



## ASU Submission

Australian Bureau of Statistics

### ANZSCO Comprehensive Review

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## The ASU

The Australian Services Union ('ASU') is one of Australia's largest unions, representing approximately 135,000 members. ASU members work in a wide variety of industries and occupations in both the private and public sector. The ASU is the union for Community and Disability Services employees in Australia.

## Our Submission

Overall, the proposed changes are positive, particularly the creation of new occupations that reflect the significant changes in the disability and community sectors that have occurred in recent years. We welcome the proposals to replace the Aged or Disabled Carer, Welfare Worker and Disability Services Officer with new classifications. Our significant concern is with the Disability Support Worker classification.

## Disability Support Worker

The creation of a new occupation of disability support worker ('DSW') is positive. However, the description of the occupation proposed by the ABS does not reflect the professionalized, highly skilled nature of modern disability services. Both the lead statement and main tasks need to be updated to reflect the actual skill and complexity of the role.

### Lead Statement

The Lead Statement notes that a DSW provides services to persons with disabilities 'in their own homes'. We recommend that the lead statement should be amended to recognise that DSWs provide services in community-based and centre-based settings.

Further, the lead statement focuses on the 'caring' element of support work to the exclusion of the welfare and advocacy work. We recommend that the lead statement should be amended to include these tasks.

### Main Tasks

The main tasks do not include a number of tasks that are routinely carried out by disability support workers in a range of settings. We believe the main tasks omitted from the list are the more complex and higher-intensity tasks that disability support workers carry out on a daily basis in both home and residential settings. These tasks include the following:

- Implement behaviour support strategies in accordance with the behaviour support plan;
- Administer medication;
- Support individuals with feeding, including tube, peg and dysphagia support
- Negotiate with other service providers for appropriate support for people with disabilities;

Many of these complex and higher-intensity tasks are described in the NDIS [Commission's NDIS Practice Standards](#), which describe disability support duties in great detail.

Complex and high-intensity tasks require a high skill, competency and knowledge level. The proposed changes classify disability support worker at skill level 4. We believe that for most of the roles for disability support worker in the NDIS sector level 3 is a more appropriate and accurate skill level.

We recommend the main tasks be amended to include the additional tasks we have listed and that the skill level be amended to skill level 3.

## Residential Care Officer

The reference to 'institutions' in this occupation description should be removed. There are no longer any disability institutions. Many people with disability live in group homes. A group home is properly described as a residential setting, not an institutional setting.