



CARE

community, advocacy,
respect and equity.

A NEW VISION FOR DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

We need a new vision for Community Services.

Community Services work with the most marginalised and disadvantaged members of our community. Each day we deliver services like disability services, youth services, homeless services, womens services, community care services, community legal services, housing services, family support services, relationship services, neighbourhood services, information and referral services, settlement services, community education services, mental health services, drug and alcohol services – the list goes on and on.

These services are drastically under-funded and face a serious crisis in attracting and retaining skilled staff. If these issues are not addressed then quality services cannot be delivered to the most needy and disadvantaged in our community.

A socially-inclusive society is one which embraces all of the members of the community and seeks to address disadvantage wherever it is encountered.

To build an inclusive society we need to ensure that the multiple needs of clients are met. This will

require a workforce for the future – one that is highly skilled across many areas of work – a workforce that is professionally paid, well trained and with a dynamic and transferable set of skills.

We need new Standards for our industry. Standards that ensure:

- Quality service delivery
- A highly skilled workforce
- Wages and working conditions that truly reflect the value of the work we do
- Workplace Safety
- Access to and recognition for education and professional development

Community and disability service workers are the heart and soul of the community sector – new Standards for quality community services start with us! We deserve to be recognised for the work we do, however we must also have new expectations of ourselves and each other. We must work toward acknowledgement of our value and the contributions of our industry.

OUR VISION MUST BE BASED IN ACTION: A PLAN FOR COMMUNITY, ADVOCACY, RESPECT, EQUITY.

ASU members and their supporters C.A.R.E.

A Campaign and a Sector



A LONG TERM SOLUTION

This campaign plan is unlike any other we have adopted before. This is not a short term plan with short term fixes. A long term plan means we have long term goals. A long term solution allows us to have a big picture vision. It will not be easy. It will not be achieved quickly.

We have made do for too long. It's time for a big picture view and for us to commit to the long term goals necessary to realise that view. It is only in this way we can build an industry that is properly funded to deliver the services needed. This is the only way we can attract and retain the workforce we need. It is the only way our sector can be valued as it should be.

We need to work together to address the big issues facing our sector:

FUNDING – We must build an industry that is, in the long term, properly funded by governments. This funding system must be reflective of the community needs, the needs of the sector and the needs of the organisations that contribute to it. We must shift government from the practice of short term funding with short term, politically motivated outcomes, to long term ongoing funding reflecting the reality of the industry.

WORKFORCE EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT – It is essential that we attract and retain a highly skilled workforce – a workforce continually skilled to address the complexity of the challenges that confront them. But we need support and resources to ensure the workforce is strengthened and its capacity increased to meet the complex needs of our clients. And, we need to lock in an industry-wide plan for education, training and development.

WAGE PARITY – We must commit to the principle of equal pay for equal work. We must seek to be valued equitably with our colleagues in the public sector.

A THREE PHASED PLAN

The campaign that we will develop will be a long term campaign. Our campaign will build an alliance that extends across and beyond the political divide. Our campaign will ensure that all political parties commit to implementing the key elements of our strategy. Our campaign is flexible enough to respond to changes in government, and robust enough to hold government to account. Our campaign provides the scaffolding on which our sector can grow and develop, where workers are properly recognised for the work they do.

COMMUNITY A community has space for everyone. We believe that every person has the right to participation and inclusion in society. We believe that we can no longer afford to leave people in our communities behind. **We commit to working together to achieve the standard of quality community services needed to achieve this goal.**

ADVOCACY The rights of individuals and groups to advocate on their own and others' behalf is fundamental to a democratic society. We believe our sector is perfectly placed as an advocate for ourselves, each other, and the communities and individuals with whom we engage. **In this campaign we will work together to advocate for a fair deal for community services.**

RESPECT Every person is entitled to dignity and respect. All people have the right to participate and be supported by their governments and communities. As workers who perform essential work within our communities, we deserve respect for the work we do. **Therefore, we commit to campaign for better funded services. These services must be delivered by a highly skilled, well paid and well trained workforce in which every worker receives dignity and respect.**

EQUITY Every person is entitled to be treated fairly and justly valued for their contributions. We believe that Social and Community Services make a significant valuable contribution and we believe that this contribution should be recognised and acknowledged. **We commit to working to ensure that work of equal value receives equal pay. We deliver programs on behalf of the government yet there is an unacceptable gap between the pay and conditions of public sector and community sector workers.**

we believe in



Phase 1 - 2008 - 2009

BUILD THE NEW INDUSTRY STANDARDS. We will consult ASU members through an industry-wide survey which will be the largest of its kind. The Standards will then be discussed and endorsed in community and disability sector workplaces across NSW and the ACT. These Standards will become the agenda in conversations with our supporters and about our expectations of government.

BUILD SUPPORTERS FOR THE NEW INDUSTRY STANDARD BY BUILDING THE C.A.R.E.

ALLIANCE. The ASU will ask employers, peak groups, client and carer groups to join with us in the C.A.R.E. Alliance to advocate and campaign for the new Standards. The C.A.R.E. Alliance can be a powerful group as it will bring our sector together – workers, employers and clients.

IDENTIFY THE STANDARDS THAT MUST BE INTRODUCED IN PHASE 1. We understand we will not be able to achieve the Standards overnight – but we must aim to make progress immediately. Our Awards will either expire or be radically changed in 2009 – we need to have clear goals of what improvements we want to achieve. These goals will be finalised by workplace meetings and a State-wide delegates conference.

CAMPAIGN WITH THE GOVERNMENT FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE 2009 STATE AND FEDERAL BUDGETS. To achieve better wages and conditions for us all, we will be involved in extensive campaigning and advocacy in the lead up to the 2009 budgets at State, Territory and Federal levels.

Phase 2 - 2009 – 2011

This phase of our campaign will be highly political building on the work of Phase 1 and working at various levels.

- We will assess the success of Phase 1 and re-set our goals for the next stage.
- In Phase 2 we will expect to see: progress towards best practice in OHS; further progress towards parity with public sector wages; and a roll out of a comprehensive industry education and training plan.
- In re-setting our goals we will have clear expectations of political parties in the lead up to the 2010 Federal Election and the 2011 State Election.
- We will campaign for delivery of Phase 2 of our claim in the 2011 State and Federal budgets.
- At this stage we would expect to see a further significant movement toward parity with the public sector.

Phase 3 – 2011- 2015

In phase three of the campaign will move to full implementation of the new Industry Standards.

- A clear link between Education and Wages will be established
- Best practice in OHS
- Parity of wages with the public sector
- A charter of client rights

2008 – 2009: WHAT WILL WE DO NOW IN PHASE 1?

1. BUILDING OUR OWN POWER

Winning is about power. Those with power win – those without it don't. In this campaign we have to ensure that we have the power and we have to do everything we can to get that power. There are three steps we need to take to ensure that we have the power we need in this campaign. For us, the power we need is people power and lots of it.

- We have to grow our Union in our own workplaces. That means every one of us has to go out and talk to the non-members and convince them they need to be part of this campaign.
- We have to grow the Union everywhere. That means talking to everyone in our industry about joining the union. We have to build a sense of unity and solidarity across workplaces committed to our campaign.
- ASU members will endorse our claim (the new Industry Standards) through workplace meetings and a State wide delegates conference in September 2008.
- We will campaign across the industry for a better deal for community services.

2. BUILDING ALLIANCES -WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS THE INDUSTRY

Our campaign will be won by a coalition made up of members of the ASU, Industry Peak groups, Client & Carer Groups, employers and hopefully government. To succeed we need to work together.

We will meet with a vast array of organisations representing various interests in our industry. We are building a C.A.R.E. Alliance. The C.A.R.E. Alliance will be a strong and powerful group to help us achieve our goals. This Alliance will sponsor research, lobby government, and work in partnership to build a strong community campaign.

Beginning in 2008 we will be working with the C.A.R.E Alliance to identify what Alliance members think are the key elements of a new set of Industry Standards. Our participation in this Alliance and the things we bring to the table as part of any discussion about what the Industry Standards should be will be determined by members.

3. WHAT TYPE OF STANDARDS ARE WE CAMPAIGNING FOR?

Adequate funding to deliver the quality services

- Funding based on community need not on claimed government capacity
- Appropriate funding models driven by need not by competitive tendering

- A proper assessment of the cost of delivery of services
- Contracts that are assessed against human outcome not just economic outcomes
- Pay rates that properly reflect the worth of our work
- Quality standards for service delivery organisations
- Pay rates that properly reflect the worth of our work
- Closing the gap between public and community sector wage rates
- Recognition of the complexity of work and of skill
- An Industry Strategy to attract and retain staff

Safety in the Workplace

- Adequate staffing
- Fair rosters
- Reasonable work-loads
- Safe workplaces for clients and staff
- Properly trained and resourced staff to deal with clients with challenging behaviours

Career Paths, Education and Training

- Fully portable Long Service Leave across the Industry
- Recognition of service with previous employers
- A highly skilled and well educated workforce
- A comprehensive education and training plan for the Industry
- Higher Education courses
- Recognition of Higher Education through higher wages
- Real career paths for staff
- Higher levels of pay for higher levels of responsibility within grades
- Higher rates of pay for those taking on responsibility for the supervision of staff
- An end to the fact that the only way to earn more is to move into administration and management. Reward and recognition needed for highly skilled case workers or support workers who stay in face-to-face client services
- Parity of wages with the public sector
- Equal pay for work of equal value
- A link between education and higher wages
- Strategies for Rural and Remote communities
- Strategies to address the specific needs of Indigenous communities

**ASU members and their supporters C.A.R.E.
Call 1300 784 278 or www.asuservices.labor.net.au
for more information**