



anf policy

# australian nursing federation

## residential and community aged care services: staffing and standards

It is the policy of the Australian Nursing Federation that:

1. The optimum mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents and clients of aged care services is achieved by the health care team working together with the residents and clients and their representatives.
2. In order to ensure that all residents and clients are provided with safe, quality care, they must receive initial and ongoing assessment, planning and management of care by a registered nurse.
3. Residents and clients of aged care services have a right to receive care provided by appropriately qualified staff.
4. The employment of a permanent nursing workforce is strongly advocated to provide a resident care environment and a nursing practice environment which promotes safe care, continuity of care and the development of quality relationships between carers and residents and clients. The employment of casual staff is supported only for the short term when staffing levels or the skill mix of the staff is such that resident or client care may be compromised.
5. Fully funded and regulated benchmarks are established to enable the provision of sufficient staffing levels and skills mix, covering all staff classifications, linked to residents' and clients' needs, quality outcomes and reasonable workloads.
6. The provision of nursing care in the aged care sector requires a minimum number of registered nurses, enrolled nurses and assistants in nursing (however titled) at an appropriate skill mix. That minimum standard reflects the care needs and acuity of residents and clients and is calculated using an industry/union supported mechanism.
7. Twenty four hour registered nurse on site cover is provided in facilities where there is ageing in place and/or high care residents.
8. A full time director of nursing (or equivalent classification) is employed in each aged care facility employing nurses. This person has an administrative role and is available for consultation by nursing staff on clinical and other nursing issues.
9. Staffing structures in aged care services provide career pathways that reflect the acquisition of skills and development of competence.

10. Aged care nursing is recognised as specialised practice and opportunities for education are provided and supported by employers. The time and other resources required for orientation of all staff and for education and staff development specific to aged care are fully funded and additional to the time and resources required to carry out nursing functions

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**Note:** This policy should be read in conjunction with:

ANF Policy on: 'Role boundaries in the provision of personal care';

ANF Position Statements on: 'Administration of Medicines'; 'Assistants in nursing and other unlicensed workers (however titled) providing aspects of care'; and 'Licensing of assistants in nursing and other unlicensed workers (however titled)'; and

ANF Guidelines on: 'Delegation by registered nurses'; and 'The use of dose administration aids by nurses'