

Dear Associate to the Honourable President Ross,

AM2020/99 - Application to vary the Aged Care Award 2010

AM2021/65 – Application to vary the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010

I write this letter in relation to the above applications by the HSU.

Statement of Matthew Bond

I, Matthew Bond, of 22 Brookhollow Avenue, BAULKHAM HILLS NSW 2153, state as follows:

1. I am Acting General Manager – People and Culture for BaptistCare NSW & ACT (“BaptistCare”).
2. I have worked for BaptistCare for two and a half years, having worked in the aged care industry in various Human Resources roles for more than 14 years.

About BaptistCare NSW & ACT

3. BaptistCare is a not-for-profit provider of aged care services. We operate 18 residential care homes and look after more than 1400 residents and 8000 home care clients across NSW and ACT, including both metropolitan and regional areas.
4. BaptistCare aged care employees are covered by the *BaptistCare NSW & ACT Aged Care Enterprise Agreement 2017* (“Enterprise Agreement”).
5. Our Enterprise Agreement covers 3087 employees; 1937 residential aged care employees and 1150 Home Care employees.
6. These roles are:

At Home - EA roles	Count
Admin Officer/Coordinator	53

Care Facilitator	98
Care Service Employee	890
Care Supervisor	1
Care Supervisor EN	1
CSE Support Facilitator	15
Handyman/Gardener	33
Occupational Therapist	10
Physiotherapist	3
Registered Nurse	1
Senior Administrator	1
Senior Occupational Therapist	1
Senior Service Scheduler	3
Service Scheduler	40
Grand Total	1150
Residential - EA Roles	Count
Admin Officer/Coordinator	55
Assistant In Nursing	23
Care Service Employee	1452
Care Supervisor	82
Care Supervisor EN	23
Clinical Nurse Educator	1
Education & Quality Supervisor	8
Enrolled Nurse	5
Facility Cook	15
Lifestyle Coordinator	16
Maintenance Officer	1
Maintenance Supervisor	18
Music Therapist	1
Office Coordinator	1
Physiotherapist	3
Qualified Chef	7
Registered Nurse	221
Training & Quality Coordinator	5
Grand Total	1937

7. Of these employees, 264 (9%) are full time, 2484 (80%) are part-time and 339 (11%) are casual.
8. Of the 2342 Care Service Employees, 1978 (84%) are qualified with at least a Certificate III level of qualification.

Staffing challenges

9. Recruitment of staff continues to be a significant challenge. At the time of writing, BaptistCare currently has more than 300 positions vacant across NSW & ACT, with vacancies predominantly in frontline care roles.
10. Vacancies exist in both metropolitan and regional areas, but regional recruitment is a particular challenge as the candidate pool is smaller. Temporary agency staff is often required to supplement staffing shortfalls, especially in regional areas.
11. Turnover (the measure of people leaving the organisation) is trending higher, increasing from a rolling 12 average of 20% in 2020 to 31% in 2021.
12. This mirrors staff sentiment, when 29% of staff indicated in a recent BaptistCare survey that they were considering leaving within the next two years. This is up 4% from 2020's figure (25%).

Work value of employees

13. Acuity levels of residents in residential aged and clients in home care have trended upwards over time. This requires more staff hours to provide essential baseline care for residents, putting pressure on BaptistCare to provide appropriate staffing levels to cater for the acuity.
14. BaptistCare, like many residential aged care providers, have an ageing-in-place model. This is designed to minimise disruption of residents requiring to move to different facilities based on the level of care needed (previously known as 'low care' or 'high care').
15. This principle extends to home care, where clients receive care based on their assessed need. The level of care of clients increases over time as they age in their home. This model of care has undertaken significant changes in recent years, providing the opportunity for clients to receive care in their home environment rather than in a formal care environment.
16. Increased acuity has provided challenges for staff. Previously, the role of frontline care staff was principally to attend to the care needs of residents and clients and the Registered Nurse attends to clinical matters.
17. Over time, the role of frontline care staff has required requires more assessment, care documentation and practices that assist the clinical staff. This includes assisting with medication, simple wound dressing, assisting with the implementation of continence programs, attend to regular checks including urinalysis, blood pressure, temperature and pulse checks, blood sugar level checks and assist and support diabetic clients in the management of their insulin and diet.

18. The roles for other frontline staff have changed over time also. Adherence to the Aged Care Quality Standards rightly requires a significant and increased focus on the wellbeing of residents. This has meant that staff in lifestyle streams are required to be cognisant of providing activities and programs that are tailored to the care needs of residents. What was previously 'Diversional Therapy' is now a targeted, person-centred program that meets the social and spiritual needs of residents.
19. This applies to staff who assist in food preparation also. Providing nutritious meals in accordance with resident's care and dietary needs a key component of the Aged Care Quality Standards, so requirements for those preparing food is higher. Cooking and preparing fresh meals and adapting menus to cater for resident preferences is essential in ensuring the Standards are met. This has changed significantly over time. Staff responsible for meals were once considered 'servery staff', re-heating pre-cooked meals and delivering to residents at a pre-determined time. Times have changed, but so has the demands on the staff preparing the meals.
20. The staffing challenges has increased the complexity of administrative staff who are principally involved in rostering, filling vacant shifts and coordinating enquiries including from resident families. This work has changed over time due to the increasing levels of staff shortages from a reduced staffing pool.

BaptistCare's position

21. In order to attract and retain staff BaptistCare pays staff above Award rates. In the Care Service Employee 2 classification under our Enterprise Agreement (the most common classification for our staff) BaptistCare currently pays 4.2% above the comparable classification in the Aged Care Award.
22. It is noted that BaptistCare, as an aged care provider, is principally funded through various Government measures such as the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) for residential care and various home care packages for home care. This provides measure of income which depends on residents and client needs.
23. It is a challenging exercise to balance the variable income received through funding with the certainty of pay rises, especially pay rises which exceed percentage increase of funding received. BaptistCare offered staff a 2% pay increase in 2021, while Daily ACFI Subsidy Rates increased by only 1.1% between 2020 and 2021.
24. BaptistCare believes our staff deserve a significant increase to the relevant Awards that apply to aged care provision. Aged care employees perform extraordinary work in helping care for the most vulnerable in our society. The work is nuanced and complex, and has increased in the complexity over time as Standards and funding has become more and more person-centred.

25. BaptistCare supports a significant increase that is fully funded by the Government in order to address inequity for the work that aged care staff perform, address the increased complexity of the work that aged care employees perform, arrest staff shortages in the aged care industry and provide a platform for a sustainable, stable industry in order to meet the projected care needs to care for elderly Australians.



Matthew Bond
Acting General Manager – People and Culture
BaptistCare NSW & ACT

3 March 2022