

Health Care and Social Assistance Strategy 2019–2022

Our vision

Healthy, safe and productive working lives for people in the Queensland health care and social assistance (HCSA) industry.

This strategy

This strategy outlines Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's (WHSQ) plan for reducing the incidence and severity of injury and disease in the Queensland health care and social assistance industry. The strategy details the high-level direction and approach we will take to achieve our vision.

The strategy supports the *Five Year Strategic Plan for work health and safety in Queensland 2019-2023* and the *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022*.

This strategy identifies priority hazards impacting on the health, safety and wellbeing of workers in the industry. It also outlines our approach to addressing these issues and working collaboratively with industry to achieve the following long-term outcomes:

- Hazards and risks are effectively identified and controlled.
- Workers are less likely to be exposed to these hazards and risks.
- Industry has lower rates of work-related death, injury and disease.

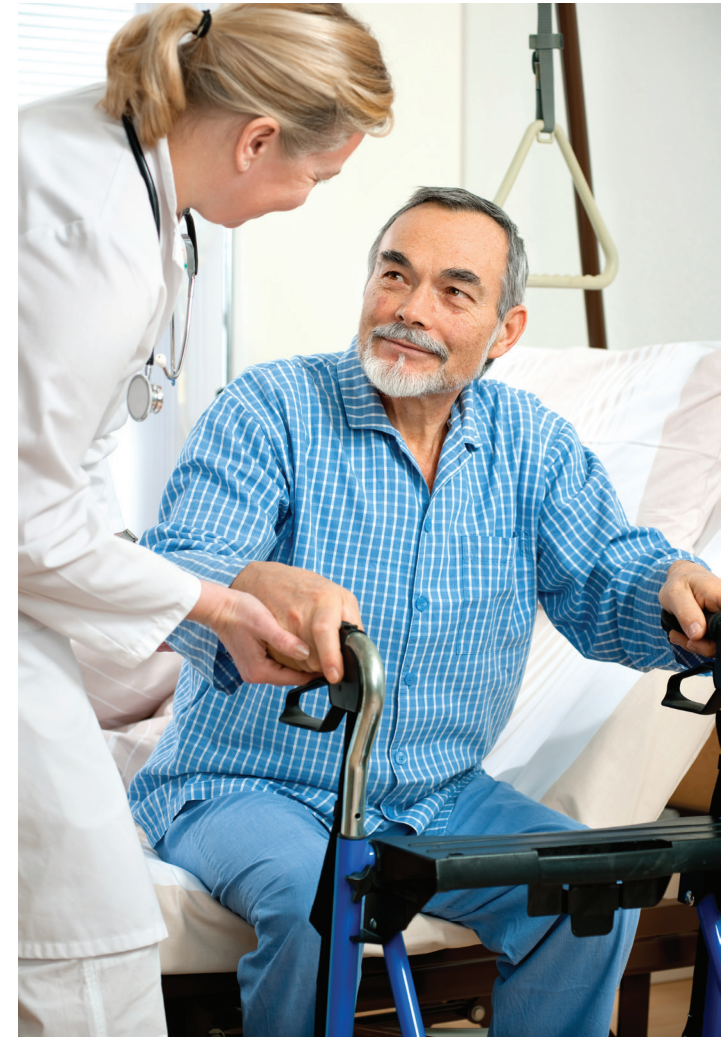
Our industry focus

The health care and social assistance industry includes businesses engaged in providing human health care and social assistance, including hospitals, residential care services, social assistance services, medical and other health care services (such as ambulance, physiotherapy and general practice). The *Health Care and Social Assistance Industry Profile* provides an overview of this industry.

There is a wide range of hazards which can impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of its workers. Extensive stakeholder consultation, claims data analysis and environmental scanning have identified the following priority issues for the health care and social assistance industry to be addressed under this strategy:

- high rates of musculoskeletal disorders, particularly from people handling and slips, trips and falls at level
- psychosocial hazards, such as work-related stress, occupational violence, bullying and fatigue
- vulnerable workers, resulting from non-typical and unstable work arrangements
- increasing demand for home care, which brings risks including isolated work in uncontrolled environments.

While these issues are highly represented in the current industry profile, this strategy will also be responsive to emerging trends and issues identified through our ongoing industry engagement and research.



Achieving our vision

We aim to embed significant and sustainable improvements in work health, safety and wellbeing management across the industry through the delivery of three key strategic themes.

1 Industry leadership

Partnerships	Networks	Leaders at all levels
Build relationships and develop partnerships with industry stakeholders including government, private sector, researchers and community. Work together to improve outcomes.	Support and engage with industry networks to disseminate information and influence peer-to-peer learning.	Work with leaders from industry to promote and support positive culture change.

2 Effective regulation

Target enforcement activities to identify and remedy the most serious breaches, focusing on activities and workplaces that give rise to the most serious risks. This is in accordance with WHSQ strategic enforcement priorities, priority industries and disorders, and will assist to:

- monitor and enforce compliance (including directing a remedy, imposing a sanction, or both)
- develop and provide information and advice about compliance.

3 Support and develop

Continuous improvement	Resources	Internal capability
Capture, analyse and report on data from the HCSA industry to better understand industry issues and to improve WHSQ engagement and support.	Increase awareness and develop materials, tools and information to assist the HCSA industry with managing work health, safety and wellbeing.	Ensure WHSQ staff have the specialist skills and knowledge needed to engage effectively with the HCSA industry.

Our approach

Our work is supported by principles that foster, drive and verify improvement in management of work health and safety (WHS) risks. All projects and engagements will be designed and delivered according to these principles.

Collaborative	Work with and through industry associations, unions, and businesses.
Systems-based	Address key risks at a systemic level through good work design.
Integrated	Promote an integrated approach to health, safety and wellbeing.
Leadership focussed	Foster systemic change through effective leadership and positive safety culture.
Responsive	Ensure compliance with WHS legislation.
Capacity building	Build capability within businesses to manage their own WHS risks.
Relevant	Tailor information and engagement approach to fit business characteristics and needs.

The role of industry

Working together we can increase awareness and commitment to improving health and safety across the industry. Industry can support us in achieving our vision by:

- supporting compliance through the adoption of focused and effective work health and safety systems, processes and procedures (that are fit for purpose with worker input and involvement, and reflect how work is actually conducted)
- collaborating through industry partnerships and networks that support work health and safety education
- promoting positive culture change and safety leadership for increased business sustainability
- embracing innovative approaches to safe and healthy work design and processes.