

CASE STUDY: CAREERS IN THE DISABILITY SECTOR

COMPANY: CRAM and Wesley Mission

HOTSPOT REGION: Illawarra

TARGET:

1. Encouraging careers in the care industry
2. Partnering with localised pre-employment programs to support recruitment strategies

The Cram Foundation is a Disability Service Provider operating in the Illawarra region since 1932. It specialises in providing supported independent living and community support for people living with complex disabilities.

The commencement of the NDIS has driven significant and unprecedented demand for quality services. As a result, Cram, like many other providers in the Disability Sector, face ongoing challenges in finding suitable, qualified individuals for support work and person-centred service delivery. They also rely heavily on the personality traits of candidate's, including their ability to make good judgement and act with integrity and skill at all times. This can often be hard to find.


Cram is passionate about finding the right people who want to enter a profession in the Disability Sector. To help address this challenge, Cram has explored local employment programs and partnered with the Illawarra Business Chamber to run a customised pre-employment program called Illawarra Youth Employment Strategy, or Illawarra YES, to feed talent into their workforce. The program helped provide applicants with the basic employability skills to help them pursue entry level employment, including traineeships, within the disability sector.

The pre-employment program has the added benefit of accessing individuals who are passionate to learn and who may have been overlooked through traditional recruitment methods. It also introduces students to a career pathway they may not have previously considered prior to participating in the course.

Successful graduates are linked traineeship opportunities with businesses across the disability sector.

Cram introduced the traineeship program into the business in 2019 and are keen to participate again in the intake. They saw the opportunity of the combination of education and support, in collaboration with on the job learning as a great formula to develop engaged, quality staff who in turn provide best practice service delivery in the disability sector.

Cram have an ongoing commitment to the traineeship program, seeing it as an opportunity to create meaningful training, education and employment prospects to the community. The government funding allows trainees to attain a Certificate III - Individual Support (Disability), whilst providing a hands-on opportunity to demonstrate their skills and learning.



Participants like Flora Vassilakoglou (featured below) have brought fresh eyes and a great attitude to the industry, and as a result, deliver a quality and supportive service to her Participants and their families.

Trainee: Flora Vassilakoglou

Qualification: Certificate III - Individual Support (Disability)

Employer: Wesley Mission

Flora Vassilakoglou is a 20-year-old from the Illawarra region. Flora is currently employed as a Trainee in Disability Support Work, which includes studying towards a Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability).

Flora cites her Mum as her main influence for pursuing a career in this field. In addition to this, Flora's wider family and friends also work in the Aged Care sector.

Previously a Tobacconist and Call Centre Operative, Flora cites the "rewarding" feeling that working with Participants with Disabilities brings.

Flora's working day begins at 6am where she helps the Participants shower, brush their teeth and get dressed, before assisting with their breakfast. The day consists of stimulating the Participants' interests through walks, craft, watching movies with rest periods and food breaks planned. The mandate for all staff is to "stimulate" and create "fun" throughout the day.

Miss Vassilakoglou said about the opportunity "It's a fun and rewarding career. It's very personally rewarding and you help put a smile on people's faces".

For more information regarding careers in Disability support in the Illawarra region, please contact The Cram Foundation.