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Willing to work: Australian Human Rights Commission Inquiry into Employment Discrimination

The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) is currently conducting an inquiry into age and disability discrimination called 'Willing to Work'.

The PSA's role

In October 2015, a survey was sent to all PSA members. 1,257 responses were received. We would like to thank those who took the time to share your experiences and tell us what changes you think need to be made.

What happens now?

The PSA has lodged a submission to the inquiry based on the experiences shared by members who contributed to the survey.

The submission is available on the PSA website **HERE**.

(<http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Willing-to-Work-Submission-final.pdf>)

Summary of survey results

- 38% of respondents experienced discrimination in employment on the grounds of disability
- 11% experienced discrimination in employment because they were a carer (for an older person or a person with a disability)
- Only 24% of those who experienced discrimination took action
- Of those who experienced discrimination, nearly 73% said the experience impacted their workforce participation

- 88% stated they believed older Australians, those with a disability and their carers experience barriers when they seek work, or in their present employment
- 80% indicated discrimination reduces the likelihood of keeping older Australians and those with a disability in the workforce
- Around half the respondents indicated they believed there were practices, attitudes or laws which discourage or prevent equal participation in employment for older Australians and those with a disability
- 97% stated more flexible working arrangements would assist older workers, workers with a disability and carers of older people and people with a disability to remain in or enter the workforce
- 28% applied for a flexible working agreement at some point, due to having a disability, being older or having carer commitments
- 25% were aware of an older worker, person with a disability or carer for a person with a disability who was forced out of a job because they were unable to access flexible working arrangements
- 64% thought that the experience of age or disability discrimination was different for women.

More about the inquiry

The national inquiry examines practices, attitudes and laws that deny or diminish equal participation in employment of older Australians and Australians with disability, and will make

recommendations about action that should be taken to address employment discrimination.

Terms of Reference for the inquiry

- The obstacles faced by older persons and persons with disabilities in actively participating in the workforce
- Discrimination against older persons and persons with disabilities as a systemic problem and a considerable barrier to their enjoyment of human rights
- The economic and social costs, and the costs to productivity, that result from discrimination against older persons and persons with disabilities in employment
- The Australian Government's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights of older Australians and Australians with disability.

Join the PSA
membership.psa.asn.au/join



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