

28 March 2023

Fair Work Commission  
Level 11, Terrace Tower,  
80 William Street  
East Sydney, NSW, 2011

Email: [awr@fwc.gov.au](mailto:awr@fwc.gov.au)

Dear Commissioners,

RE: Aged Care Work Value Case - Stage Three

Garden Village writes this submission in relation to the Aged Care Work Value Case - Stage 3 which determines the wage value of employees other than direct care employees and the level of adjustment for direct care employees.

### **About Garden Village**

Garden Village is a not for profit Aged Care, Retirement Living and Home Care provider in Port Macquarie. To care for our residents, we have 252 employees who work as carers, nurses, cleaners, maintenance, catering and administration.

Our team are highly skilled individuals who are passionate about providing exceptional care 24 hours a day. Garden Village has 350 retirement living residents and 142 aged care residents at a collocated site<sup>1</sup>.

The Mid North Coast has one of the highest ageing populations in Australia. The Hastings district, including Wauchope and Port Macquarie areas are in the top 5 oldest locations in Australia<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Garden Village Port Macquarie, <https://www.gardenvillage.com.au/>

<sup>2</sup> Australian Aged Care Collaboration; It's time to care about Aged Care Report 2021; [REPORT-Australian-Aged-Care-Collaboration-FEB2021-FINAL.pdf \(theweeklysource.com.au\)](#)

As of March 2023 Garden Village employs 252 people which includes:

Profession	#Employees	Percentage of total staff
Cleaning and Maintenance	20	8%
Administration	38	15%
Catering	38	15%
Direct Care Staff	156	62%
TOTAL	252	

## Garden Village's Position

**The inequity of not providing the wage increase to all employees who work in aged care must be addressed in Stage Three of the Fair Work Value Case.**

1. Garden Village strongly supports pay increases for all staff including non direct care staff to be fully funded by the Federal Government.
2. Research well defines that any unfairness or perceived unfairness can negatively impact workplace productivity, employee engagement and morale, access to talent, and retention<sup>3</sup>. The aged care sector, like many other sectors or industries in Australia, require an engaged, productive and increasing talent and need to employ an estimated 1 million people by 2050 to meet the demands for services<sup>4</sup>.
3. Inequity and any unfairness (either perceived or otherwise) in pay will negatively impact Garden Village's and the sector's ability to engage labour and effectively meet the needs of older Australians in the future.
4. The Hastings is one of the oldest regions in Australia (years) and impediments to attracting and retaining labour will negatively affect aged care providers ability to care for older Australians.
5. The important care work we do every day at Garden Village is a team effort. People only have excellence in care with effort from both direct and indirect care workers.
6. A team approach in the workplace with equality in pay, provides for increased retention and performance of employees<sup>5</sup>
7. Government funding increases have not kept up with the cost of living. All staff are impacted by the cost of living, not only direct care staff.

## Work Value of Employees

**Garden Village supports the wage value claim for all employees and asks the Fair Work Commission to include administrative employees, catering and maintenance employees in the work value claim.**

1. Garden Village asserts a team approach is used within the sector and all employees provide residents with the highest possible levels of support and connect with residents and clients on a daily basis.

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<sup>3</sup> Workplace Gender Equality Agency; What is pay equity; <https://www.wgea.gov.au/pay-equity>

<sup>4</sup> Aged Care Quality & Safety Royal Commission; Attraction, Retention and Utilisation of the Aged Care Workforce; <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/system/files/2020-06/RCD.9999.0176.0001.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Bhaumik, A; Htun,WT; 2021, Journal of Positive School Psychology; Employees Job Satisfaction and Retention at Workplace; <https://www.journalppw.com/index.php/jpsp/article/download/2453/1536>.

2. All aged care workers are central to the provision of safe, loving care, and their work should be properly valued.
3. The wage rates for non direct care staff do not recognise the nature of work and the level of skill and responsibility involved in performing the work to meet current Aged Care Quality Standards.
4. In order to attract and retain the number of skilled workers needed to deliver safe and quality care in the sector, wages must be competitive and equitable for all employees.
5. A recent resident engagement survey completed in 2023 included feedback from a resident: “Pay all the workers more. Nurses, catering, cleaners, maintenance and all the people that provide the basics for us all.” This sentiment is supported by the Garden Village community.
6. Garden Village consistently achieves excellence in Aged Care Quality Audits and Star Ratings including five stars for compliance. This level of care and excellence can only be achieved thanks to the commitment of all team members. Wages must reflect this value sector wide, not just for some.
7. The shift towards Consumer Directed Care is positive but it has increased the demands on all Aged Care employees and this must be recognised in the Modern Awards for all employees in the aged care sector. .
8. Applying the wage increase to some employees and not others is unacceptable and divisive. The decision and inequity fails to consider and recognise the significant contribution of 38 percent of our workforce to improve the quality of lives of vulnerable older Australians.

A recent resident survey asked the question “What does the Garden Village team do well?” A resident answered “Smile, especially under extreme workload.”

Despite the challenges of the sector the Garden Village team happily supports the diverse needs of our community, many of whom have significant health issues and comorbidities.

Non direct care staff need to receive a wage increase via their Modern Award that properly reflects the complexity and challenges of the sector, and this wage increase should be fully covered by the Federal Government.

The wage increase is critical to the long term sustainability and future of the aged care sector in Australia.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Yours faithfully,



**Craig Wearne**  
CEO Garden Village Port Macquarie