AGED CARE SERVICES

INDUSTRY SKILLS PLAN

May 2010
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Definition

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aged Care Services</th>
<th>Aged Care residential, community care, respite and day therapy centre services</th>
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List of Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACST</td>
<td>Aged and Community Services Tasmania</td>
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<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>RTOs</td>
<td>Registered Training Organisations</td>
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<td>UTas</td>
<td>University of Tasmania</td>
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Disclaimer

The information contained in this document has been sourced from various consultations, publications and websites.

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Foreword

The aged care service sector faces a great challenge in an environment where demand for services will grow significantly and the availability of labour will diminish. Our workforce is our greatest asset in delivering care and services, however due to the small size of many aged care organisations and limited resources they have struggled to navigate and use the training system effectively in developing the skills of their workforce. We believe that this plan and the initiatives within will build the capacity of our sector to not only engage with the training system but to drive outcomes based on the needs of our sector.

There are a broad range of services being provided to the aged and in response our sector has a diverse workforce with a range of differing requirements. This plan provides the vehicle to tackle this task as a sector through planning, collaboration and engagement with training providers and other stakeholders.

We welcome this plan as the crucial first step in building coordinated and supported action by our sector in workforce planning, skills development and ultimately increased quality of care and services to the Tasmanian Community. This plan and our future actions reflect the intention of ACST and its member organisations to impose ourselves on the training system and demand and create the outcomes that are required.

Darren Mathewson
CEO
Aged and Community Services Tasmania (ACST)
For the first time in Tasmania’s history, the health care and social assistance sector employs more people than any other in the state. A key driver of this sector is aged care services, which faces the twin challenges of Tasmania's ageing population and consequent demand for services increasing, and the sector itself with an ageing workforce.

The delivery of aged and community services relies on dedicated and passionate workers across occupations from cleaners, carers, nurses and directors of facilities. The evolution of community based services and new models of care bring a demand for higher levels of skills, knowledge and abilities. New qualifications and new models of delivery of training are part of the training environment.

The actions in this Skills Plan will inform and lead stronger industry ownership of skill development for its future workforce.

I congratulate Aged and Community Services Tasmania for its commitment to workforce planning, and learning driven by the needs of the industry and the people it serves.

Mark Sayer
General Manager
Skills Tasmania
**Skills Plan Overview**

This Aged Care Services Industry Skills Plan (Skills Plan) provides information and analysis on the labour and skills requirements of our sector. It identifies strategies/actions which when implemented will ensure our workforce has the skills and knowledge required to provide quality services to our clients and will minimise the impact of current and future skill shortages within our sector. The plan also identifies strategies in relation to the allocation of publicly funded training aimed at ensuring that the delivery of training and development programs meet the specific needs of our sector, the needs of organisations and individuals within our sector and addresses sector demographics/demands.

The Aged Care Services Skills Plan outlines a range of actions that form a framework with the following components:

- An Aged Care Services training and development system for Tasmania
- A training and development process that works for employers and the sector
- A training and development process that works for employees of the sector
- A training and development process that embraces accredited and non accredited training

The Skills Plan identifies actions that will be implemented over a two year period, July 2010 to June 2012 with a review after 12 months.

The Skills Plan supports:

- ACST to achieve the following objectives from our Strategic Plan 2008-2011:
  - Proactively influence government policy and funding;
  - Promote the role and image of the aged care services industry in serving Tasmania;
  - Equip members to meet increasing workforce challenges in Tasmania and
  - Extend the current suite of member services

- Skills Tasmania in achieving four of the ten Action Areas identified in the Tasmanian Skills Strategy 2008 – 2015, namely:
  - Deliver responsive, high quality education and training
  - Skills for innovation and future industries;
  - Meet industry demand for skills; and
  - Improve workforce development

- Skills Tasmania in its overall priority setting for purchasing and funding skill development activities

To progress and monitor this Skills Plan ACST and Skills Tasmania will formalise and extend their partnership and establish appropriate review arrangements.
The parties to this Skills Plan recognise that the effective implementation, communication and evaluating of the Skills Plan is critical to its success.

In committing to this Skills Plan, those responsible for implementing actions will develop key performance indicators for each action, report on progress towards those actions and communicate to relevant stakeholders the outcomes of the actions.

**Background & Consultation**

This Skills Plan has been developed by Aged and Community Services Tasmania (ACST) on behalf of Aged Care Services Sector in our State.

ACST is the major peak body representing residential care, community care and retirement villages in Tasmania. Over 90 per cent of aged care service providers in Tasmania are members of ACST including a growing number of community care organisations.

The Aged Care Services Sector, as in other states and territories of Australia, is characterised by:

- an ageing workforce
- a growing workforce
- substantial levels of part-time and casual employees;
- movement of labour between service organisations;
- small single site facilities through to large multi site organisations;
- organisations spread across the state, and
- a requirement for staffing seven day a week, 52 weeks a year and 24 hours a day

ACST have commenced a comprehensive workforce planning exercise for the sector in Tasmania. Through this process ACST’s Board, Committee and Members are focused on:

- Increasing the skills base in the sector and developing real and achievable career paths.
- Building infrastructure in our facilities to support the development of a training, research and education culture.
• Retaining and attracting staff through workforce development strategies underpinned by workforce planning and commitment to an industry skills plan

• Identifying opportunities for encouraging members to collaborate and share increasingly scarce resources.

• Identifying opportunities to source funding for the benefit of members.

ACST has worked in close consultation with our members and the sector as a whole to develop this skills plan. ACST has acquired significant qualitative and quantitative information through industry input via surveys and consultation.

Surveys have been conducted via a cross section of the sector which includes organisation by size and by region. Further extensive surveys will be conducted during 2010/11.

ACST acknowledges the many organisations and individuals for the valuable input and time in response to the surveys. Their important contribution will ensure the Skills Plan is relevant to the continuing success of the aged and community services sector now and into the future.
Our Skills Plan

Our consultation clearly indicates that organisations within the Aged Care Services Sector have a strong commitment to providing ongoing training and development opportunities to staff and employees are committed to participating in the opportunities provided.

Consultation also indicated that the majority of readily accessible training and development opportunities for the sector are concentrated in accredited training, focussed on entry level skills (mainly in the direct care area). It was also identified that majority of these training and development opportunities are ‘driven’ by RTOs and other training providers and not by our industry.

The Skills Plan identifies five main actions aimed at supporting the ongoing skills and knowledge development for all workers in our Sector. There is a focus on workforce planning and development in relation to both ‘today’s workforce’ and our ‘workforce of tomorrow’, the plan also focuses on ensuring that training and development opportunities are driven by our industry.

Workforce Planning

On the whole the Aged Care Services Sector has an ageing workforce and traditionally does not attract young workers straight from the education system. To some extent the sector has relied on recruiting older workers who are often re-entering the workforce.

Tasmania’s ageing population will have a greater reliance on the aged care services in the future, and the required workforce is expected to grow. This will put further strain on workforce numbers unless the sector becomes attractive to other recruitment target groups. This plan recognises the need to be proactive in planning for the recruitment and development of our current and future workforce.

Although some informal planning is undertaken by individual organisations, this Skills Plan recognises there is a need to develop a ‘whole of sector’ workforce plan and to develop strategies aimed at promoting the sector as a ‘career of choice’ with structured career paths. The strategies include:

- Development of a ‘whole of sector’ workforce plan which includes undertaking a comprehensive workforce census
- Promotion targeted at the 18-25 year age group to encourage the sector as a career/vocation option
- Development of programs to retain older workers through support and employment flexibility
ACST Brokerage Service

This Skills Plan recognises the importance of partnerships between industry, training providers, Skills Tasmania and other stakeholders in the provision of training and professional development. The plan also recognises the importance of workforce development and skill enhancement that is industry driven to meet current and future needs.

As an action under this plan, ACST will apply to Skills Tasmania for funding, for an ‘Innovative Partnership’, to build ACST’s ability to provide a Workforce Planning and Development Brokerage Service to its members.

The brokerage service will provide support at two levels:

- Whole of sector – through sector information sharing, facilitation of partnerships, sourcing of funding
- Individual organisations – independent provider of support and assistance

The brokerage service will also support Skills Tasmania in their efforts to effectively identify skills needs and demands, validate workforce planning principles and practices and promote the leveraging of ‘other funding’ to ensure the best use of Skills Tasmania funding in our sector.

The brokerage service will not be a provider of training but may coordinate training opportunities on behalf or the sector or an individual organisation.

These opportunities may arise through government programs that focus on program standards and service quality; through collaboration with Community and Health Services Industry Skills Council as well as through direct funding for vocational training from Tasmanian and Australian Governments.

Capability and Capacity Building

*We recognise that if training and development is to be effective there needs to be a strong partnership between the stakeholders (e.g. the training provider, employer and the participant in training) with each party clearly understanding their role and responsibilities.*

Organisations within the Aged Care Services Sector and the Sector as a whole are strongly committed to the training and development of staff and many have developed strong partnerships with stakeholders, in particular Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). However, training opportunities are often driven by RTOs rather than industry demand driven.

The industry predominately undertakes informal training needs analysis that is aligned with accreditation requirements or is based on ad hoc or event driven issues.
The response to shifts in policy or regulatory environment is often short term rather than systemic. Training opportunities are often taken up due to training providers promoting a course or qualification in line with their Scope of Registration rather than a specific training need of the organisation.

The plan recognised that to develop a training system that is driven by industry there is a need to:

- Develop forums and reference groups that identify training and development requirements and solutions for the sector

- Inform training providers and other stakeholders of the specific training and workforce development requirements of the sector that will build a sustainable workforce, particularly, changing the training from RTO driven to industry driven

- Build the knowledge of the Aged Services Sector in relation to the VET and Higher Education systems including accredited and non-accredited training options, access to funding and Community and Health Services Industry Skills Council flexibility in customisation and delivery of training.

Learning and Development Networks

The Aged Care Services Sector in Tasmania is made up of passionate and dedicated people with vast experience and knowledge of the sector. They are the carers, the managers, the health professionals, including nurses, the allied health professionals, the auxiliary staff, the educators and many more. However, most of this experience and knowledge is kept within organisations and not shared across the sector. Not because they unwilling do so but rather there is not a central avenue to so.

This Skills plan proposes to create two networks – communication and learning - as avenues for sharing technical expertise, training resources, information and ideas.

The establishment of these networks will provide the sector with forums to discuss and address common training and workforce development issues, ranging from development of non-accredited training programs, sharing training and/or physical resources to sourcing and accessing appropriate funding. The concept of sharing expertise and resources will provide cost and time efficiencies organisations within the sector, in particular the smaller organisations with limited capacity.

The networks would ideally include the involvement of sector organisations together with training providers and other stakeholders.
**Skilling and Developing our Workforce**

As discussed in the above Skills Plan actions, the Aged Care Services Sector is committed to the training and development of their people. However, a preliminary skills and development survey carried out to a cross of the sector indicates that only informal and undocumented training needs analysis is undertaken on a regular basis within organisations. The preliminary surveys also indicated that little or no workforce planning is currently undertaken to ensure a sustainable and training workforce for the future.

Large multi site organisations often employ an education/training officer to coordinate and plan training and professional development activities. However, single site and small organisations do not have the capacity to maintain such a position.

This Skills plan recognises the importance in ensuring we have and maintain a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. The strategies proposed include:

- A comprehensive skills survey to be undertaken across the whole sector to identify future training requirements and the development of a sector skills development plan
- Establishment of partnerships between industry and RTOs and other training providers to ensure quality training and professional development that addresses industry requirements
- Consultation and liaison with other industry bodies and associations, including unions and the Community and Health Services Industry Skills Council, with an interest in skill development for workers in our sector.
- Work with Skills Tasmania to identify and access training and professional development funding that is industry driven and not RTO driven
- Development of programs that will attract younger entry level workers and promote the sector as a vocation with a structured career path.
## Detailed Action Plan

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<tr>
<th>1. Workforce Planning</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Develop a ‘whole of sector’ Workforce Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>As part of this process we will:</td>
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<td>• Facilitate/implement/promote programs to educate the sector on Workforce Planning and the associated benefits</td>
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<td>• Undertake a comprehensive workforce census of our sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Given the changing environment and demographics of aged care services in Australia, conduct workshops exploring ‘the workforce of the future’</td>
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| 1.2 Establish a program(s) designed specifically to encourage 18-25 years into our workforce. | | |
| • Develop and implement ‘promotional/marketing ’campaign targeted at encouraging 18-25 to consider Aged Care Services as their career/vocation of choice | | |
| • Facilitate the development and implementation of pre-employment programs specifically targeted at 18-25 year olds | | |
| • Work with both VET and Higher Education Providers to facilitate/improve on the current process for articulation of qualifications | | |
| • Work with VET and High Education Providers to promote Aged Care Services as a ‘career of choice’. Improve their perception of the sector | | |

| 1.3 Facilitate/develop/implement programs aimed at supporting and retaining our ageing workforce. | | |
| • Develop/facilitate/deliver programs that create an awareness of the ‘needs’ of the older workers and how the sector can retain/support this demographic to remain in the workforce e.g. adapting work practices, flexible work arrangements, phased in retirement etc. | | |
| • Develop and deliver programs targeted at encouraging/supporting older workers to remain in the workforce e.g. self care programs, adapting work | | |

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<tr>
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<th>Priority</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Development of a ‘whole of sector’ Workforce Plan</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>ACST* ACST Members Skills Tasmania</td>
<td>November 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Establish a program(s) designed specifically to encourage 18-25 years into our workforce.</td>
<td>5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5 5.6</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>ACST* Skills Tasmania RTOs</td>
<td>September 2010 – June 2012</td>
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<td>1.3 Facilitate/develop/implement programs aimed at supporting and retaining our ageing workforce.</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>ACST* Skills Tasmania RTOs Other Training Providers</td>
<td>January 2011 – June 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Structured Career Pathways</td>
<td>Develop and distribute material that promotes/demonstrates the structured career pathways available in our sector</td>
<td>3.3 3.4</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>ACST*</td>
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| 2. ACST Brokerage Service | **Outcome(s)** | a) Our sector has access to the knowledge and skills required to ensure that we gain maximum benefit from the available training dollars.  
  b) Our sector has access the knowledge and skills required to ensure that we are able to meet both current and future workforce requirements |  |  |  |
|  | **Action** |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1 ACST, in partnership with Skills Tasmania, will develop and deliver a ‘Learning and Workforce Development’ brokerage services to our Sector. This service will:  
  a) Support the successful implementation of all actions associated with our Skills Plan.  
  b) Support Skills Tasmania in their efforts to effectively identify skills needs and demands, validate workforce planning principles and practices and promote the leveraging of ‘other funding’ to ensure the best use of skills Tasmania funding in our sector. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Capability and Capacity Building | **Outcome(s)** | a) Our Sector has ownership of/is driving training and professional development for our Sector.  
  b) Our sector has a strong working understanding of the Vocational Education and Training System and how we can make it work for us.  
  c) Registered Training Organisations and relevant VET and Higher Education Stakeholders have a strong understanding of the learning and development requirements of our Sector. |  |  |  |
|  | **Action** |  |  |  |  |
| 3.1 Establish ACST Member Training and Development Reference Group. Develop and clearly define:  
  a) Structure  
  b) Terms of reference  
  c) Roles and responsibilities |  | 5.4 | High | ACST*  
ACST members | August 2010 |
| 3.2 Establish ACST RTO/Higher Education Training and Development Round Table. Develop and clearly define: |  | 5.4 | High | ACST*  
Skills Tasmania | September 2010 |
3.3 Establish a projects and programs to ensure that our sector:
- Understands the VET and Higher Education Sectors
- Is knowledgeable in relation to their rights, roles and responsibilities
- Is aware of the relevant 'VET stakeholders' and their associated roles and responsibilities.
- Is aware of various funding opportunities available and how they can be accessed
- Can ensure that we gain maximum value for the funding available for training
- Is aware of how we can work together as a sector to facilitate the 'sharing of training and professional development opportunities, expertise and resources.'

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3.4 Establish projects and programs for all providers of training and other VET related services to the Aged Care Services Sector that:
- Promote and facilitate strategic partnerships between the sector, training and development providers and VET service providers
- Ensure that our sector is able to access training and development opportunities that are relevant to the skills and knowledge requirements of the sector
- Ensure that training and development opportunities are delivered in a manner that meets the needs of organisations within the sector and the needs of individual employees
- Promote/facilitate the delivery of quality training
- Promote/facilitate consistency of the delivery (across training providers) of like qualifications and training and development opportunities

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4. Learning and Development Networks

**Outcome(s):**

- a) Our sector has a culture of working together to identify, develop, share and efficiently and effectively implement training and development opportunities for our workforce.
- b) Our sector is able to easily identify and access training and development opportunities.
relevant to both their organisational needs and the needs of individual employees.

c) VET service providers have established ‘communication networks’ into our sector

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</table>
| 4.1    | Establish a project to develop a training and development portal and communication network for our sector. Options to be explored include:  
• Linking database and communication platform to our existing webpage  
• Using ‘Share Point’ or similar application  
• Working with UTAS Information Systems students to implement the program as part of their final year projects (makes the project affordable)  
• Speak to final UTAS Information Systems students to source appropriately skilled person who is looking for relevant ‘work experience’ to put on their resume  
• Source and access appropriate funding opportunity  
The Portal will provide:  
• Point of reference to current and future training and professional development opportunities  
• Communication forum for our sector to share information relating to training and development  
• Communication forum for our training providers to promote training and development opportunities  
• Communication forum for VET Service Providers to share relevant information  
• Provides a forum to receive and share feedback  
• Is a repository for shared/ and to facilitate the sharing resources: e.g. audio and visual learning materials, fact sheets, Learning Materials, E-learning  
• Facilitate efficient enrolment/ into training and development programs | 3.2  
3.3 | High | ACST*  
ACST members  
UTas  
RTOs  
Higher Education Providers  
Other Training Providers  
VET Service Providers  
Skills Tasmania | September 2010 – June 2012 |
| 4.2    | Develop a ‘Sector Learning Network’.  
Our sector has a large number of highly experienced/ trained, skilled and knowledgeable individuals who are passionate about their vocation and more than willing to share their skills and knowledge.  
What are the objectives of the ‘learning network’:  
• Tap into the vast industry ‘technical expertise’ of our Sector, identifying individuals who are willing to share their expertise by delivering learning and development programs to our current and perspective workforce | 5.2 | Medium | ACST*  
ACST members | December 2010 – June 2012 |
• Develop/facilitate a program of training and development opportunities (non-accredited) to be delivered by the ‘learning network’
• Facilitate cost effective and relevant training. We only have to cover the direct costs of the training e.g. person delivering the training, learning material. It is envisaged that this could work as a ‘barter system’ e.g. you provide this training for my organisation we provide alternative training to your organisation (on a more holistic basis)
• Develop a ‘virtual library/catalogue of resources that can be shared by the sector. Does everyone need to have one of everything?

4.3 Explore the feasibility and ongoing viability of accessing funding to establish an ‘Industry Skills Centre’ in the South, North & North West of the State, with

• The Centres as our ‘regional learning hubs’
• The Centre ‘appropriately equipped’ to create the required learning environment for the aged care services workforce
• The Centre available to be utilised by all aged care service providers
• The Centre available to be utilised by all Training Providers

5. Skilling and developing our Workforce

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Associated Actions</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Stakeholders *Sponsor Stakeholder</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Undertake a comprehensive ‘Skills Audit’ in relation to the current and future skills and knowledge requirements of our workforce</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>ACST* ACST members Skills Tasmania</td>
<td>August 2010</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| 5.2    | Based on the information received through our ‘Skills Audit’:
  • Develop/implement a whole of sector skills development plan
  • Inform/educate relevant stakeholders of the outcomes of our ‘Skills Audit’
  • Work with Skills Tasmania to identify/access funding for training and development
  • Work with training providers and our ‘learning network’ to facilitate the development and delivery of training and development opportunities in line with our Skills Development Plan (both accredited and non accredited training) | 1.2 1.3 4.1 1.2 1.3 | High | ACST* ACST members Skills Tasmania | November 2010 |
| 5.3    | ACST will research and maintain an awareness of any opportunities for the sector to access funding for training and development. ACST will implement strategies to ensure that the sector is kept up to date with this information. | 1.2 1.3 | High | ACST* ACST members | July 2010 – June 2012 |
| 5.4 | Through the established reference groups work in partnership with training providers to develop and implement protocols and processes that support/promote the delivery of quality training and development. | 1.2 1.3 3.1 3.2 | High | ACST* UTas RTOs Higher Education Providers Other Training Providers Skills Tasmania | September 2010 – June 2012 |
| 5.5 | Through the established reference groups work in partnership with training providers to develop and implement pre-employment and entry level training programs that support/promote:  
- the participation of people who will realistically be employed by the sector  
- a realistic understanding/perspective of what it means to work in the sector  
- participants who are equipped with the required skills and knowledge to be effective and efficient entry level workers  
- consistent delivery and quality of the training being provided | 1.2 1.3 | High | ACST* ACST members RTOs Skills Tasmania | September 2010 – June 2012 |
| 5.6 | Skills Tasmania will:  
- Adjust its current funding approaches to support the achievement of the relevant actions in this Skills Plan; and  
- Use the outcomes of our ‘Skills Survey’ and this Skill Plan to inform its training procurement decisions relating to the acted and community care industry | 1.2 1.3 | High | Skills Tasmania* | July 2010 – June 2012 |