

Professional Associations: Themes from interviews

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This presentation

- Summarises perspectives of professional associations in youth work, disability and aging
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Questions

Questions asked about

- Potential **contribution of universities** to professional education in their discipline/profession
- **Difference** between university education and Diploma or Cert IV
- **Campaign priorities** for upcoming election
(7 respondents –interviews continuing)

Aged Care – big picture

- **Later entry into aged care:** need intensive and individualised care
- **Concerns about quality** of care and workers
- **Skills shortage** –overseas employees fill gaps but language barriers and cultural differences can be problematic
- **Big gaps in the training** pathways for aged care workforce.
- **Needs an Industry Council** to develop a quality framework for aged care –should include academics and service providers

Aged Care - Qualifications

- Cert IV serves as foundation and pathway to degree but needs **more theoretical framework** as it's too practical
- Degree courses need to include
 - health science
 - business/ management skills
 - teach about support and enabling wellness

Aged Care – University Role

An undergraduate degree would:

- Teach students how to keep up-to-date, and be **responsive to change**
- Assist students to be **sensitive to diversity**
- Teach about issues associated with aged care
- Lead to more **quality research** in the field,
- **Legitimise this field of study**
- Make this field more **attractive** as a rewarding career.

Disability – Big picture

- **Recruitment and retention** of staff a big problem (especially rural and remote)
- Shortage: **no minimum qualifications**
- NDIS does not take account of **complexity of disability**—problematic for those with higher needs
- Powerful economic forces (**market basis of NDIS**) not encouraging employment of highly qualified staff

Disability – Qualifications

- People with disabilities **choose people without qualifications** to support them (cost?)
- NDIS funding **insufficient to pay tertiary qualified** staff
- Organisations are **not supporting further qualifications** in disability (people with a Cert III / IV move into management/marketing)

Disabilities - Universities

- Coherence
 - Good units here and there but need to be **'knitted together'**
 - Collaboration is needed to ensure curriculum is **consistent**
- Content
 - Policy needs to cope with **complexity**, and **political and social change** (requires university qualifications)
 - Managing/**supporting staff** is a role for graduates

Youth Work – Big picture

- Fund youth work education even if not **profitable**
- Financial value of social niche professions (including youth work) high in terms of **managing complex social issues**
- Well-funded programs enable **innovative research**
- Must seek opportunities for **collaboration** between universities and community sector (WIL, program evaluation, etc.)

Youth work –Qualifications

- Diploma is competency-based and **not theoretical** (different pedagogy)
- Degree is essential for high quality, **critical, emancipatory youth work**
- Degree provides knowledge base which consistent with **youth work as a profession**
- A degree program equips students to deliver services **AND critically evaluate** their value, take a structural and **sociological** perspective on social issues

Youth Work – Universities

- **Should engage with professional associations**, universities to discuss curriculum that would lead to endorsement of the degree
- **Degree endorsement** (national and international) can lead to student exchange programs, increased work opportunities, and staff professional development and networking

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