

Workshop 5: Workforce Management FAQs

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Frequently Asked Questions

The following table provides suggested guidance to answer questions asked during the Workforce Management workshop on 7 November 2025. The responses aim to provide general guidance to assist aged care providers prepare for the SaH reforms.

Question	Response
<p>This Reform can increase in claims for workplace stress and psychosocial injury - premiums increased therefore impacts the organisation to make it unsustainable. ICARE NSW does not support organisation employers and does not accept substantial evidence even when staff are performance managed due to evidenced poor practice and as a result put in comp claims. Any ideas?</p>	<p>Increasing workplace stress and injury claims, and rising workers compensation premiums can have a significant impact on provider viability and sustainability.</p> <p>Aged care providers can strengthen psychosocial risk frameworks (including identifying psychosocial risks and controls in consultation with staff), enhance incident and injury management processes (including upskilling of investigation teams to investigate psychosocial injuries), ensure rigorous and well-documented performance processes, and engage early with dispute resolution channels such as WIRO.</p> <p>Aged care providers should invest in preventative measures to minimise the risk of psychosocial injuries, reduce claim risk, and demonstrate compliance, while exploring premium management strategies to help contain financial impact. This could include but is not limited to consulting with staff to improve work design, implement manager training, wellbeing programs, and transparent communication.</p> <p>While this advice may be helpful for you, we appreciate that each provider's circumstances are different and would welcome the opportunity to discuss further with you. You can reach out to us at agedcareadvisory@au.ey.com.</p>
<p>We are struggling with an aging workforce too. Obviously such a physically demanding role for Support Workers increase risk of injury. It would be interesting to hear how others manage this</p>	<p>Managing an ageing workforce in physically demanding support roles requires a proactive and inclusive approach. Many providers are reducing injury risk by introducing ergonomic equipment, offering strength and flexibility programs, offering injury prevention and early intervention programs, and redesigning tasks to match physical capability. Flexible work options - like shorter shifts, or to lighter duties - are also common. These strategies may not only lower injury rates and workers' compensation claims but also improve retention and workforce sustainability.</p>



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<p>So with all the changes, our entire management team (senior management, administration/finance and care managers) are struggling with the increased workload and attempting to explain this very confusing system - no one has time for training, but they're trying in their spare time, even racking up time in lieu to get on top of it all. On top of this, we're seeing care managers/partners at other organisations quitting due to stress and overworking or fear of explaining the SaH changes to their clients. How do you suggest we combat this shared stress so we don't end up like the companies with CMs leaving? How do you help the companies already affected?</p>	<p>We understand that navigating these changes can feel overwhelming, especially when your team is already managing increased workloads. Our team is here to help and we'd be happy to discuss what support is available and how we can best help you. You can reach out to us at agedcareadvisory@au.ey.com.</p>
<p>I'm really interested in the pod concept as I think it has a lot of potential for increased client and staff satisfaction. However I understand that some of the big providers have implemented this model and are now pulling back from it. I'm assuming that there are costly faults in the model that are not apparent until the model has been operating for a while.</p>	<p>There are various benefits to the pod model, however, we recognise the model is not a one-size fits all. Its success depends on the nature of the workforce, client needs, and organisational readiness.</p> <p>Common implementation challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economies of scale can be lost if the pods are too small or too geographically dispersed. ▪ Not having the right digital systems and tools to support effective rostering, communication and care documentation within pods. ▪ Workforce constraints, including high turnover or limited availability of staff with the right mix of skills and flexibility to work in consistent teams. <p>To mitigate these challenges, providers need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopting an iterative approach, starting with small pilots and refining the model based on feedback and outcomes. This should be continuously evaluated and adjusted over time - implementation of the model should not be a set and forget. • Investing in fit-for-purpose digital systems that support pod-level rostering, communication and care tracking.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning pod design with local workforce and client needs, rather than applying a uniform structure across all sites. • Building in change management support, including training, leadership engagement, and clear communication about the purpose and benefits of the model. <p>While this advice may be helpful for you, we appreciate that each provider's circumstances are different and would welcome the opportunity to discuss further with you. You can reach out to us at agedcareadvisory@au.ey.com</p>
<p>Would offshore managed services be viable in our industry, noting cyber security and privacy concerns?</p>	<p>Offshore managed services can be a viable solution under certain operating conditions. For routine, repeatable tasks that are completed at scale, engagement with an offshore managed services provider can deliver cost savings, uplift maturity and improve efficiency of back-office delivery.</p> <p>Selecting a managed services provider that understands the Australian aged care sector's cyber security and privacy requirements, and has clear procedures for ongoing oversight, can make this solution more viable. However, there remains a need to ensure robust governance and compliance frameworks are in place internally before engaging a managed services provider. Key considerations when developing compliance frameworks include privacy and data sovereignty, cybersecurity, and regulatory accountability.</p> <p>Below are key considerations when engaging an offshore managed services provider. In-house captive offshore services (where an aged care provider sets up and operates its own offshore team or facility, rather than outsourcing to a third-party vendor) are associated with higher risks and warrant further consideration in addition what is outlined below before implementation. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at agedcareadvisory@au.ey.com.</p> <p>Key considerations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Privacy and Data Sovereignty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal and health information of aged care recipients is considered sensitive information under the Privacy Act. ○ If data is stored or accessed offshore, providers must ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The overseas entity complies with Australian privacy standards

Question	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are contractual safeguards (e.g., binding agreements, audit rights) ▪ The provider remains accountable for any breaches ○ See OAIC guidance on cross-border disclosure of personal information: Chapter 8: APP 8 Cross-border disclosure of personal information OAIC <p>2. Cybersecurity Risk Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementing the Essential Eight mitigation strategies ▪ Ensuring MSPs have incident response plans ▪ Including notification clauses in contracts for any data breaches ○ See ACSC’s Managed Service Providers Risk Guide for further guidance <p>3. Regulatory Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under the Aged Care Act 2024, providers using third-party or offshore services are still fully responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of care ▪ Compliance of services delivered, including compliance with the Aged Care Code of Conduct ▪ Incident reporting obligations ○ The Commission requires providers to register associated providers and maintain oversight of their compliance <p>4. Contractual and Operational Controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contracts with offshore Managed Service Providers should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear service level agreements (SLAs) ▪ Data protection clauses ▪ Audit and access rights ▪ Termination rights in case of breach

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<p>If we require casual staff to complete training (e.g., mandatory modules or First Aid/CPR) do we have to pay for them to do the annual refreshers (course cost and staff time)?</p>	<p>The Fair Work Ombudsman advises that time spent completing mandatory training (including online or off-site) must be paid as work time. This applies to casual, part-time, and full-time employees. Further information can be found at Unpaid work - Fair Work Ombudsman.</p>
<p>Shared services are very difficult in this compliance led industry, not sure how realistic this is.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the complexities of shared service model implementation within the aged care sector. While shared services can introduce cost savings through a reduction of internal back-office FTE, there remains a need for critical activities, such as compliance management, to be maintained in-house. This is due to the business risk with certain activities being completed by an external entity.</p> <p>Examples of activities that typically remain in-house in a shared services model to minimise risk include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance: Finance strategy, New Business/Pricing Analysis, Business Performance Analysis, Cost Analysis, Audit/Risk Management, Tax Planning, Budgeting and Forecasting • Information Technology: Strategy Development, Requirements Definition, Application Architecture, Application QA • HR: Rewards and compensation strategy, Recruitment strategy, Overall training and development strategy • Risk: Compliance Program, Compliance Management, Operational Risk Management, Enterprise Risk Management, Stress testing <p>Establishing a shared services model also requires a certain level of operational maturity in order to be feasible in alignment with compliance standards. The process for a provider to establish operational maturity for shared services may include the following steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen maturity of stakeholder relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Define desired criteria for partnership ○ Identify Aged Care Provides and build buy-in ○ Agree on scope of shared services ○ Understand scale of operations ○ Establish shared governance 2. Build maturity of processes and systems



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Agree on processes○ Agree on technology/systems○ Transition to shared technology/systems <p>3. Establish maturity for implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Establish an implementation timeline○ Implement change management processes○ Implement shared services model based on agreed approach <p>While this advice may be helpful for you, we appreciate that each provider's circumstances are different and would welcome the opportunity to discuss further with you. You can reach out to us at agedcareadvisory@au.ey.com</p>

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