

Lack of workforce consultation hinders solutions to aged care crisis

The HSU is frustrated by the complete lack of consultation from the Victorian and Federal Government before announcing a package aimed at curbing secondary employment in the Victorian aged care sector on Sunday.

The package includes funding to “reduce the need for aged care workers to provide care across multiple aged care facilities” but lacks any meaningful detail.

It is common for both home and residential aged care workers to hold secondary employment to subsidise the chronic low wages and underemployment that is rife in the sector.

HSU leadership have raised this issue at multiple levels of government across states and federally, in an attempt to collaborate and devise clear, fair and consistent policy that will not disadvantage these critical workers.

We have been committed to consulting on a range of workforce capacity and surge matters, informed by the lived experiences of our members in the aged care sector, and instead have been cut out

Quotes attributable to Tim Jacobson, National Assistant Secretary, Health Services Union

“HSU members in aged care often hold multiple jobs just to keep food on the table and bills paid. Punishing them for trying to stay afloat is reactive, unfair policy that will place thousands of households in crisis.”

“The problem of underemployment in aged care has been around a lot longer than this virus and it is no surprise to us that it is now leading to issues with the pandemic.”

“The HSU has been raising these issues and desperately seeking consultation with the Government for quite some time, but we have been cut out of the conversation.”

“It is unacceptable that the voice of the workforce has not been proactively sought and now it’s almost too little too late.”

“We are keen to hear the detail around how our invaluable frontline workers will be supported and protected as they continue to care for some of the most vulnerable people in our community.”

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