



Decent Work Good Care

International approaches to aged care

Background

In most OECD countries, population ageing, a fall in the numbers of informal carers and increasing costs are placing pressure on aged care services. Yet there is little understanding, at either the policy or workplace levels, of how the sustainability and quality of aged care services are affected by the quality of aged care jobs. Evidence shows that job quality and care quality are connected through care relationships. So how is this connection negotiated between aged care workers and aged care recipients? And how are these care relationships shaped by national policies, funding and regulation and by organisational practices and work design?

Decent Work Good Care Project (2017-2020)

This three year Australian Research Council Discovery Project explores the links between decent work and good quality care in aged care in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Scotland. The main objective of this cross-national study is to better understand how national policies, funding and regulation, operationalized through organisational practices and work design, shape both the quality of work and the quality of care. We also want to learn and collect evidence about how the organisation of care relationships in aged care services between care workers and aged care recipients can best promote job quality in the work of aged care and sustainable, good quality aged care services.

Our Study

1: Analysis of national aged care contexts

For each country we will map relevant aged care policies, funding and quality accreditation mechanisms, and employment regulation. We will also speak to key stakeholders, including government & accreditation agencies, unions & employer bodies, and carer advocacy groups to get their perspectives on how national policy and regulatory settings shape job quality and care quality.

2: Organisational Case Studies

We will be undertaking week-long case studies in both residential and community-based aged care services in Australia, New Zealand and Scotland, and drawing on existing case studies in Canada. These case studies will be used to identify both how national policy settings impact on service provision at the organisational level and how organisational practices, service and work design influence job quality and care quality. The differences and similarities between national and sector case studies will also be used to highlight innovative practices that support good job quality and care quality.

Project team

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