



Future-proofing care

Innovation and collaboration to
transform Australia's care economy

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Cooperative Research
Centres Program





Acknowledgement of Country

The Care Economy CRC acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia including the lands on which we meet today. We recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities.

We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

We also acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here today.

Care sits at the centre of Australia's social and economic wellbeing.

As population ageing and care complexity accelerate, the sustainability of care delivery has become a national productivity challenge.

Australia's largest employer

2.3 million Australians work in the care economy

Growing share of the economy

Care's share of GDP will **double to 15%** by 2060

Increasing demand for care services

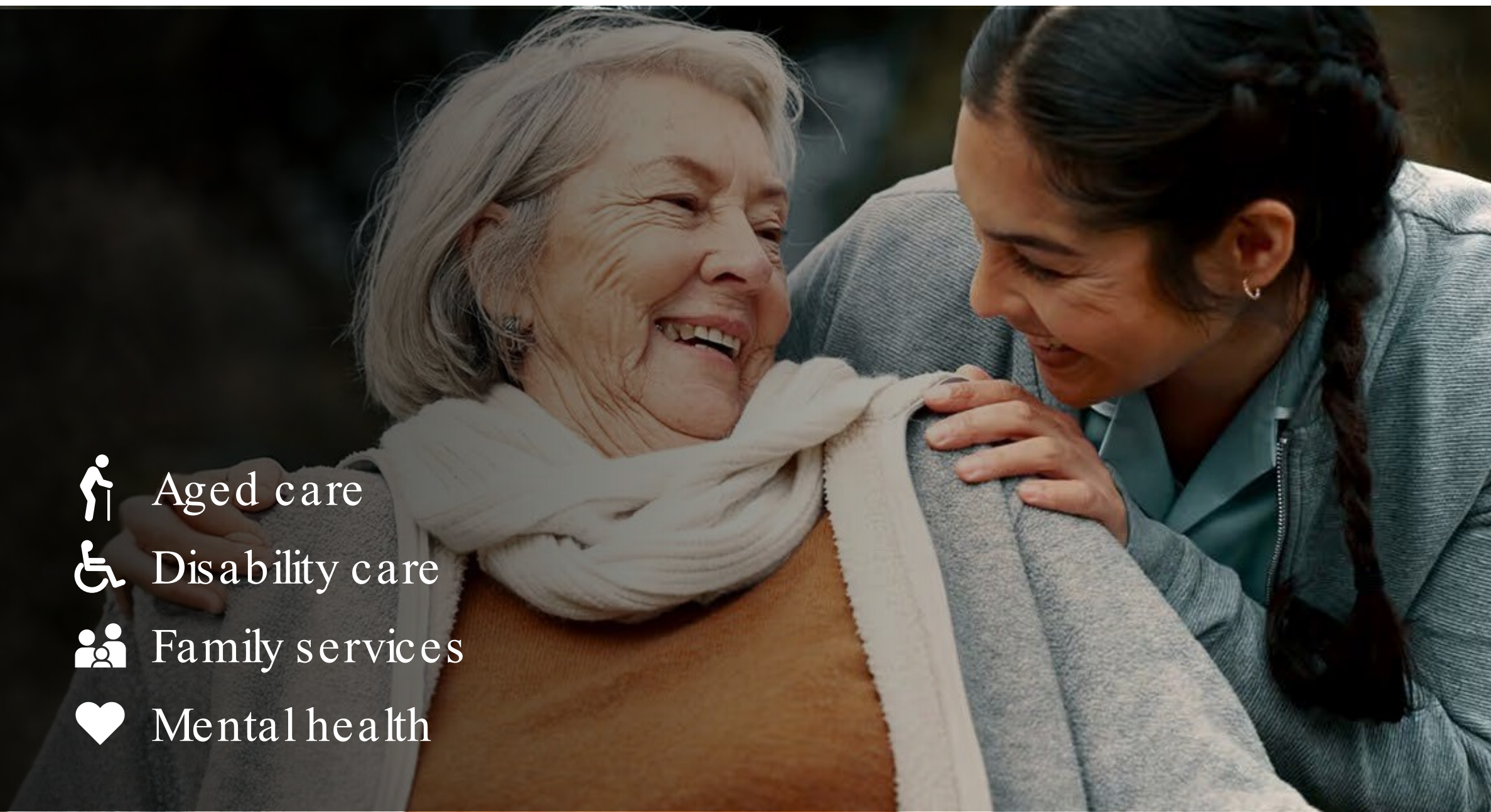
1.5 million older Australians receive care - set to **double** by 2050



Australia's \$327 billion care economy

- ⊕ Community healthcare services
- 🎓 Early childhood education and care
- 🏠 Housing and wellbeing
- 😊 Youth services

- 🦯 Aged care
- ♿ Disability care
- 👥 Family services
- ♥ Mental health



Facing shared pressures

- 👥 Workforce shortages
- 🔗 Rising care complexity
- 🏠 System fragmentation
- 📄 Regulatory duplication
- 🖨 Administrative burden
- ⚙ Reform agenda and pace
- 💻 Slow technology adoption
- 🔌 Disconnected data systems

These pressures have become **systemic features** of the care economy rather than **sector-specific** problems.

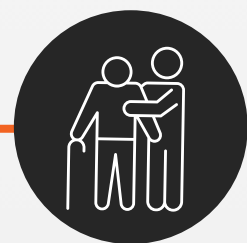
Aged care in context

- Acknowledge the aged care sector is hurting:
 - Pace of reform
 - Increased public interest and scrutiny
 - Workforce shortages
 - Growing demand for care
- Relatively mature digital transformation, quality standards and clinical governance compared to other Care Economy sectors
- Efficiency and effectiveness of care is increasingly shaped by fragmentation across the broader care system, particularly at points of transition.



People don't experience care through organisational or funding boundaries

Older people frequently move between health, aged care, disability, mental health and community services, often during periods of heightened vulnerability.



Where these systems are poorly connected, **inefficiency increases**, continuity of care is **compromised**, and long-term **costs escalate**.



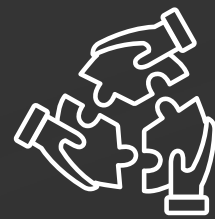
Connecting the care system

Government reform is increasingly focused on the care economy as a connected system, not a set of standalone sectors.

The Productivity Commission has made explicit that improving care quality and improving productivity are inseparable objectives. It highlights the pressing need for:



Aligning quality
and safety
regulation



Embedding
collaborative
commissioning



Investing in
prevention and early
intervention



Fragmentation across the care economy contributes to duplication, inefficiency and gaps in care.

Productivity Commission
Delivering quality care more efficiently (2025)

The Care Economy CRC unites 50+ partners to address shared challenges

We undertake industry-led collaborative research initiatives to transform the quality, productivity, and outcomes of Australia's care services.

We focus on Technology, Data and Workforce innovation.

By leveraging a broad alliance of expertise, we co-develop solutions that improve lives and strengthen the nation's fastest growing sector.

Our Mission

To improve how care is delivered in Australia by enabling sector-wide transformation, boosting productivity, and delivering fit-for-purpose solutions that meet the evolving needs of Australians.

Our Vision

To provide industry-tested and person-centric technology and data solutions supported by a capable and adaptable workforce to improve care.

The CRC is designed to cut across care sectors and address shared challenges



Aged care



Disability
care



Mental
health



Early
childhood
education
and care



Family
and social
services

Industry and Innovation focus

- Care Provider led priorities, including frontline workers and management for implementation and scale (beyond pilot studies)
- 10 Year initiative funded jointly through the Dept Industry Science and Resources and our Partner Organisations
- Together, we ideate, co-develop and co-produce to implement and commercialise new and innovative technologies, data solutions and models of care.



Care service
providers



Researchers



Technology
partners



Peak bodies,
consumers
& Others



This approach supports the development of **evidence-based, practical and scalable solutions** that improve care outcomes, strengthen workforce capability and support a more sustainable care system.

Our priorities

The Care Economy CRC focuses on addressing persistent productivity challenges.

- reducing administrative burden, duplication and inefficiencies
- increasing workforce capability
- improving technology adoption



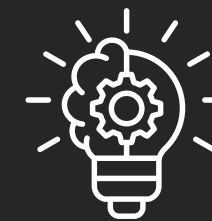
Digital readiness

- Upskilling
- Co-designed solutions
- Current and future needs



Workforce development

- Vocational offerings
- Professional training
- Industry embedded PhDs
- New workforce models



Fit-for-purpose technology

- By design
- Partner-led
- Leveraging networks



Trusted R&D pathways for uptake

- Beyond pilot studies
- Networked test-beds
- Synthetic data sandboxes
- Commercialisation activities

Our research programs link together to create impact

Research Program 1



Technology solutions

- Modular technology
- Apps and interfaces
- Demonstrators and test beds



Research Program 2



Data solutions

- Connected information
- Navigation and decision support
- Virtual test infrastructure



Research Program 3



Workforce innovation

- Skills mapping
- Upskilling
- Workforce models
- Implementation and scaling



Education and training

- Industry embedded PhDs
- Micro-credentials
- Learn-while-you-work



How we work

Connecting partners across the care economy to co-develop and scale practical solutions

01

Sector challenges and opportunities identified

CRC partners identify challenges and opportunities affecting productivity, workforce capability, service delivery and sustainability across the care economy.

These challenges often exist across multiple segments of the care economy.

02

Cross-sector collaboration and co-design

The CRC brings together partners from across the care economy including care service providers, researchers, technologists and workforce organisations.

Partners work together to co-develop solutions to shared challenges, and share learnings across sectors that traditionally operate in silos.

03

Development and testing in real care settings

Technology solutions, data innovations and workforce innovations are developed and tested within partner organisations.

Testing solutions in real care environments ensures they are practical, effective and capable of being adopted across the sector.

04

Evidence and improvement

Solutions are evaluated to understand their impact on productivity, workforce capability and care service quality.

Evidence generated through CRC projects is used to refine solutions and support broader adoption across the care economy.

05

Implementation and scale

Proven solutions are implemented, scaled or commercialised across partners and the wider care economy.

This enables improvements in productivity, workforce capability and the long-term sustainability of care services.

Our partners

We are proud to partner with 50+ organisations across the care economy. Our partners include leading universities, industry innovators, care service providers, and government agencies – all committed to improving care for Australians.



Core partners



Supporting partners



Affiliate partners



Third party supporters