



Employment & Training



St John Ambulance can help your business comply with new workplace safety requirements.

You can trust St John

THE Occupational Health and Safety legislation has changed, but the most trusted name in first aid hasn't. Since January 2012, a new model Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act and regulations came into effect. In addition, a new First Aid in the Workplace code of practice was approved in July 2012 outlining the main components to be considered under the new WHS legislation. Following a recent survey conducted by St John (NSW), it was shown that almost six out of 10 businesses are either not aware or unsure about the OH&S changes. In addition, only one in seven are fully aware of both the change to WHS

and its implications. It is important that you re-assess your workplace first aid requirements such as: first aid kits, training, signage and first aid rooms. Components such as the size and location of your business, as well as hazards related to the work undertaken at your workplace are to be considered when re-assessing the safety of your workplace. St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) Wollongong Branch can assist your business in being compliant with the new legislation, offering first aid audits, first aid assessments, first aid drills and more. To find out more, call 4229 2788 or email wollongong@stjohnnsw.com.au.



Occupational Health and Safety legislation has changed

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A new age of opportunity

By KEELI CAMBOURNE

AUSTRALIA has about 2800 residential aged-care facilities providing care to more than 160,000 people – and it is predicted in the next 10 years the number of residents in such facilities will nearly double, with the highest growth in residents aged over 95.

This makes the aged-care industry one of the fastest-growing in Australia, with rising demand for a workforce that includes medical, nursing and allied health professionals, carers and assistants.

One of Australia's largest community-based seniors lifestyle and care providers, IRT, in association with Wollongong University, is equipping professionals with the skills needed to meet the demand.

Their training program, the Teaching and Research Aged Care Services (TRACS) initiative, highlights the importance and challenges of creating an aged-care model to meet world's best practice.

IRT College general manager Tania Tsiamis says aged care is becoming a much more specialised career option for health professionals as people live longer and, as a consequence, develop more complex chronic illnesses, including dementia.

"As an individual's health conditions become more complex, so too will the skill requirements of those caring for the older individuals," she says.

"Skill requirements for carers will need to align with this trend, particularly for those providing care outside a traditional care setting, like in-home care."

Aged care can occur across many settings and be provided to people with differing needs. Career options and pathways are just as varied.

In addition to care careers, Tsiamis says IRT, like many aged care providers, is a



IRT resident Dorothy Costello with nursing student Saeid Moradi and Georgia Ryan, 12. Picture: Robert Peet.

significant business that requires specialists in management, finance, strategy, communications, marketing, property, human resources, education and information technology.

As the skills required become more complex and specialised, so do the qualifications needed to work within the industry.

Tsiamis says qualifications are now "a given" rather than something only a small section of the industry obtains.

"Skill development pathways are strong, incorporating entry-level qualifications such as Certificate III in Aged Care or Home and Community Care through to Certificate IV for more advanced skills in core job roles, including Aged Care, Home and Community Care and Leisure and Health," she says.

"Diploma in management and articulation through to tertiary qualifications are also available and becoming increasingly sought-after. At the highest level, masters specialisations such as

dementia are also becoming available."

Tsiamis says there is a growing need to deliver services that reflect competent multicultural awareness and skills.

"Baby boomers will also present a range of different demands as they age, as they come from a strong consumer mindset," she says.

"Complexity of client needs will continue to be a pressing issue and the development of employees beyond core qualifications – those who have a set of targeted skills who can be deployed as required – will be increasingly necessary."

Australia's ageing population is mirrored across the developed world. Tsiamis says a career in the sector offers global opportunities.

"Given the ageing population trends globally, the career can certainly be transferred. This will become more evident over the next five years as the Asia aged care industry begins to develop and mature," she says.



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