

National Aged Care Research Roundtable Survey Report

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National Aged Care Research Roundtable Survey

The Australian Government Department of Health commissioned the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) to undertake a National Aged Care Research Roundtable Project to identify priority research areas for aged care reforms. This project involved a gap analysis (review and consultation) to identify gaps in research about aged care in Australia, and two half-day National Aged Care Research Roundtable Workshops. Following this, a survey to validate and refine the findings from the roundtable workshops was sent to 228 aged care experts across Australia. An invitation to complete the survey, accompanied by the roundtable workshops consultation report, was sent via email, with respondents completing it electronically via Survey Monkey. The survey gathered both quantitative and qualitative data to identify principles that should be applied to all aged care research, research priorities to address the gaps in aged care, and infrastructure requirements needed to be able to adequately conduct research in aged care. A copy of the survey is in Appendix 1. After the removal of duplicate and incomplete responses, 90 survey responses were recorded. A final report incorporating the findings from each phase of the project as well as identifying key opportunities and priorities for research in the aged care sector has been provided to the Australian Government Department of Health. This report describes in further detail the survey results.

Results

Demographics of survey respondents

The majority of respondents identified as researchers/academics with almost half of all respondents citing their expertise in the health/medical area of aged care. Half of the respondents were based in Victoria, however there was representation from all states/territories within Australia except Northern Territory. The respondents were primarily from metropolitan areas. Tables 1-4 display the demographics of all survey respondents.

Table 1. What sector do you most align with?

Answer choices	Responses (%)	Responses (N)
Research/Academic	61.11%	55
Government/Policy	7.78%	7
Service provider	7.78%	7
Advocacy	13.33%	12
Other	10.00%	9
Total	100%	90

Table 2. What is your main area of expertise in aged care?

Answer choices	Responses (%)	Responses (N)
Health/Medical	46.67%	42
Social	13.33%	12
Economics	13.33%	12
Lived experience	12.22%	11
Other	14.44%	13
Total	100%	90

Table 3. In which state/territory are based?

Answer choices	Responses (%)	Responses (N)
Northern Territory	0.00%	0
Queensland	7.87%	7
New South Wales	16.85%	15
Australian Capital Territory	12.36%	11
Victoria	50.56%	45
Tasmania	2.25%	2
South Australia	4.49%	4
Western Australia	5.62%	5
Total	100%	89

Table 4. Is the area you are located considered...

Answer choices	Responses (%)	Responses (N)
Metropolitan	84.44%	76
Rural/Regional	15.56%	14
Total	100%	90

Principles

The majority of participants agreed with all principles (see table 5). The highest level of agreement (100%/87 respondents) was on the principle of *Equity and rights: Ensuring equity of participation for all research populations (older people, carers, staff) is prioritised, optimising representation from underrepresented populations, and designing for diversity*. A high level of agreement (97.75%/87 respondents) was also noted on the following principles;

- *Involvement and engagement of end users: Involvement and engagement of older people and carers (formal and informal) in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants*
- *Involvement and engagement of end users: Involvement and engagement of the aged care sector in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants*
- *Policy and practice relevant research: Research proposals and findings are effectively/efficiently communicated to policy makers*

Table 5. Do you agree with these principles?

Research principles	Agree	Disagree	Total
Equity and rights: Research is consistent with a rights-based framework	97.73% 86	2.27% 2	88
Equity and rights: Ensuring equity of participation for all research populations (older people, carers, staff) is prioritised, optimising representation from underrepresented populations, and designing for diversity	100.00% 87	0.00% 0	87
Equity and rights: Research participants and advisors are adequately prepared, recognised and remunerated	94.32% 83	5.68% 5	88
Involvement and engagement of end users: Involvement and engagement of older people and carers (formal and informal) in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants	97.75% 87	2.25% 2	89
Involvement and engagement of end users: Involvement and engagement of the aged care sector in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants	97.75% 87	2.25% 2	89
Policy and practice relevant research: Research outputs/outcomes are relevant to policy and practice	96.63% 86	3.37% 3	89
Policy and practice relevant research: Research outputs are timely and persuasive	96.59% 85	3.41% 3	88
Policy and practice relevant research: Financial considerations, including economic and cost effectiveness studies, are incorporated into research	94.32% 83	5.68% 5	88
Policy and practice relevant research: Research proposals and findings are effectively/efficiently communicated to policy makers	97.75% 87	2.25% 2	89
Policy and practice relevant research: Research is contextually appropriate and can be translated into policy and practice	97.73% 86	2.27% 2	88

In response to the qualitative comments on the survey, some changes were made to further clarify the intent of the principles and incorporated in the National Aged Care Research Roundtable Draft Final Report. Comments that were considered out of the scope of this project are not reflected in these changes. This included basic science, considerations covered by ethics requirements, and any aspect beyond the remit of research such as the need to improve working conditions within the aged care sector.

The following additions or clarifications were made to the equity and rights principle:

- Diversity and cultural safety is considered in research design
- Clarification of who research advisors are (consumers or people with lived experience)
- Dignity and respect is preserved for all people involved in research, including researchers, consumers and participants.

The following additions or clarifications were made to the involvement of end users principle:

- Adding aged care providers and policy makers into the list of who should be included in the design and deliver of aged care research
- Highlighting participatory co-design as an effective way to include all necessary and relevant parties in the research
- Having culturally appropriate resources to assist those from diverse backgrounds to be involved
- Specific information when conducting research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The following additions or clarifications were made to the policy and practice relevant research principle:

- Research can take many forms (for example, policy relevant research, discovery research). Regardless of its form it should be independent, transparent and collaborative
- Clarity around the difference between research impacting policy and research impacting practice
- Removed the word persuasive in relation to research findings as this was seen to be biasing the results. This was replaced with significant and transparent.
- Research and research findings should be accessible.

Research Priorities

There was generally strong agreement with the research priorities that were identified through the roundtable workshops. As seen in table 6, those priorities rated to have the highest level of importance were:

- *Research to support a capable and resourced aged care workforce* (90.59%/77 respondents)
- *Research to address structural inequities to older peoples' health, connectedness and access to services* (84.88%/73 respondents)
- *Research to help older people stay healthy* (85.71%/72 respondents)

The priorities rated lowest in importance were *Research to address ageism and stigma* (7.06%/6 respondents) and *Research to promote a holistic integrated approach to end-of-life* (7.06%/6 respondents). With the high level of agreeance across all research priorities, there were insignificant results for priorities rated 'not important'.

Table 6. Thinking about the 11 research priorities listed above, and any others that you think should be included, please rate each on a scale of how important you think they are.

Research priorities	Highest/High	Medium	Low/Lowest	Not important	Total
Research about older people and carers' experiences and expectations about caregiving and care receiving	70.59% 60	23.53% 20	5.88% 5	0.00% 0	85
Research that is designed for diversity	74.42% 64	19.77% 17	5.81% 5	0.00% 0	86
Research to translate principles about older people's rights and choices into practice	81.18% 69	15.29% 13	3.53% 3	0.00% 0	85
Research to address structural inequities to older peoples' health, connectedness and access to services	84.88% 73	12.79% 11	2.33% 2	0.00% 0	86
Research to address ageism and stigma	72.94% 62	18.82% 16	7.06% 6	1.18% 1	85
Research to help older people stay healthy	85.71% 72	11.90% 10	2.38% 2	0.00% 0	84
Research about models of care	74.12% 63	18.82% 16	5.88% 5	1.18% 1	85
Research to support a capable and resourced aged care workforce	90.59% 77	7.06% 6	2.35% 2	0.00% 0	85
Research about home care	82.35% 70	15.29% 13	1.18% 1	1.18% 1	85
Research about enabling technology	58.82% 50	34.12% 29	5.88% 5	1.18% 1	85
Research to promote a holistic integrated approach to end-of-life	76.47% 65	15.29% 13	7.06% 6	1.18% 1	85

The qualitative feedback from the survey did not suggest any new priorities be added, however there were some changes suggested to amend or clarify the policies already identified. Ensuring that diverse and underrepresented populations are included in all research was a common theme identified across all priorities. As above, those comments considered out of the scope of the project have not been integrated. The following recommendations were provided about additions to the research priorities or where greater clarification was needed:

Research about older people and carers' experiences and expectations about caregiving and care receiving:

- More detail included about the types of services that older people and their carers' may have experience with:
 - How formal services intersect with aged care, e.g. disability support, housing, community services
 - How older people and carers choose aged care services and what information they need to make an informed choice
 - How older people and carers choose accommodation payment types
 - What older people and carers value in aged care, especially in relation to the strength of preferences for different quality metrics and wellbeing components
- Consider older people's contribution to family and society.

Research that is designed for diversity:

- Include people with disability, both later life acquired and lifelong
- Whilst it is important to design research for diversity, it is also important to find out the most effective evidence-based interventions for different cultures, and also how to contextually adapt evidence-based interventions.

Research to translate principles about older people's rights and choices into practice:

- Ethics research that aims to support providers and staff in resolving conflict of rights is important.

Research to address structural inequities to older people's health, connectedness and access to services:

- Research is specifically needed to find out the factors that are contributing to the time between assessments and accessing aged care services
- Research is needed about addressing aged care service inequity in regional, rural and remote Australia
- How does the "consumer-driven and market based system" work in rural / regional Australia.

Research to address ageism and stigma:

- Older people are sometimes seen as not worthy of receiving appropriate or high quality medical care. There was a call to include research into addressing this perception.

Research to help older people stay healthy:

- Include mental health as an area that needs to be researched
- Emphasise that this needs to occur in people from diverse backgrounds
- Research on the social determinants of health is needed
- Research on the impact that the environment has on older people being able to stay healthy is needed
- What level of health literacy and financial literacy do older people and their carers have? How can we improve health literacy and financial literacy in older people and their carers?

Research about models of care:

- Comparing the difference between models of care in metropolitan and rural areas, especially in relation to access and availability of services and the capacity of the service system
- Funding models;
 - Development and evaluation of realistic funding models
 - Further refinement of the AN-ACC model
 - How to structure aged care pricing and how to use pricing to align provider behaviour to help achieve policy outcomes
 - Role of co-payments in financing aged care
 - What drives service provider investment decisions
 - Service provider characteristics and how these impact care quality and financial performance
 - How the aged care market operates in terms of competition
- Consideration of how the different types and model of care complement and substitute each other
- Dementia specific models of care
- Clinical governance and structures in aged care.

Research to support a capable and resourced aged care workforce:

- Explicit focus on the experiences of the migrant workforce in the aged care sector
- Focus on job satisfaction and the attitudes to the aged care workforce
- Research about the current curriculum for the aged care workforce
- Using more diverse measures of study recruitment for research involving the aged care workforce.

Research about home care:

- It is important to explore efficiency of each type of service as well as the effectiveness.

Research about enabling technology:

- Research on ensuring that enabling equipment or technology is useful and able to be used correctly and effectively by the older person.

Research to promote a holistic integrated approach to end-of-life:

- Include palliative care
- Explore older people's level of death literacy
- Research to explore the many different forms that grief and end-of-life can be experienced by older people and their carers.

Research infrastructure and capability

Over two thirds of the respondents (68.24%) believed that there are other elements required, in addition to funding, to ensure equitable and evidence-based aged care research.

Survey respondents reported that other elements of research infrastructure and capability, in addition to funding, are important. Comments received did not recommend additional elements, but rather they expanded on the four that were already identified.

Collaboration:

- Include industry stakeholders
- Suggestions on how to encourage and build collaboration, such as partnership hubs
- Broadening the scope of aged care research and encouraging collaboration across intersecting fields, for example, architecture, information technology, design, health and social care
- Regular and transparent communication among all stakeholders to encourage collaboration, for example, regular forums aimed at discussing aged care research priorities

Data Collection, Access and Integration:

- Cohesive strategy for aged care research is needed to provide direction around quality and fit-for purpose data collection, facility integration of data and research and ensure that appropriate governance and data sharing arrangements are in place.
- National Minimum Data Set:
 - Researchers consider how their research outputs can contribute to this
 - Data should be made publically available where possible
 - Dynamic, real-time and accessible data and information
 - Continued and enhanced access to aged care data in forms that supports research
 - Include dementia specific research and data
 - This could support large scale, system wide research to ensure that aged care research is representative and useful.

Knowledge hub:

- Expand on the purpose of the knowledge hub:
 - Serve as a source of information for older people, carers and other stakeholders about the opportunity to participate in research and consultation
 - Provide information about the outcomes of aged care research
 - Provide an opportunity for increased public interest and discourse on aged care

- Ensure that it caters for all stakeholders, including those from diverse populations

Research ready aged care sector:

- Exploration about what factors encourage the uptake of research in the workplace and how, why and when it is applied to practice
- There is a need to make the aged care workforce 'data ready'
- Economic analyses may contribute to the aged care sector being more willing to participate in research as they will see the financial impact
- Aged care researchers encouraged and supported to participate in multidisciplinary research that is translatable
- Aged care workforce to be skilled up to be research literate

Conclusion

The results of the National Aged Care Research Roundtable survey indicated strong agreement with the set of principles, research priorities and infrastructure requirements identified via first two components of the National Aged Care Research Roundtable process. Upon analysis of the survey responses, no major changes were required. However, the principles, priorities and infrastructure requirements were refined and further developed in accordance with the recommendations provided by respondents through the qualitative data. These changes are included in the National Aged Care Research Roundtable Draft Final Report (submitted to the Australian Department of Health on 19th Dec) which details the final outcomes of the National Aged Care Research Roundtable project.

Appendices

Appendix 1. National Aged Care Research Survey

The aim of this survey is to validate and refine the principles, priorities and infrastructure requirements for aged care research as outlined in the accompanying National Aged Care Research Roundtable Consultation Paper, November 2021. Please complete by close of business Friday 3rd December 2021.

1. Contact information (optional)

Name _____

Organisation _____

Email address _____

2. What sector do you most align with?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| ☐ Research/Academic | ☐ Advocacy |
| ☐ Government/Policy | ☐ Other |
| ☐ Service provider | |

3. What is your main area of expertise in aged care?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Health/Medical | ☐ Lived experience |
| ☐ Social | ☐ Other |
| ☐ Economics | |

4. In which state/territory are you based?

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Northern Territory | ☐ Victoria |
| ☐ Queensland | ☐ Tasmania |
| ☐ New South Wales | ☐ South Australia |
| ☐ Australia Capital Territory | ☐ Western Australia |

5. Is the area you are located considered

- ☐ Metropolitan
- ☐ Rural/Regional

Section 1. Principles

The consultation paper outlines principles of research (Section 1. Principles, p7) that should be considered and incorporated across all areas of aged care research:

Equity and rights:

- Research is consistent with a rights-based framework
- Ensuring equity of participation for all research populations (older people, carers, staff) is prioritised, optimising representation from underrepresented populations, and designing for diversity

- **Research participants and advisors are adequately prepared, recognised and remunerated**

Involvement and engagement of end users:

- **Involvement and engagement of older people and carers (formal and informal) in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants**
- **Involvement and engagement of the aged care sector in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants**

Policy and practice relevant research:

- **Research outputs/outcomes are relevant to policy and practice**
- **Research outputs are timely and persuasive**
- **Financial considerations, including economic and cost-effectiveness studies, are incorporated into research**
- **Research proposals and findings are effectively/efficiently communicated to policy makers**
- **Research is contextually appropriate and can be translated into policy and practice**

1. Do you agree with these principles?

Agree Disagree

Equity and rights: Research is consistent with a rights-based framework

Equity and rights: Ensuring equity of participation for all research populations (older people, carers, staff) is prioritised, optimising representation from underrepresented populations, and designing for diversity

Equity and rights: Research participants and advisors are adequately prepared, recognised and remunerated

Involvement and engagement of end users: Involvement and engagement of older people and carers (formal and informal) in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants

Involvement and engagement of end users: Involvement and engagement of the aged care sector in the research design and delivery of research, and as research participants

Policy and practice relevant research: Research outputs/outcomes are relevant to policy and practice

Policy and practice relevant research: Research outputs are timely and persuasive

Policy and practice relevant research: Financial considerations, including economic and cost effectiveness studies, are incorporated into research

Policy and practice relevant research: Research proposals and findings are effectively/efficiently communicated to policy makers

Policy and practice relevant research: Research is contextually appropriate and can be translated into policy and practice

2. Do you think there are other principles that need to be added?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If yes, please comment:

Section 2. Research priorities to address the identified gaps

The project identified a number of gaps in aged care research. The following 11 research priorities (Section 2. Research priorities to address the identified gaps, p9) have been recommended to address the gaps:

- **Research about older people and carers' experiences and expectations about caregiving and care receiving**
- **Research that is designed for diversity**
- **Research to translate principles about older people's rights and choices into practice**
- **Research to address structural inequities to older peoples' health, connectedness and access to services**
- **Research to address ageism and stigma**
- **Research to help older people stay healthy**
- **Research about models of care**
- **Research to support a capable and resourced aged care workforce**
- **Research about home care**
- **Research about enabling technology**
- **Research to promote a holistic integrated approach to end-of-life**

1. Are there additional research priorities that should be considered as important in addressing the gaps in aged care research?

2. Thinking about the 11 research priorities listed above, and any others that you think should be included, please rate each on a scale of how important you think they are.

Highest High Medium Low Lowest Not important

Research about older people and carers' experiences and expectations about caregiving and care receiving

Research that is designed for diversity

Research to translate principles about older people's rights and choices into practice

Research to address structural inequities to older peoples' health, connectedness and access to services

Research to address ageism and stigma

Research to help older people stay healthy

Research about models of care

Research to support a capable and resourced aged care workforce

Research about home care

Research about enabling technology

Research to promote a holistic integrated approach to end-of-life

Section 3. Research infrastructure and capability

Four key elements to ensure strong research infrastructure and capability for equitable and evidencebased aged care research have been recommended (Section 3. Research infrastructure and capability, p15):

- **Collaboration**
- **Data collection, access and integration**
- **Knowledge hub**
- **Research-ready aged care sector**

1. With the exception of funding are there any other elements required to ensure strong research infrastructure and capability for equitable and evidence-based aged care research?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If yes, please comment:

Section 4. Additional comments

Do you have any additional comments on each of the sections?

1. Aged care research principles

2. Research priorities in aged care research

3. Infrastructure needed to undertake aged care research

Thank you for completing this survey.