

Most Australians support tax levy to improve aged care

28 May 2021, by James Giggacher



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The vast majority of Australians aren't confident in the country's aged care system, with more than one-in-10 saying they have no confidence at all, new analysis from The Australian National University (ANU) shows.

The findings also show more than eight-in-10 Australians back a tax-based levy to improve aged care.

The study of more than 3,200 Australians' attitudes to aged care found less than one-in-three Australians had [confidence](#) in the aged care system, compared to 45.4 percent for the Federal Government in Canberra and 77 percent for hospitals and the health system.

Study co-author Professor Nicholas Biddle said the results come at a time when aged care reform was high on the agenda of politicians and voters.

"Our study paints a very timely, and sadly very bleak, picture of the state of aged care according to Australians and our overall faith in a system that has come under close scrutiny in recent years,"

Professor Biddle said.

"We found that across Australia, just 1.8 percent of people had a 'great deal' of confidence in the aged care system and Around 31.1 percent of said they had 'quite a lot' of confidence.

"In contrast, more than half, 55.2 percent, said they did not have 'very much confidence' and 12 percent said they had 'no confidence at all.'"

"With an increased focus on the aged care workforce, it is very troubling that only five percent of Australians said they would definitely recommend a young person work in the industry, and only 10.1 percent saying they would definitely recommend an unemployed person working in the industry."

Most Australians would advise against someone considering a career in the industry, according to Professor Biddle.

"The one positive finding in our study was that the current workforce is much more positive about the industry than those who have never worked in aged care," he said.

The findings follow the announcement of almost \$18 billion in the Federal Budget for aged care reform, and the aged care Royal Commission final report handed down earlier in 2021.

"We also asked people's attitudes about future funding for the aged care system, and specifically if they supported a levy to improve to aged care support," Professor Biddle said.

"Our findings suggest a massive majority, 85.4 percent, of Australians saying they'd support a proposed one percent 'aged care improvement levy' paid via tax.

"And a third of those in favor, 33.5 percent, said this

levy should be paid by all taxpayers.

"This would seem to imply Australians back any effort to improve aged care with extra funding."

The study also provides an estimate of how many Australians provide aged care to a member of their family—11.8 percent of adults.

People aged 45 years or over, almost 70 percent of respondents, were asked if they were worried they'd become a burden on their family later in life. More than one-in-10, 12 percent, said they worried a lot with another 47 percent saying they worry sometimes.

Other significant findings include:

- Females are significantly and substantially more likely to say they provide care for an aged member of their family than males—14.0 percent compared to 9.4 percent.
- More people were confident or very confident about being able to afford aged care services at home (45 percent and 11.1 percent respectively) than being able to afford aged care services in a facility (29.1 percent concerned and 5.4 percent very concerned).
- Confidence in other institutions is strongly associated with confidence in the [aged care](#) system. The two strongest predictors are confidence in the Federal Government and confidence in hospitals and the health care system.

More information: Views and experience of the aged care system in Australia—April 2021.

csmr.cass.anu.edu.au/research/.../australia-april-2021

Provided by Australian National University

APA citation: Most Australians support tax levy to improve aged care (2021, May 28) retrieved 24 October 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-05-australians-tax-levy-aged.html>

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