

The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy

The Current State – Community Services

Aug 2013

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Glossary

Term	Description
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Health Care and Social Assistance	The Australian Bureau of Statistics industry classification used for the Health and Community Services sector
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network
LGA	A Rural Council or Shire Region
NILFET	Not in the Labour Force, Employment or Training
Mid Murray Employment Service Area	A DEEWR area that includes the Swan Hill, Buloke and Gannawarra Local Government Areas
MMLLEN	Murray Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network
NFD	Not fully defined
'Non employing'	An owner operator business, one does not employ any staff
Swan Hill LGA	Swan Hill Local Government Area, used interchangeably with Swan Hill Rural City Council region and municipality
SHRCC	Swan Hill Rural City Council
Swan Hill City	The Swan Hill city segment of Swan Hill Rural City Council
SHRWDS	Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy
The Steering Committee	Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee

Executive Summary

Industry Growth

- Children's Services, which includes child care, family day care, before and after school care, and child minding, experienced employment growth of 32% between 2006 and 2011. The children's services sector employs more than 70 people in the Swan Hill Rural City Council region.
- Employment in the community services sector, which includes welfare services, counselling, family support, youth welfare counselling and aged care support services (but not residential aged care), is also increasing, providing jobs for more than 230 people in Swan Hill.

Employers

- Employers include not-for-profit provider, Goodstart, the Swan Hill Rural City Council, which co-ordinates the Out of School Hours Care, Family Day Care, pre-schools and kindergartens in Nyah West, Woorinen South, Swan Hill City. A new private child care centre in Swan Hill is expected to open this year (2013)

Key Occupations

- Under the Early Years Learning Framework staff working in early childhood are required to have higher level qualifications. Entry level roles are requiring staff to hold a Cert III in Children's Services, but employer demand is higher for Diploma trained staff.
- 92 Swan Hill residents listed their occupation as child carer in the 2011 Census, up from 79 in 2006.
- Driven by the new national regulations, demand is increasing for Bachelor trained pre-school teachers to work in child care centres as well as kindergartens/pre-schools. The region has a small and ageing pre-school workforce, but has experienced difficulties filling pre-school teachers since 2000. Existing staff have been increasing their hours to meet the increased need.

Workforce Development

- The number of Swan Hill residents studying children services qualifications has shown strong growth.
- Opportunities for Swan Hill residents to study a Bachelor of Early Childhood that qualifies them to work as a kindergarten or pre-school teacher is expanding.
- SuniTAFE and Deakin at Your Doorstep, a University of Ballarat course, which involves learning in blocks, and a new on-line program through Latrobe University are now available.
- Suggestion that e-learning modules may support people in outlying towns to study children's Services Qualifications. Goodstart Early Learning Centre staff can study on-line through the Goodstart Training College.

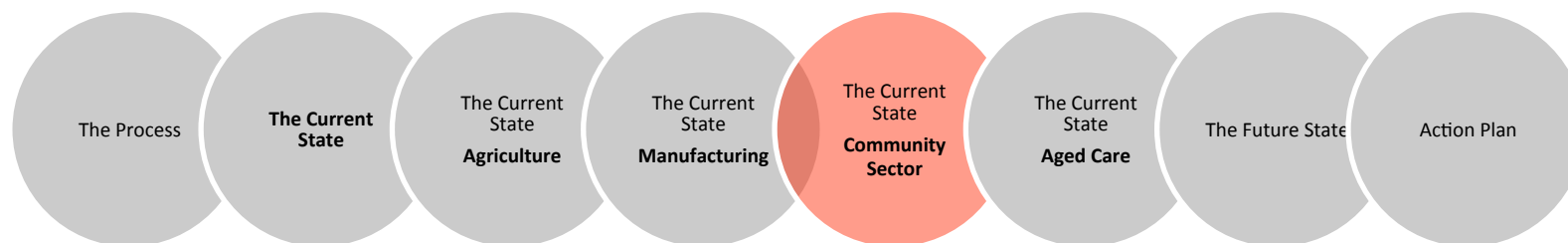
Workforce Risks

- The literacy skills of potential and enrolled students mean it's difficult for them to complete the course.
- A lack of child care places for the children of potential students is preventing people from studying Children's Services courses.

About this document

The Current State – Community Services is one of four industry specific snapshots that contributes to The Current State

The Current State – Community Services is one of eight documents that has been produced as part of the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Project.



The Current State – Community Services contributes to the body of evidence on which the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy and Action Plan has been based.

This document summarises relevant ABS data, local research and consultations with Swan Hill employers and training providers as well as the Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee members.

This Current State Community Services focuses on the Early Childhood workforce and the Social/Welfare workforce in Swan Hill. Moving from general to more specific data it covers:

- Growth segments in Community Services
- Number and size of businesses by Swan Hill regions
- Enrolment in Certificate 1 - Diploma qualifications (State Government funded under the Victorian Training Guarantee)
- SuniTAFE enrolments in Community Services
- A SWOT Analysis combining research with consultation findings
- Risks and Suggested Strategies drawn from the SWOT Analysis
- An Executive Summary covering the key findings

Employment Trends in Community Services (2006 – 2011)

Employment in child care and community services has experienced strong growth

The number of people employed in early childhood services increased by 32% between 2006 and 2011.

The number of people employed in community/welfare services increased by 45% between 2006 and 2011.

Industry	2006	2011	% Change	
*Child Care Services	53	70	32% up	↑
**Other Social Assistance Services	95	138	45% up	↑
Social Assistance Services, nfd***	25	39	56% up	↑
Health Care and Social Assistance, nfd	17	55	223% up	↑
Other Residential Care Services	7	3	57% down	↓
Total	197	305	55% up	↑

* Child care includes: child care services, family day care, children's nurseries (but not pre-schools), childminding services, before and after school care.

** Other Social Assistance includes: welfare counselling services, youth welfare services, disabilities services, soup kitchen operations, marriage guidance service, alcoholics anonymous, aged care assistance services, adult day care and adoption services

*** 'nfd' means 'not fully defined'

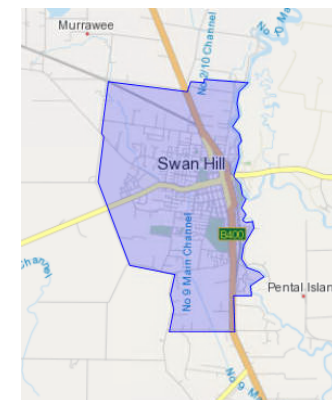
Health/Social Assistance Businesses in Swan Hill City – No. and Size

The number of businesses (organisations) providing health and social assistance services has grown

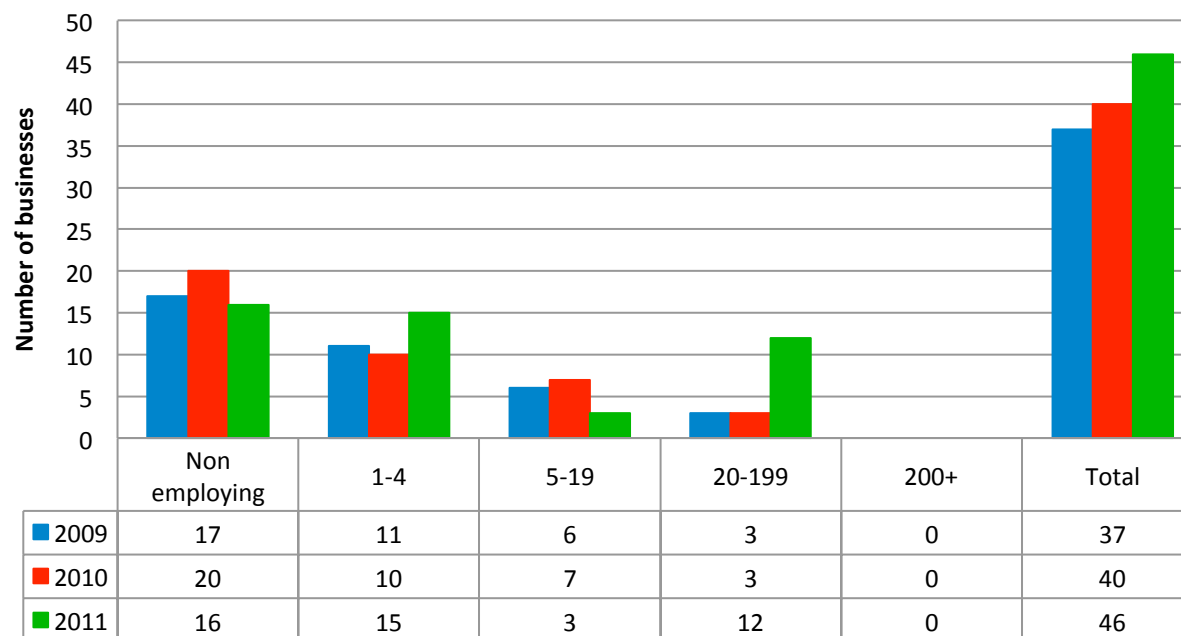
Between 2009 and 2011 in the Swan Hill City the total number of Health Care and Social Assistance businesses increased by nine businesses.

Twelve businesses employ 20 or more staff.

From 2010 to 2011 six new businesses/organisations entered the market.



Health Care and Social Assistance - Swan Hill



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses including Entries and Exits, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

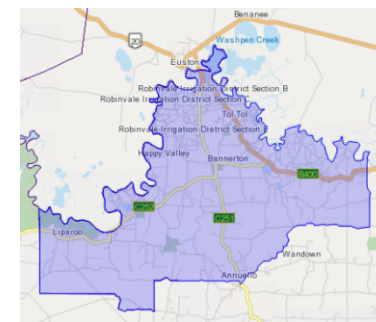
Health/Social Assistance Businesses in Robinvale – No. and Size

Robinvale has six health and social assistance businesses

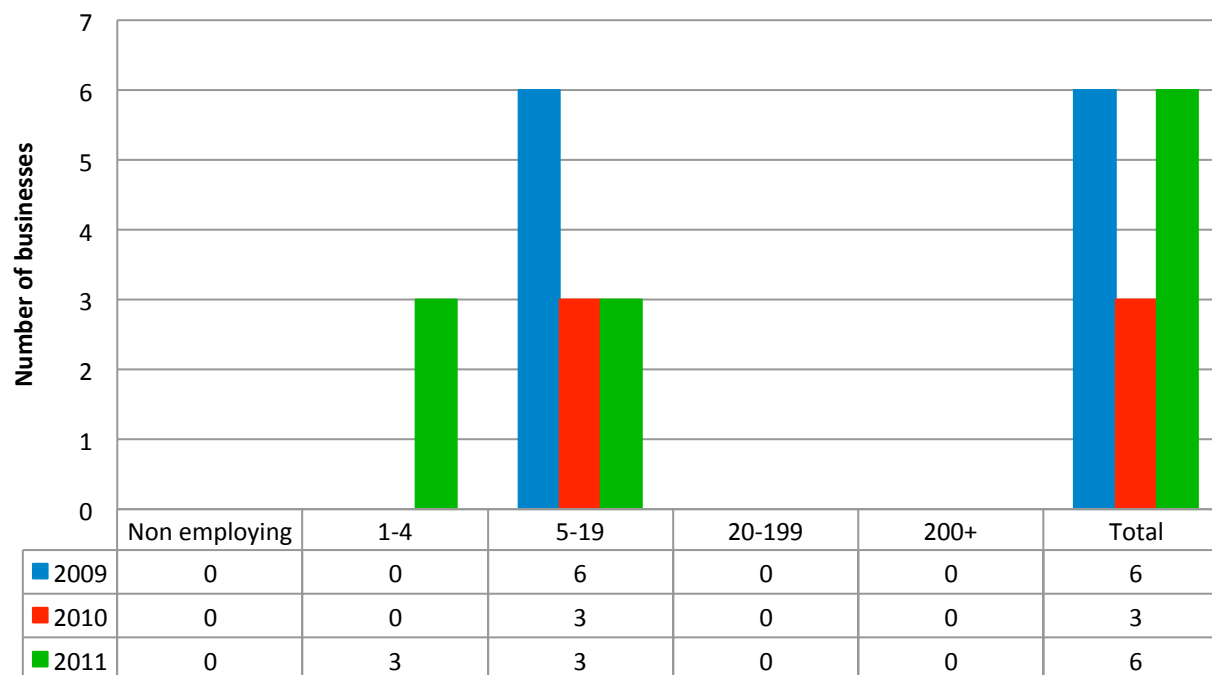
Robinvale has 6 organisations providing Health and Social Assistance. There would also be organisations based in Swan Hill, Mildura and other towns, which provide health and community services to the Robinvale community.

From 2009 to 2010 there was an exit of 3 businesses from the sector. This could be explained by mergers rather than exits.

From 2010 to 2011 there was an entry of 3 businesses in the 1-4 employee segment.



Health Care and Social Assistance - Robinvale



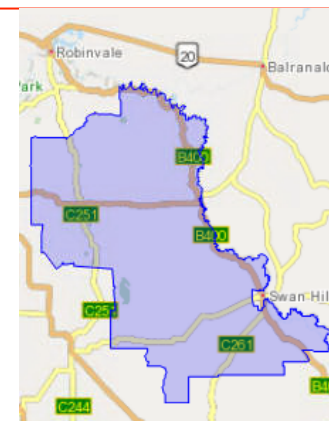
Source: ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses including Entries and Exits, 2009, 2010 and 2012.

Health/Social Assistance Businesses in Swan Hill Region (excludes township) - No. and Size

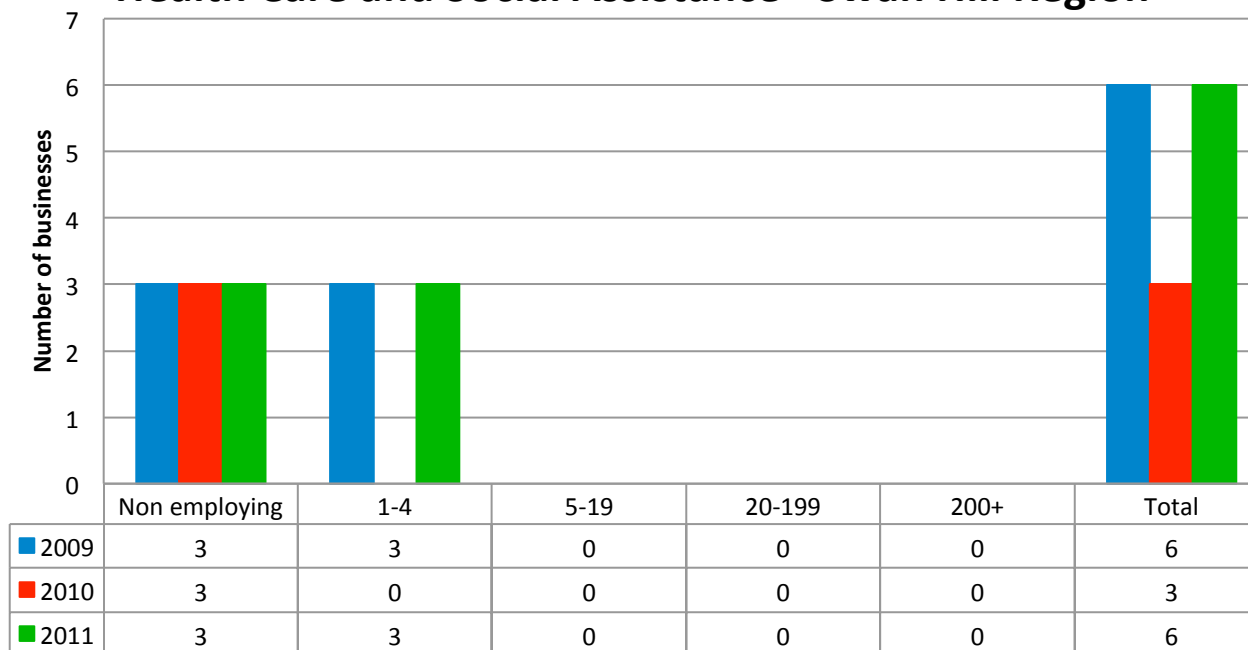
There are six health/social assistance business employing 4 or less people

In the Swan Hill region (excluding Swan Hill City and Robinvale) there are six businesses working in Health and Social Assistance. Three are non-employed.

This number dropped to three in 2010, but there was no overall change from 2009 to 2011.



Health Care and Social Assistance - Swan Hill Region



Source ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses ,including Entries and Exits, 2009, 2010 and 2012.

Employment Trends in Community Services Occupations (2006 – 2011)

Employment in child care and community services has experienced strong growth.

The number of people in Swan Hill working as child carers is growing.

The number of people working in social work or welfare roles is also increasing.

Occupation	2006	2011	% Change	
Child Carers	79	92	16%	↑
Welfare Support Workers	50	59	18%	↑
Welfare, Recreation and Community Arts Workers	27	35	30%	↑
Social Workers	10	14	40%	↑

*'Child Care' includes: child care services, family day care, children's nurseries (but not pre-schools), child minding services and before /and after school care.

** 'Other Social Assistance' includes: welfare counselling services, youth welfare services, disabilities services, soup kitchen operations, marriage guidance service, alcoholics anonymous, aged care assistance services, adult day care adoptions services

*** 'nfd' means 'not fully defined'

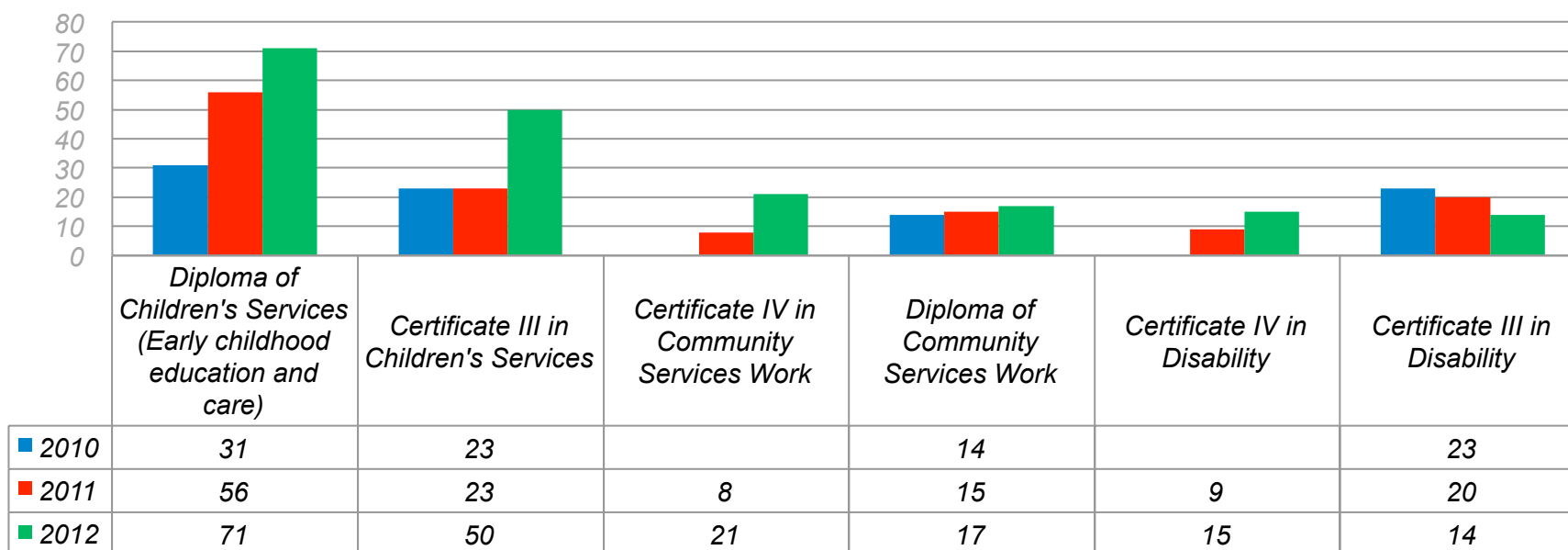
Vic Govt Funded Enrolments in Community Services by Swan Hill Residents (2010 – 2012)

Enrolments in Children's Services and Community Services courses are growing

This table shows the number of Swan Hill residents enrolled in Community Services Courses and the VET qualifications they are studying. Data provided by DEECD (Higher Education Skills Group does not indicate where they are studying, the provider or mode of study.

In 2012 there were 130 enrolments in Early Childhood/Children's Services qualifications, more than double the number in 2010. This will be in response to the introduction of the Early Years Learning Framework and the requirement for staff to possess higher level qualifications.

Course enrolments for Community Services by learners residing in Swan Hill, by qualification, State Government Funded only, 2010-2012



Source: DEECD report on Swan Hill selected industry sectors table 1

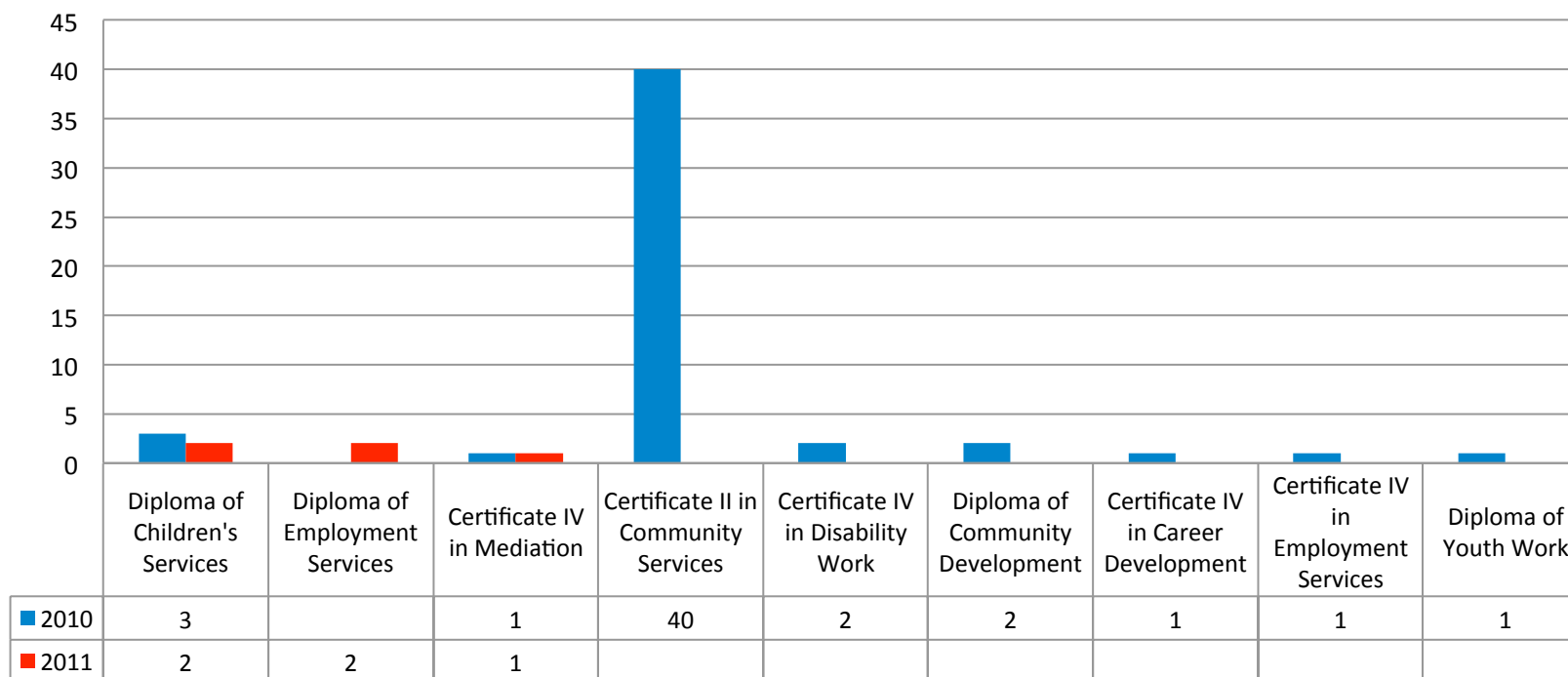
Vic Govt Funded Enrolments in Community Services Enrolments (2010 – 2012)

Enrolments in Children's Services and Community Services courses are growing

In 2011 enrolments in Cert II in Community Services ceased.

In 2011 and 2012 enrolments in higher level Community Services qualifications grew.

Course enrolments for Community Services by learners residing in Swan Hill, by qualification, Government Funded only, 2010-2012 with zero enrolments in 2012



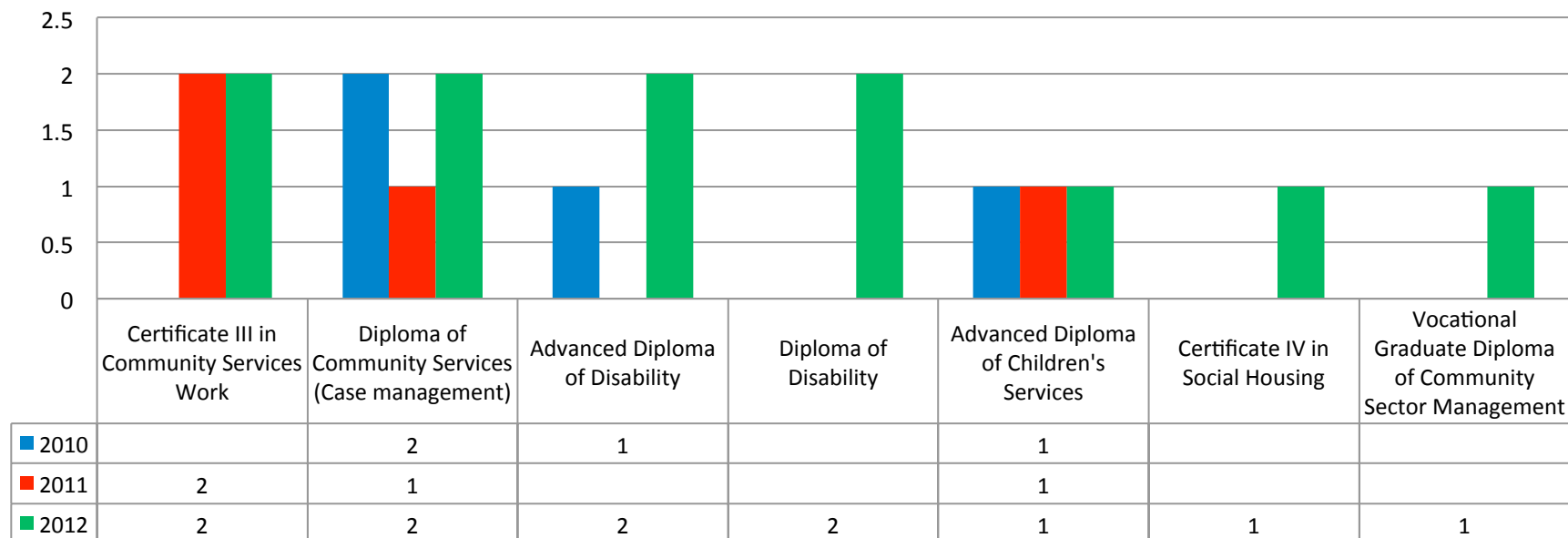
Source: DEECD report on Swan Hill selected industry sectors table 1

Vic Govt Funded Enrolments in Community Services by Swan Hill Residents 2010 – 2012

~~Enrolments in Children's Services and Community Services courses are growing~~

This table and the table on the previous page indicate a small number of Swan Hill residents are studying more specialised community service qualifications.

Course enrolments for Community Services by learners residing in Swan Hill, by qualification, Government Funded only, 2010-2012



Source: DEECD report on Swan Hill selected industry sectors table 1

SWOT Analysis: Early Childhood Workforce

ABS data, local research and consultations with employers and RTOs were considered in this SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Multiple options to study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple options to study for qualifications available (inc. SuniTAFE, MAYDEC, Goodstart Early learning RTO, a Melbourne based RTO specialising in multicultural students) Flexible learning options are available through SuniTAFE and Goodstart. <p>Opportunities to study or upgrade from a Diploma to a four-year Bachelor Degree are expanding. Courses available include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deakin at Your Doorstep at SuniTAFE La Trobe University, Bendigo (new two-year online qualifications for Diploma qualified workers) University of Ballarat (includes block on campus study) <p>Strong relationships between employers and training providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Both our trainers come on site and ask us, is there anything missing in our training that we are not teaching our students?” (employer)</i> <i>“If a centre is worried about a student they ring us immediately so we can address it” (trainer)</i> <p>Providers have responded to employers’ preference for large on-the job components of training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers are open to exposing school students to work in early childhood through visits and work experience Employers are focusing on retention 	<p>Difficult-to-fill roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four-year trained pre-school roles are the most difficult to fill. Increased funding for these positions has meant funding for extra hours. Hence solution has been to extend hours of exiting staff <p>Diploma Qualified staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidies for the Diploma of Children’s Services qualification will be removed at the end of 2014 for Diploma of Children’s Services courses <p>Cert III staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some potential students do not have the required level of literacy and numbers to undertake the course. This applies to new arrivals to the areas, school leavers and people linked with an employment agency <p>Cultural diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child care workforce needs to become more culturally diverse to match the local population <p>Low literacy levels among students and potential students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many students need extra literacy support to undertake Children’s Services qualifications and RTOs report the funding available to provide this support is reducing. Pressure to deliver courses in fewer hours makes it challenging to support students with inadequate language and literacy skills There is a perception that some CALD student attending Children’s Services courses outside the region gain qualifications without the necessary level of language and literacy to work in a centre

SWOT Analysis: Early Childhood Workforce

ABS data, local research and consultations with employers and RTOs were considered in this SWOT analysis

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Work quality improving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Quality Framework(NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care has specified higher qualifications for child care educators which will improve the attractiveness of the occupation. This applies, to child care centres, family day care, before/after school care and pre-schools (kindergarten) The NQF specifies lower child-to-staff ratios which is increasing employment opportunities. <p>Number of jobs will show some growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers report the need for new staff is dropping due to improvements in staff retention Existing centres have long waiting lists indicating a strong demand for services. A new centre in Swan Hill is planned, awaiting planning permits The Grain Shed has a child care room they would like to more fully utilise. <p>Workforce segments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This sector provides entry level roles for two key groups: School leavers New migrants, including Sudanese, Afghan and Indians (Sudanese and Afghan are generally interested in Family Day care) 	<p>Potential shortage of trainers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few early childhood workers are interested in training/teaching roles at present. <p>Low awareness of pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leavers' perceptions of sector may not match reality. They may not understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the growth in jobs available locally improved quality of work pathways available that lead to a four-year degree <p>An ageing pre school workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ageing permanent and relief workforce in the pre-school (kindergarten area), particularly in the small towns While demand for child care services is strong in the region, the number of jobs available is influenced by the number and size of centres and staff turnover <p>Funding Cuts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federally funded employer incentives for the Diploma of Children's Services course will cease at the end of 2014 <p>Pay and Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low pay and demanding working conditions for staff in child care centres can make retention difficult Swan Hill has no council run child care facilities. These centres often offer more attractive pay and working conditions for staff

Early Childhood - Risks to be prioritised and Suggested Strategies

Ideas and strategies suggested during the consultations are summarised against each risk

Risks	Relevant to other industries	Ideas and Suggestions from Community
New local opportunities to gain Bachelor qualifications are available but awareness of options is low	Yes	Raise awareness of grants available to support staff upgrading from Diploma to a Degree qualification.
Low awareness of local opportunities and career pathways in child care	Yes	Target indigenous students who may have an interest in child care (under way). Swan Hill students are studying Cert III in Children's Services while at school (underway).
Low literacy and numeracy and difficulties 'understanding how to learn' is making studying at Cert III level difficult for some potential workers. This includes early school leavers and new migrants	Yes	Develop a pre-study option which supports people to improve their literacy and 'learn how to learn'. Could look at groups starting with a Cert II in Community Services. A Melbourne RTO specialising in multicultural residents is supporting Sudanese and Afghan to explore working in the sector.
Cessation of employer incentives after 2014 will reduce numbers up-skilling	No	No suggestions.
Difficulties finding degree qualified early childhood educators to cover increased need resulting from increased funding to preschools and increased demand by child care centres under the NQF. Shortages have existed since 2000.	No	Loddon Mallee Preschool Association (LMPA) is developing a workforce strategy for the Loddon Mallee Region. Improved pay and conditions for Early Childhood Educators in child care centres could improve appeal.
Mature-age people can find it hard to study child care due to a lack of child care places.	Yes	Explore opportunities to expand child care places in Swan Hill. Explore opportunities to better utilise The Grain Shed.

Community Services: Social Support and Welfare Workers in Swan Hill

ABS data, local research and consultations with employers and RTOs were considered in this SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Supportive sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>‘Welfare sector is very good at working together in Swan Hill’</i> employer <p>New Diploma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The diploma course, a partnership between SuniTAFE and Deakin at Your Doorstep is attracting people of a range of ages <p>The number of difficult to fill roles is reducing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers report that staffing is stable and welfare staff and social worker generally leave for better facilities or professional advancement <p>Some skilled managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers reported particular managers and supervisors attract staff to work for their organisations. 	<p>Difficult-to-fill roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Guidance staff, including social workers for schools in the region • Degree-qualified social workers • Diploma-qualified Welfare Workers - employers report this has eased since SuniTAFE and Deakin University began offering the diploma qualification locally through Deakin at Your Doorstep <p>Difficult-to-fill shifts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main recruitment difficulties are for unattractive shifts (e.g. overnight on weekends or short hours) • Brokerage models of funding mean a person may only be employed for short hours <p>Suitability of people in entry level roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some staff gaining Certificate III in Community Services, the entry level qualifications, are not suited to the work available <p>Youthfulness of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff entering the field are in their twenties. Employers report preferring a mixed age range and would like to attract more mature aged staff <p>Literacy skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor spelling and grammar of some community services graduates impedes report and letter writing

Community Services: Social Support and Welfare Workers in Swan Hill

ABS data, local research and consultations with employers and RTOs were considered in this SWOT analysis

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Growth in employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABS Census data shows the number of people in Swan Hill working in welfare roles increased by 18% between 2006 and 2011 • The number of social workers also increased, though the number employed is much smaller than the number of welfare workers • DEEWR Australian Jobs 2013, predicts jobs opportunities for welfare workers will increase by more than 8% <p>National Disability Insurance Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is seen as an opportunity. More staff will be needed to work with people with disabilities • There are some concerns about the pressure it will create due to the increased skills in business management the scheme will necessitate <p>New segments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers see the potential of the sector employing 'grey nomads', skilled mature people returning to the area, and educated refugees settled in the area <p>Need to sell the region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selling Swan Hill and the region as an attractive place to live and work and developing facilities by the river would help attract skilled people to the region 	<p>Demand for services is growing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived increase in family dysfunction, family breakdown, domestic violence and drug and alcohol usage is driving demand for services • Demand is also growing due to greater awareness that help is available • Swan Hill has a high teenage pregnancy rate • Mental health services are limited • Only the people with the most urgent and compelling needs are seen, which makes staff workloads more challenging <p>Growing demand doesn't equal growing funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers commented that growing demand means more complex cases are prioritised. It doesn't necessarily mean more funding is available to hire more staff <p>Access and cost of training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of the training may be free, but travel and accommodation makes it expensive for the organisation

Community Services - Risks to be prioritised and Suggested Strategies

Ideas and strategies suggested during the consultations are summarised against each risk

Risks	Relevant to other industries	Ideas and Suggestions from community
<p>Social work, a degree qualification is not currently available in Swan Hill. There are difficulties recruiting for the small number of positions available.</p> <p>Due to increased demand on services and the increasingly complexity of clients, demand for social workers could grow, depending on government funding.</p>	No	Encourage placements by social work students from Bendigo and Mildura and expose them to a variety of services in Swan Hill.
<p>Welfare Workers – The risk of having insufficient welfare workers to fill vacancies has reduced since the commencement of the diploma level course through the partnership between SuniTAFE and Deakin at Your Doorstep.</p>	No	
<p>Community services may find it increasingly harder-to-fill short hours and weekend shifts which will be in higher demand following the introduction of the Disability Care Australia scheme (NDIS).</p>		Consider attracting staff to Swan Hill for weekend shifts from neighbouring municipalities or regional centres e.g. Bendigo and Mildura.
<p>Employers report social problems are increasing in Swan Hill and this has the capacity to reduce the number of people available for the workforce, particularly in entry level roles. It also has the potential to detract from the attractiveness of Swan Hill as a place to live, work and visit.</p>	Yes	

References

The following documents were reviewed in this Project

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of population and Housing, 2006 and 2011
2. Sunraysia Institute of TAFE, 2012, Start your Career at SuniTAFE 2012 DEEWR Australian Jobs 2013,
3. DEEWR, Australian Jobs, 2013
4. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, 2009, 2010 and 2012



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