / Career Change Education

HEALTH SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS & TRAINING

PATHWAYS & TRAINING THAT IS EFFECTIVE	PATHWAYS & TRAINING ISSUES
Health hubs in schools	Funding clarity and frequent changes
TAFE fee-free courses (school leavers)	Traineeships have barriers to entry
Clear gateway pathways into schools (GISP)	Pre-employment checks (incl. microcredentialing)
Programs linked to Government funding eg Deadly Start Program	Outdated training packages
	Mismatch between training and required skills
	Not enough placements
	No reserved places for local students
	Lack of employer support

HEALTH SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

SUGGESTED ACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One-on-one career guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stronger industry engagement in schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight non-typical health career pathways
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved collaboration between governments, industry and organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear qualification pathways (microcredentials, short courses)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host networking forums with all stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry specific careers fairs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater local education presence / promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow RTO capability



Allied Health Roundtable

ALLIED HEALTH BARRIERS TO WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

ENTRY-LEVEL ROLES	MID MANAGEMENT ROLES
Wages	Lack of information about traineeships
Course fees	Capacity constraints
Funding constraints	Burnouts
Transport barriers	Skills gaps
Lack of experience	On-the-job training gaps / lack of formal training
Red tape	Limited relationship building with school/pipeline
Lack of exposure	Limited RTO capacity
Lack of occupational awareness	Budget limitations
Perception of the job	Lack of flexibility (job design)
Difficult application process	Lifestyle priorities

ALLIED HEALTH SKILLS GAPS

CURRENT SKILLS GAPS		FUTURE SKILLS GAPS	
SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS
Management capability	Ethical use of technology	Resilience	Ability to utilise AI effectively while maintaining the human factor
Leadership capability	Adapting to rapid technological change	Compassion and empathy	
Communication skills	Appropriate use of AI in clinical decision-making	Human connection (as training becomes more simulated)	
		Decisiveness	
		Life skills	
		Problem-solving	

ALLIED HEALTH SKILLS THAT TRANSFER WELL

TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS	SUITABLE SOURCE / SECTOR / WORKFORCE
Resilience (gained in trades/hard labour roles)	Valuable in high-pressure clinical environments
Pre-graduated professionals	Already possess foundational technical knowledge
Certificate-level skills gained at school	Provide practical readiness for early roles
Transfer from OT / Nursing / Paramedicine	Skills adaptable across Allied Health pathways
Industry acceptance	Recognition of transferrable skills enables smoother transition into degree pathways and employment

ALLIED HEALTH EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS & TRAINING

PATHWAYS & TRAINING THAT IS EFFECTIVE	PATHWAYS & TRAINING ISSUES
Careers in health are highly valued by aspiring students	Students using degrees as stepping stones to alternate career paths
School-based traineeships (eg SHS to work in casual pool)	Placement shortages limiting progression
Built-in credentials within first-year degree	Difficult access to placements due to workforce shortages
Clear training pathways	Limited exposure to real-life healthcare environments
	Accessibility barriers to industry experience

ALLIED HEALTH SOLUTIONS

FOCUS AREAS	SUGGESTED ACTIONS
Student Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage and support students to gain early health/aged care experience as gateway to Allied Health• Better education around options and careers within the industry
University Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for holistic admission processes (not ATAR only)
Employer Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate employers on value of hosting students• Provide incentives and benefits to take placement students
Placement Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for paid placements (eg JobSeeker style payments)• Reduce red tape for employers
Workforce Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incentivise employers to invest in workforce development
Government Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for stronger Government support• If no Government support, explore adding HELP-style mechanisms for student support



Why work with us?

We always celebrate success

We empower our team to have a voice

We provide a great buddy system for team training and support

We monitor and measure performance to ensure positive outcomes

We use innovative technologies to provide quality care and increase team efficiency

Aged Care Roundtable



AGED CARE BARRIERS TO WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

ENTRY LEVEL	MID-MANAGEMENT	EXECUTIVE LEVEL	CROSS-LEVELS
Perception of sector (confronting)	Wages	Wages	Lack of understanding of sector
Wages	Lifestyle Priorities	Lifestyle Priorities	Competition with NDIS and construction industries
Lack of flexibility (job design)	Lack of local experience	Lack of local experience	Lack of local experience
Lifestyle priorities			Qualification barriers
Vaccination status			Housing & Transport
			Childcare

AGED CARE SKILLS GAPS

CURRENT SKILLS GAPS		FUTURE SKILLS GAPS	
SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS	HARD SKILLS
Communication	Critical thinking (RNs)	Generational leadership	Nursing
Connection (generational)	Cert III - need for individual support (including dementia focus)		Geriatric care
Leadership	Coaching capability		
Conflict avoidance			
Generational diversity			

AGED CARE SKILLS THAT TRANSFER WELL

TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS	SUITABLE SOURCE / SECTOR / WORKFORCE
Customer Service	Retail, Hospitality and Returning Workforce
Nurses into Leadership	Health Sector
Social Work	Community Services
Physical strength roles	Former Construction Workers
General health knowledge	Cross-sector health backgrounds

AGED CARE EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS & TRAINING

PATHWAYS & TRAINING THAT IS EFFECTIVE	PATHWAYS & TRAINING ISSUES
Engagement with schools	Plenty of courses but insufficient supervision
AIN pathway	No recognition of international prior learning
Cert III in Health Support	Government funding criteria too restrictive (eligibility issues)
Strong partnerships between schools & sector (eg Coolum SHS)	Cost of training borne by the individual
Gateway to Industry Schools Program (GISP)	

AGED CARE SOLUTIONS

FOCUS AREAS	SUGGESTED ACTIONS
<p>Connecting Industry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger school-to-worker connections • More placements • Work experience options • Clearer career pathways
<p>Assessing Workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract migrant workers • Accelerate Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) especially for overseas
<p>Systems Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a buddy system for employees
<p>Sector Promotion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise profile of careers in Aged Care • Work closer with industry bodies • Engage with all levels of government • Greater education sector collaboration
<p>Employer Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect businesses to existing programs • Better connection with Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) program • Back to work options • Microcredentials • Harrison Tool assessments (career guidance)
<p>Funding & Advocacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for training and funding



Solutions & Actions

Collated Roundtable Responses to Solutions

Sector	Solution Theme	Specific Solutions Identified
Aged Care	Workforce Attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve sector perception and value proposition • Promote career pathways and progression opportunities • Target recruitment from hospitality, disability and community sectors
	Retention & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured mentoring programs • Leadership development pathways • Support for emotional wellbeing and resilience
	Training & Work Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen alignment between training and real-world practice • Increase practical exposure during training • Improve consistency and quality of training delivery
	Pathway Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) • Clearer entry-to-advanced role career mapping
	Industry Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger coordination between providers and training organisations
Allied Health	Workforce Pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand local training pipelines • Improve regional placement access
	Placement Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase supervision support models • Strengthen industry–education partnerships
	Attraction & Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote transferable skills frameworks • Improve awareness of Allied Health career options
	Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sector planning between providers, educators and workforce agencies
Clinical	Placement & Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase clinical placement capacity • Invest in supervision and preceptor models
	Career Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer progression frameworks • Structured bridging pathways for adjacent-sector workers
	Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address burnout and workload pressures • Improve regional attraction strategies
	Training System Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align education supply with projected workforce demand
Health Support	Entry Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clearer entry-level pathways • Improve visibility of health support careers
	Career Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map career progression into higher-skilled roles • Introduce stackable credentials / micro-credentials
	Attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reposition sector value and opportunity • Target workers with transferable administrative, logistics and customer service skills
	Training Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce fragmentation in training pathways • Improve articulation between qualifications
Cross-Sector Priorities	System Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger industry–education alignment
	Workforce Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional workforce forecasting and planning support
	Transferability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote cross-sector mobility and recognition of transferable skills
	Regional Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted regional attraction and retention strategies
	Collaboration with RJC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated action planning and facilitation support from the Regional Jobs Committee

Health Industry Workforce Transformation Map

Stabilise & Align Year 1

Establish a regional health workforce steering group across Clinical, Health Support, Allied Health and Aged Care. Build a shared workforce data baseline, identify critical shortage roles, map existing training pathways, and develop a unified communications framework for careers and entry points. Begin advocacy for funded placements, supervision support and improved training alignment

Strengthen Entry Pathways Year 2

Launch school-to-work and career awareness initiatives, including health hubs in schools, industry talks, career fairs, one-on-one guidance, and promotion of non-traditional pathways. Expand traineeships, work experience and gateway programs. Introduce clearer entry-level pathway maps, especially for Health Support and Aged Care, and improve recognition of transferable skills and RPL.

Expand Placements & Supervision Year 3

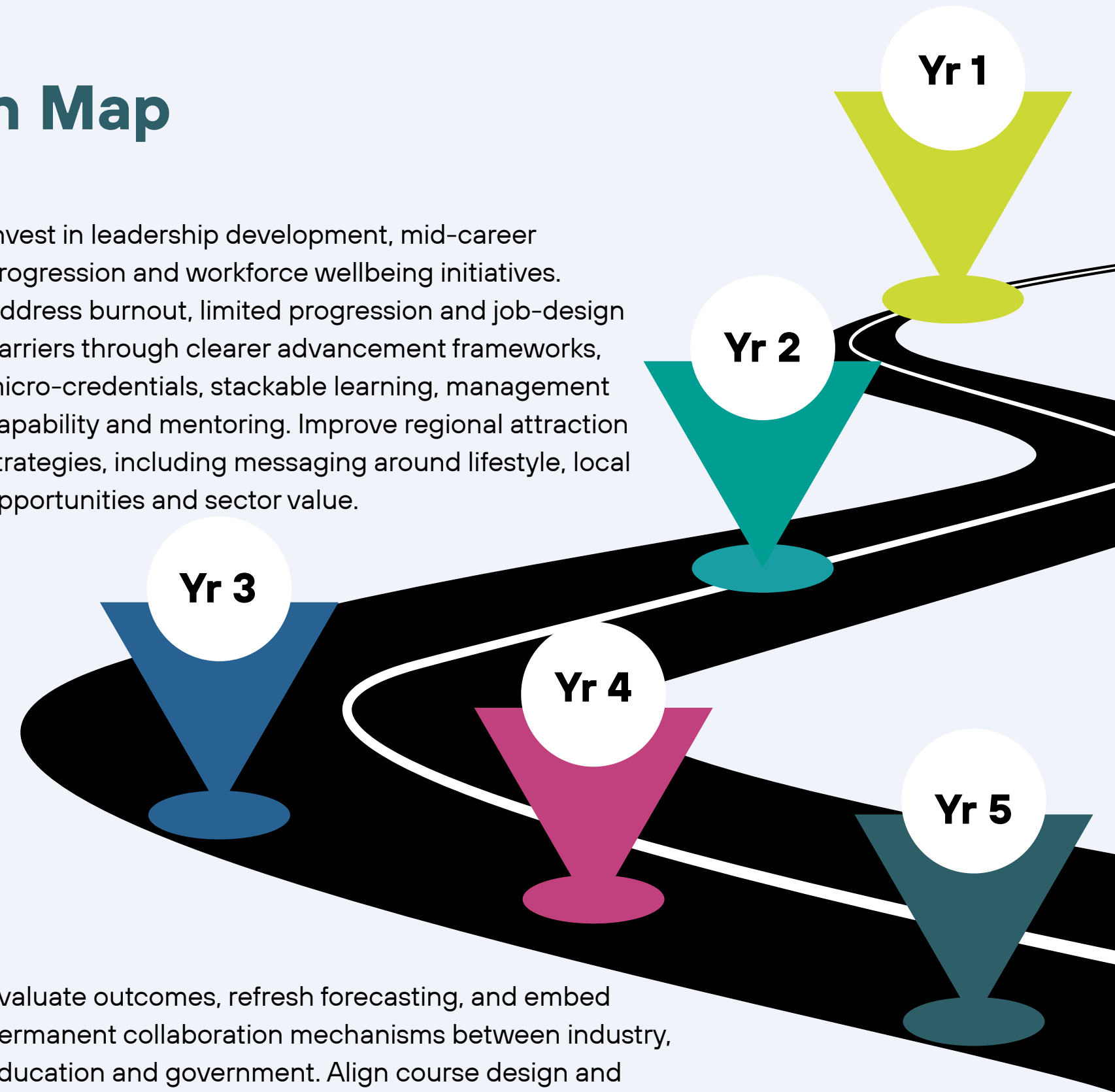
Scale regional placement capacity through shared supervision models, preceptor support, paid-placement advocacy, and employer incentives. Prioritise placement bottlenecks in Clinical and Allied Health. Pilot structured buddy systems, mentoring and employer support models in Aged Care and Health Support.

Build Capability & Retention Year 4

Invest in leadership development, mid-career progression and workforce wellbeing initiatives. Address burnout, limited progression and job-design barriers through clearer advancement frameworks, micro-credentials, stackable learning, management capability and mentoring. Improve regional attraction strategies, including messaging around lifestyle, local opportunities and sector value.

Future Readiness Year 5

Evaluate outcomes, refresh forecasting, and embed permanent collaboration mechanisms between industry, education and government. Align course design and qualification pathways with projected demand, including AI/technology capability, non-clinical skills, empathy, resilience and interdisciplinary skills. Formalise cross-sector mobility pathways between hospitality, disability, community services, administration and health roles.



01

Sunshine Coast RJC Action Plan

Using the results of all Skills Forums to develop a State Govt approved Action Plan of the year's activities that aligns with industry needs



NEXT STEPS



02

Sector Discovery Sessions

Work with leads in each of the four sectors to assess current programs & identify gaps or areas of support, then create repository of resources

03

Health Industry Advisory Group

Sense-checking all activities with local leaders to show value add of actions undertaken and ensure measurement of outcomes possible



THANK YOU FROM SCRJC

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