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## Unions call for additional funds to be reinvested back into aged care workers.

Unions welcome the additional funding recommendations in the Productivity Commission's Caring for Older Australians draft report released early today, but are disappointed that it fails to address key workplace challenges faced by the aged care sector.

ACTU President Ged Kearney said that although aspects of the report was effective in addressing the overarching issues there was a clear absence of recommendations on how it would address the shortage of carers in the industry.

"As a country with an aging population the demand for aged care will increase and thus we will need more workers to service it." Ms Kearney said.

"We are already experiencing a difficulty attracting and retaining workers so we can only see the problem getting worse if nothing is done about it.

"Aged care workers need fair and adequate wages to ensure an end to the high level of turnover in the industry.

"There needs to be a balanced approach where there is adequate infrastructure and facilities as well as an adequate level of quality care.

The report identifies inferior wage competitiveness and conditions, an unarticulated career pathway as well as limited skill development opportunities as key factors in the shortage of workers in the industry.

"It places the responsibility on the stakeholders and employers to improve these barriers but fails to identify core recommendations on what role government will play," Ms Kearney said.

"There is an urgent cry for workplace reform in this industry and any increase in funding to the industry needs to seriously consider improvements to wages and conditions.

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