

# YourLifeChoices

*Simplifying retirement*

## Willing to Work Submission

***'A massive 75% of all respondents think that older Australians face discrimination when looking for work...'***

In support of the Australian Human Rights Commission **Willing to Work** Inquiry, and to better understand the experience of age discrimination in the workplace, **YourLifeChoices** website undertook a survey of its 135,000 members (age 50-75) in August-September this year. We were delighted to receive **5474 responses** to 14 questions relating to the 'lived experience' of work for older Australians.

Of those who responded 55% were still working, (full or part time) with a further 12% looking for work and 28% *who would like* to work.

Of this number 27% have experienced workplace discrimination. Even more alarming perhaps was the 14% who said they were not sure if they had or not. Of those that had experienced workplace discrimination only 28% had taken action as a result.

The most common actions taken were reporting to management, a union or leaving the workplace altogether. Many respondents went on to add this was not effective, but they felt discrimination was 'difficult to prove' and it was 'better not to cause a stir.'

Of those who had experienced workplace discrimination, 54% said it had had a significant impact, resulting in taking time off or changing jobs.

A massive 75% of all respondents think that older Australians face discrimination in the workplace or when looking for work, with 71% going so far as to say workplace discrimination prevents older Australians from finding and keeping jobs.

The most common pros associated with older Australians remaining in the workforce were considered to be increased experience and knowledge, an increased quality of life and self-esteem from remaining active and accomplished, and financial rewards for both themselves and as a boost to the economy in general.

Mentoring, succession planning, a holistic approach to their working hours, support and respect were some examples which were cited as evidence of good practice as well as specific workplace policies for employing older Australians and keeping them employed. Bunnings was frequently mentioned as a great example of an employer helping older Australians stay in the workplace.

When asked what action should be taken to address workplace discrimination against older Australians, most respondents suggested introducing employers' incentives, but with stricter regulations, legislation and fines in place for employers who breach age discrimination rules.

**YourLifeChoices** website is happy to share further detail from this survey with the AHRC as required.

**YourLifeChoices** website is Australia's longest-established independent retirement website with a membership of 135,000 baby boomers and seniors who receive daily enews on all aspects of life when planning, or living in retirement. As well as providing objective and relevant content, **YourLifeChoices** has also played a role as an advocate on behalf of older Australians who often feel overlooked, or left out of the debate about their rights and entitlements. In particular, we look forward to a day when generations can work together to ensure a dignified and connected life for all Australians, at all life stages.

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