

Qualified Support for Vulnerable Jobseekers is Critical

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It is critical that all Australian jobseekers, particularly the most vulnerable, secure access to qualified support when referred to an employment services provider.

An [inquiry](#) into *Workforce Australia's* employment services has shown evidence of a 'de-skilling of the employment services sector workforce since outsourcing and privatisation'.

CDA National President Linda Jeffrey said that relevant minimum qualifications and experience should be mandated for all *Workforce Australia* staff assisting clients with complex needs.

"The ongoing human and economic cost of allowing potentially underqualified or inexperienced staff to be responsible for the future well-being of jobseekers must cease," Ms Jeffrey said.

"Qualified career practitioners offer specialised skills to adapt information to a person's interests, skills, ambitions, age and circumstances, and are aware of and respond to current opportunities."

With an unpredictable and changing labour market, the work of career development practitioners is far more complex and broader than people imagine.

"Qualified practitioners continually update their knowledge and skills to meet the shifting demands of the labour market, technology, and employers," Ms Jeffrey said.

Australian and International research shows there are significant benefits from mandating minimum staffing qualification requirements - for jobseekers, for the cost of the program, and for the economy.

Evidence has shown that job seekers participating in qualified career development interventions are 2.67 times more likely to obtain employment (Whiston, Li, Goodrich Mitts, Wright, 2017).

A study from Wales, UK has identified that unemployed adults receiving qualified career development support demonstrated a 2x return on investment (Percy, Hughes, 2019).

Findings from the *Workforce Australia* inquiry will be presented by September 29, 2023. CDA's submission is available to view [here](#).

The Career Development Association Australia (CDA) is Australia's national, multi-sectoral professional association, with more than 1300 members across Australia working in all sectors of the profession. This broad membership means CDA grasps the interconnections within Australia's careers ecosystem, speaks for career related issues that impact Australians across their lifespan, and explains the connections between multiple policies and diverse programs.

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