

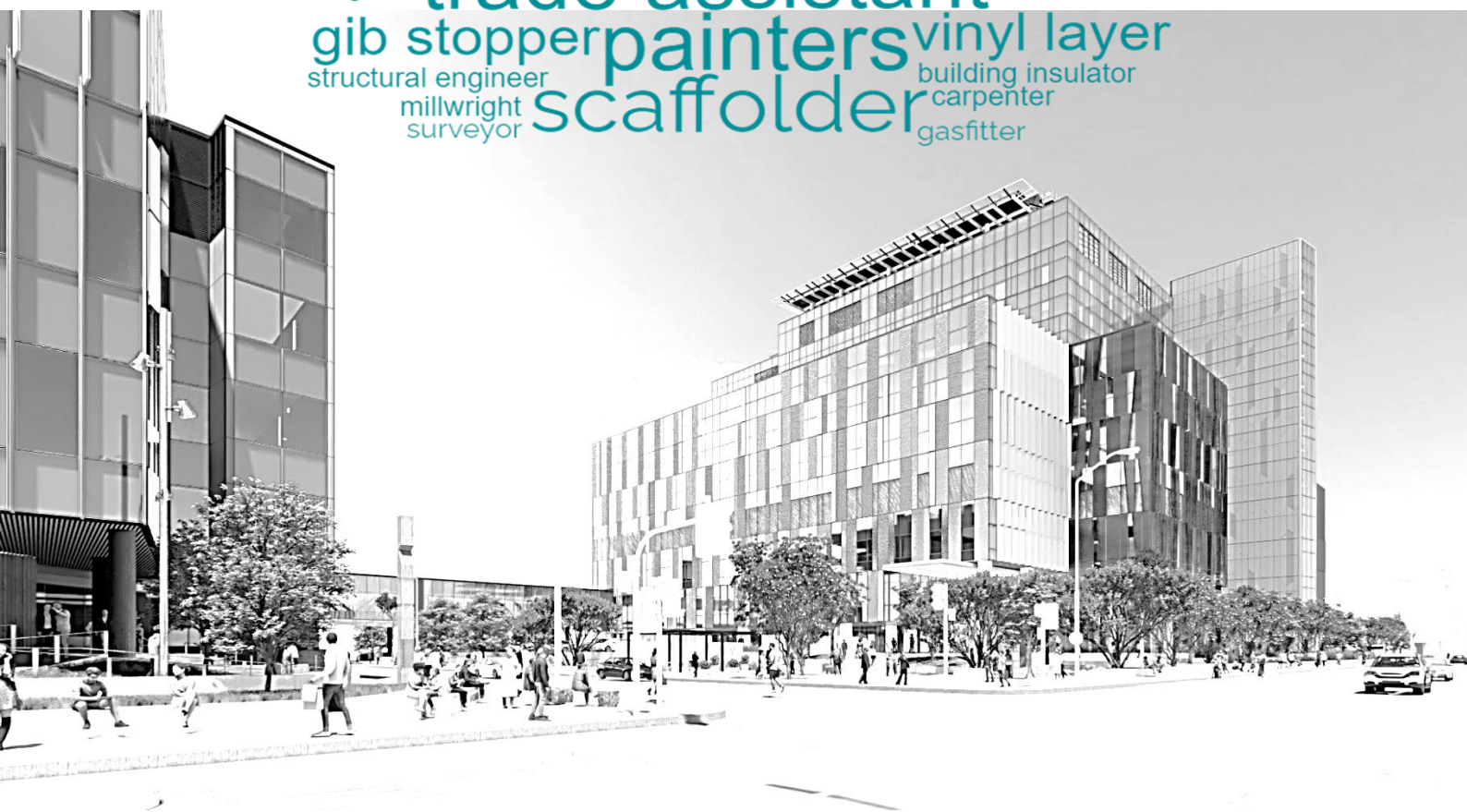


**Workforce Central
Dunedin**

Generating jobs

**Social Return on Investment Report
Workforce Central Dunedin 2020-2025**

labourer electrician locksmith
cabinet maker refrigeration technician insulator
engineer health and safety officer rigger architect
concrete worker door hanger telecommunications technician
hanger crane operator builder
landscaper project manager gib fixer
quantity surveyor fabricator cable layer IT Technicians
building contractor tiler fixer plasterer
saw doctor welder cad designer plumber
joiner operator site manager carpet layer
dogman trade assistant drainlayer
gib stopper painters vinyl layer
structural engineer scaffolder building insulator
millwright carpenter
surveyor gasfitter





Hiring starts here

Workforce Central Dunedin (WFCD) is a Job and Skills Hub established to supply workers for construction, infrastructure and trade businesses in the community, as well as the New Dunedin Hospital build which is currently the largest health infrastructure project in New Zealand.

WFCD was set up in September 2020. This report summarises WFCD's work so far and its value to stakeholders.

Generating jobs

Social Return on Investment Report

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Takeaways from this report

1

Workforce Central Dunedin mitigates risk (and kicks goals!)

WFCD has helped the New Dunedin Hospital project facilitate two complementary goals:

- deliver the workforce needed to build a new hospital in a relatively small city, distant from a large labour market; and
- maximise the broader social and economic outcomes associated with the project.

2

Stand-out shopfront

WFCD offers large projects a neutral and authoritative 'single point of contact' meaning jobseekers, collaborators, stakeholders, and the community have simplified access to information and opportunities.

3

Smart way to save time (and \$)

WFCD helps facilitate recruitment, inductions and worker health and wellbeing on behalf of the project owner and construction partners so they don't have to (and can concentrate on delivery).



“Economic benefits add almost no additional cost to public money spent on a large infrastructure project. What these benefits add is an expectation that all contractors involved deliver public value in the community in which the build takes place.

The New Dunedin Hospital project is more than building a hospital, it is about using the sheer size of the procurement to positively impact locals and thereby help build a strong community.”

Raymond Clark, Operations Manager,
Workforce Central Dunedin

Who should read this report and why

1.

Any business who is interested in working with us.

It will help you understand more about how WFCD can add value to your project.

2.

Any business or project interested in measuring their own procurement performance. We'd love to share our experience of this process with you.

3.

Any business or project interested in delivering their own economic benefits. We can help you consider the most relevant outcomes.




Contact us

We'd be keen to talk anytime.

If you are a jobseeker or looking for talented staff, we can help.

Please visit our website: wfcd.co.nz or email: kiaora@wfcd.co.nz

Reach and impact summary

WFCD IMPACT 2020 – 2025		
Skilled & ready workforce	Wellbeing & productivity	Outreach & education
		
254 employed (\$17.54m+ pa in wages)	Productivity goal +1%	Overall reach 7,493 (10% Dunedin population 10-49 yrs)
1121 trained/inducted	239 health checks	393 people visited site
330 visited job seminars	401 haircuts (\$4,096 donated)	11 career expos
\$5.04 value for every \$1 invested		

Introduction

Workforce Central Dunedin offers a free recruitment service for the construction and infrastructure industries. It helps people find training, apprentices, and jobs. It helps extend the hiring pool for employers. WFCD has delivered \$5.04 value for every dollar invested.

Purpose

WFCD was established to mitigate the risk of a workforce shortage for construction of the New Dunedin Hospital. Set up in late 2020, it was to ready the market by working with industry and training providers to identify skill gaps and train ahead of need. WFCD would also recruit workers where needed - primarily for the Inpatient Building and primarily for sub-contractors as lead contractors are generally not direct employers.

Hurry up...and wait.

It has been well documented that the New Dunedin Hospital (NDH) project has been beset by delays and mounting costs, including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite timelines being pushed out, the first phase (Outpatient Building) is progressing well. WFCD has developed many wellbeing initiatives to help support workers onsite who number anywhere between 200-240 per day.

Substructure works for the Inpatient Building are expected to commence mid-year. In June 2025, the Government announced the appointment of a Crown Manager to oversee the delivery of the Inpatient Building, confirm the procurement approach, and finalise the construction contract. The Crown Manager will work closely with Health

New Zealand to ensure alignment with the broader NDH programme.

Even when the main construction contract is awarded, it will not be until fitout stage that recruitment for large worker numbers will be required (painters, gib stoppers, carpet layers, vinyl installers, furniture and equipment installers etc) and this will be several years down the track.

WFCD has played a key role in helping ready the workforce

Workforce Central Dunedin was established in advance of the New Dunedin Hospital commencing because time was required establish the relationships key for success and to train ahead of need.

Workforce Central Dunedin has played a key role in advocating for new industry training micro-credentials such as the New Zealand Certificate in Data Cabling and 'Trade Essentials' that are designed to benefit future workforce not only in the Otago region but throughout the country.

This future workforce is critical.

The infrastructure pipeline for renewing and expanding public health facilities across the country alone is estimated to be a \$20 billion programme over the next 10 years.

Results

Despite the obvious impact of the Inpatient build delay on Workforce Central Dunedin's outcomes, WFCD is on track to meet its employment target and has already exceeded its training target:

- 1. 300 employed (254 to date)**
The total value of these jobs is estimated \$17.54m+ per annum
- 2. 900 trained (1121 to date).**

Overall, WFCD has delivered \$5.04 : \$1.

It is difficult to quantitatively assess the wider value of many of WFCD's initiatives. Some of these interventions may have helped save a life. There may have been less time off work due to ill health, directly improving site productivity. Some may now seek a career in construction after seeing it firsthand on a tour and been inspired to take a new direction.

Benefits to NDH project

Workforce Central Dunedin has provided the New Dunedin Hospital project with a number of benefits. As an independent Job and Skills hub, it works with MSD and recruitment agencies to match job seekers to vacancies for hospital build contractors and other employers in the region.

WFCD also delivers health and wellbeing services to workers contracted onsite, almost acting as the employer (despite not being the employer).

Workforce Central Dunedin has been a crucial independent interface of the New Dunedin Hospital project for hundreds of other people associated with the project, including local and central Government agencies, construction industry, education sector, and the wider community.



In acting as an important connector, offering updates and information throughout, WFCD has literally been the public engagement gateway to the project for collaborators and the community. This includes site visits which have offered a rare glimpse into the project and chance for some to see work being completed, meet role models working onsite and discuss careers the construction industry offers – “if you can see it, you can be it.”

Research methodology

WFCD stakeholders were invited to take part in an independent qualitative interview to help assess its impact, value of its services and what it could do better in the future. One-on-one discussions using a semi-structured interview format enabled participants to share their experiences and perspectives. These observations have been summarised into key areas: relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability.

Respondent quotes that represent common themes have also been included.

Relevance

Stakeholders agree the right things have been done by Workforce Central Dunedin. They commend WFCD for their approach and philosophy, and ability to produce outcomes despite the shifts and challenges of the build timeline.

"I love the fact that WFCD are parked right next to the build but are not on the actual build. They are there doing something that people wouldn't think of there onsite. That's kind of cool. It's a neat model. Often those things are off site but WFCD are onsite and I suspect that the relationships are strong because of that."

Advisor, Education sector

Effectiveness

Those interviewed agreed that WFCD had done particularly well at networking and bringing the regional partners together. WFCD have been an accessible and responsive point of contact to link everyone to information and relevant opportunities. Their approach to workforce support has seen numerous industry-first initiatives benefit the Outpatient Building site that would not have been pursued (or even thought of) without WFCD.

"Everybody was kind of like in their own silo, doing their own thing with mild or moderate results of success, but actually WFCD has been the catalyst for getting everybody together and headed in the same direction for a common purpose. I think that really has been their main role and they've been quite successful."

Manager, Industry sector

"Most of WFCD's initiatives have been 'first time ever' – there aren't a lot of play books around."

Manager, Tertiary sector

Impact

Stakeholders acknowledge the delicate balance between WFCD being stood up in time to form relationships and train ahead of need and its susceptibility to project delay. While there could have been alternatives to WFCD, most stakeholders found it difficult to envisage any model that would have achieved similar results.

"WFCD's presence onsite and focus on a whole lot of things – not just plumbers, but actually plumbers that are happy to be here and fulfilled in their job, is a really big component. And I also think having the cultural narrative is a really big part of it – almost that pyramid really, that gives it something different. I've worked on a few work sites and I've certainly never had that feeling and understanding."

Former teacher and principal

"I think what WFCD have done really well is built relationships and awareness. I think sometimes as vexed as this hospital project has been, WFCD has helped spread the truth around what the opportunity might be. What they've done well is linking dots around key partners such as industry training, schools, and then obviously employers etc. I think then it leads to a lot of the stuff we discovered through our own work that collaboration and pathway finding and things don't just happen by osmosis, by accident – there has to be deliberate interventions that cost money but are worth investing in because they help people connect those dots and create a 'place of truth' around what opportunity might be."

Regional Skills Leader

Many interviewed commented that WFCD had played an invaluable role in helping them save time and effort having to build their own independent connections.

"It would be a full-time job for me to physically fly to Dunedin and start creating those relationships to have them in place to have the buy-in and trust of people down there. It just takes away that lead-in time where WFCD facilitates that on our behalf."

Project Manager, Construction

Efficiency

Stakeholders believe that Workforce Central Dunedin has made the jobs and opportunities at the New Dunedin Hospital more visible, which helps expand a jobseeker's view of the construction sector – while most could name roles such as a builder, plumber, or electrician, many are unaware of the breadth of roles within the industry or the diverse range of progression opportunities it offers.

"I think WFCD have made the jobs available at the hospital build a lot more visible - and that was completely the intention of setting up WFCD. For someone to be able to walk past the actual construction site and be able to call in and say 'hey, can you tell me a little bit more about this, I'm looking to get into construction, could you help me?' that's the gold. I think WFCD have done that really well."

Regional Labour Market Manager

Others complimented WFCD on its lateral thinking, using the delays in the build timeline to focus on what would bring the most benefit to the onsite workforce, despite not being its original core purpose.

All agreed that training ahead of need is critical. Many interviewed believed there was an opportunity to introduce more industry skills training for New Zealand jobseekers, to help expand the workforce pool and reduce the industry's reliance on skilled migrant labour.

Getting the timing and linking up with industry correctly is also important. It was

noted employers can't retain apprentices when the build is delayed.

"I think WFCD have done almost the best job they possibly could, given the cards they got ultimately dealt. They haven't shied away from it and said, 'the game has changed and this is not what we all signed up for'. They've said the game is changing – how can we pivot to still get the best for society and the community and stick close to what our original purpose was? We are in the neighbourhood, what are the things that are lacking? We keep hearing that X people will die a year but 10x die or will die in the fullness of time so we are trying to stop that number – what can we do? A health check? Well most of the people on a construction site probably haven't had a health check in 10 years! So I think they've done remarkably well with a lot of enthusiasm where others might not have."

Construction Manager

Sustainability

WFCD has been subject to challenges outside its control. Despite this, has WFCD delivered on its funding goals of jobs and training for the New Dunedin Hospital build? Yes.

Has WFCD played a crucial role in building the connections and championing careers in construction for the region? Yes.

Is a free recruitment service for the construction industry sustainable without funding? No. Having no funding will directly impact the project and limits public and sector engagement, as well as worker support.

Key findings

The following summarises Workforce Central Dunedin's performance progress and findings from independent interviews with stakeholders. Many acknowledged that WFCD has provided the NDH project (and construction industry) a unique 'testing ground' to trial new things.

**For every dollar invested
WFCD has delivered value**

\$1 = \$5.04

**WFCD has delivered jobs
& training outcomes**

\$17.54m+ job value

**Independence & neutrality
have been WFCD's strengths**

**Opportunity: WFCD continues
to 'fill the gap' others do not**

**WFCD has been the NDH
public engagement gateway**

**Concern: without continued funding,
this valued resource for all project
information disappears**

**Workforce health & wellbeing
can improve site productivity**

How much? +1%?

**Opportunity: WFCD quantifies
this as benchmark for industry**

**WFCD has almost been the
onsite 'employer' in many ways**

**Concern: the wellbeing benefits for
future onsite workers may disappear if
WFCD was not continued**

**Project role models inspire
construction careers**
"If you can see it, you can be it"

**Opportunity: WFCD provides access
for other sectors with skills shortages**

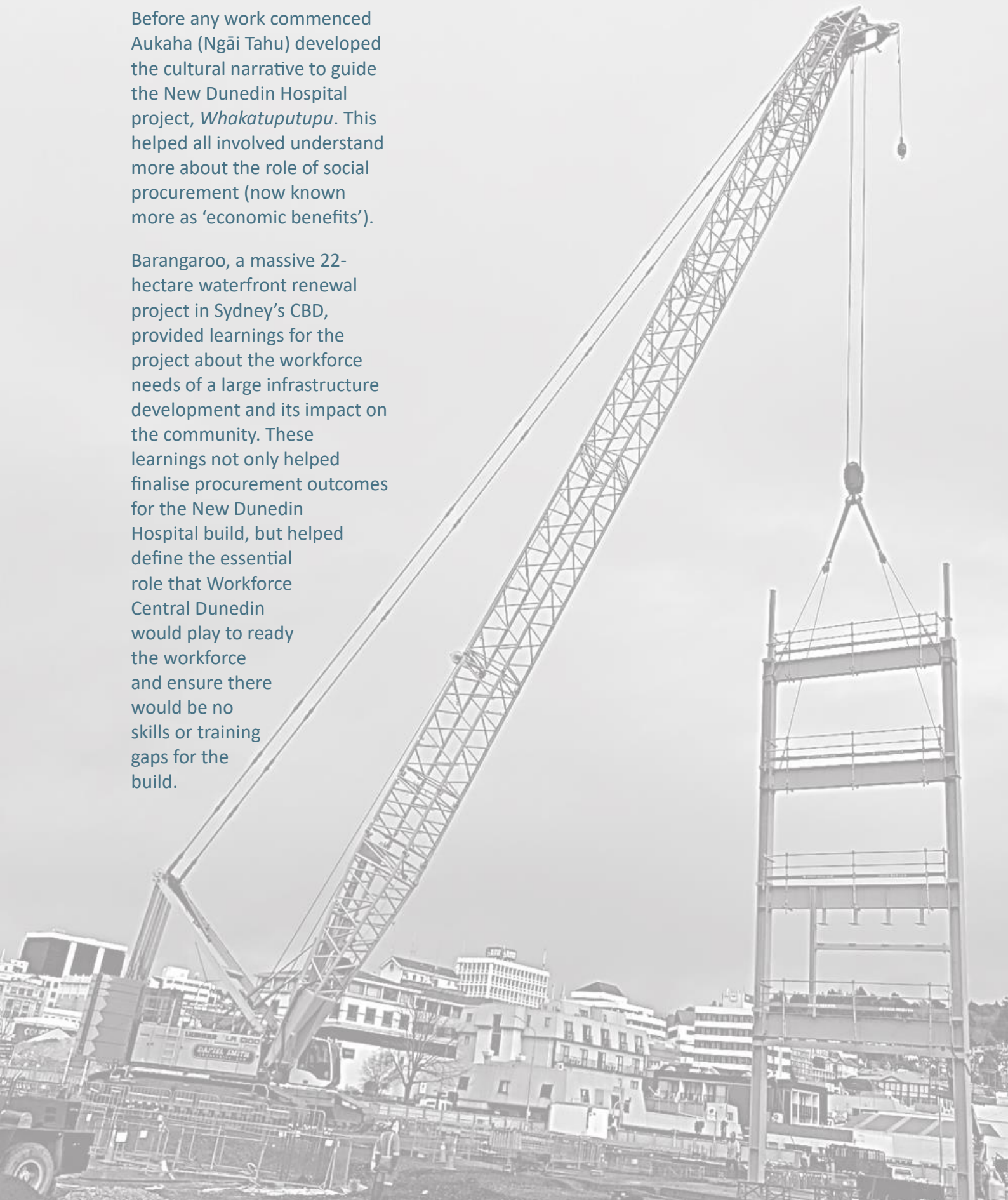
**Parent/whānau perceptions
of industry guide career choice**

**Concern: more needs to be done
(by all) to 'influence the influencers'**

The early days

Before any work commenced Aukaha (Ngāi Tahu) developed the cultural narrative to guide the New Dunedin Hospital project, *Whakatuputupu*. This helped all involved understand more about the role of social procurement (now known more as ‘economic benefits’).

Barangaroo, a massive 22-hectare waterfront renewal project in Sydney’s CBD, provided learnings for the project about the workforce needs of a large infrastructure development and its impact on the community. These learnings not only helped finalise procurement outcomes for the New Dunedin Hospital build, but helped define the essential role that Workforce Central Dunedin would play to ready the workforce and ensure there would be no skills or training gaps for the build.



Building a new hospital

Building a new health facility isn't as straight-forward as people may think. There are lots of things to consider to ensure that the healthcare needs of the local community are considered well into the future. The Southern region will be proud of its new hospital.

Before the first patients are treated at the New Dunedin Hospital, thousands of people will have been involved in its design and construction.

Led by Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora, the modern, fit for purpose facility is currently the largest ever health infrastructure investment in New Zealand. While the new hospital will be similar in size to the current hospital, its flexible design and use of latest technology will mean greater efficiency, including patient flow around the hospital, and better access to diagnostics and treatment spaces, reducing unnecessary delays.

“Workforce Central Dunedin play a large part in helping contractors ensure the wellbeing of those onsite, that jobs and training opportunities take place, and that the community benefits from the legacy of our new hospital’s construction.”

Andrew Holmes, Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora
Outpatient Director – New Dunedin Hospital



"We are proud to be the voice of the South and Workforce Central Dunedin is key to our workforce and business development team. The team at WFCD are second to none."

Mike Collins, Chief Executive
Te Kaiwhakahaere Matua, Business South

WFCD context

WFCD congratulate all build contractors helping to increase the size and skill level of the local workforce, supporting construction sector training, involving local industry, and explicitly considering workforce wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

You could say that Workforce Central Dunedin is a sum of three parts: committed to collective thinking; unlocking potential; and practically working together with all stakeholders to maximise construction outcomes for the Otago region and its workforce.

Workforce Central Dunedin are immensely grateful for the considerable experience and commitment of its Advisory Board, made up of local and central Government, industry, stakeholders, and collaborators who have freely provided guidance and insights to help harness all the benefits of the hub to the region throughout.

In July 2020 Workforce Central Dunedin received Provincial Growth Fund funding of \$1.85 million over four years to help establish a construction industry Job and Skills Hub, to support the New Dunedin Hospital build in Ōtepoti. WFCD's aim is to upskill and support more than 300 local people into work on the hospital build.

Supported by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (via the Kānoa Regional Development Sector Workforce Engagement Programme), Workforce Central Dunedin are a proud part of the Southern Business Association (Business South Inc.) team who work to support more than 1,300 members and a diverse range of organisations and sectors across Otago and Southland.

While WFCD has two targets to meet its funding criteria, employment & training, it has done much more. Job and Skills hubs that are stood up alongside large infrastructure projects are not a new concept. What is new are the many initiatives WFCD have put in place to support the New Dunedin Hospital build and its construction workers.

In March and April 2025, stakeholders were invited to take part in an independent qualitative interview to help assess Workforce Central Dunedin's impact, the value of its services and what it could do better in the future. Respondent quotes have been included throughout this report that represent common themes from these discussions.



A Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology has been used to determine economic and social outcomes where possible. Some initiatives are not directly comparable; therefore assumptions have been made to calculate their value.

Skilled & ready workforce



Skilled & ready workforce – approach

Workforce Central Dunedin match jobseekers to employer vacancies. Placements include apprenticeships, entry level labour, semi-skilled trade assistants, qualified roles, and many other construction-related positions. WFCD also recruits for other industries within the region.

Workforce Central Dunedin helps people find training, apprenticeships, and jobs to support a future career in the construction and infrastructure industries. For employers, WFCD helps find skilled workers for projects, extending the hiring pool of potential candidates, and helping managers to upskill current staff.

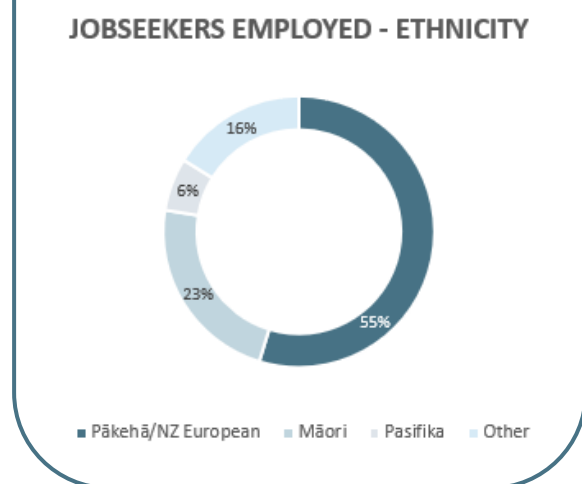
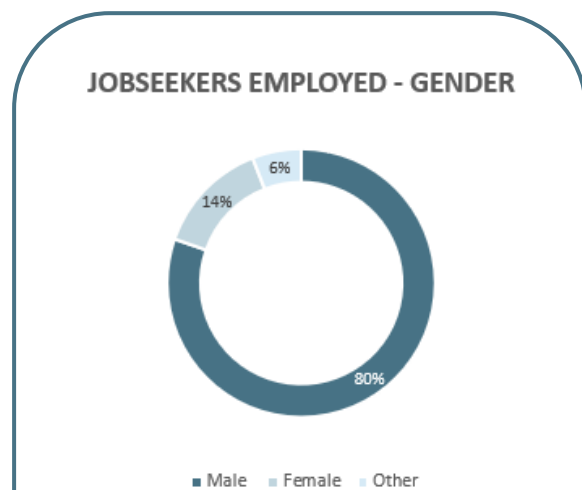
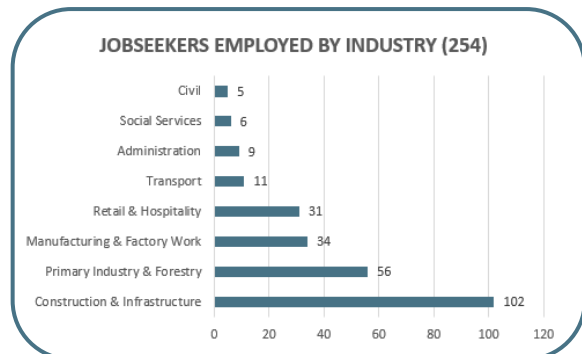
While Workforce Central Dunedin is a free recruitment service set up for the construction and infrastructure industries, it has played a broader role by successfully placing people across other industries throughout the region.

Recruitment results

Despite the obvious impact of the Inpatient build delay on Workforce Central Dunedin's outcomes, WFCD is on track to meet its overall funding target of 300 people employed (254 to date).

41% of those employed were placed in construction and infrastructure related roles by Workforce Central Dunedin.

The total value of these jobs is estimated to be more than \$17.54m per annum. While some jobseekers may have been job changers, at the time almost all were unemployed so the difference between the average salary for each industry and the Government's Jobseeker Support benefit has been applied in this report.



"WFCD is unique in the fact that it is aligned with industry and I think that's what makes it successful for a project like this. I don't think an MSD Skills and Job hub would have done the same thing."

Area Manager, Industry sector

"Just having a neutral location to have employment conversations is just so invaluable. Anybody can walk off the street and have a conversation with an employer about roles and training and jobs available right now or coming up and they are not labelled a 'jobseeker' - they are just somebody wanting information. I think that's incredibly valuable because it can be a bit intimidating for people and employers to go to a Work and Income site and have a conversation about work. Being able to have a neutral place to do that is really cool."

Regional Labour Market Advisor

course in a virtual reality format that ensures everyone onsite understands their health and safety responsibilities.

"Most people I have shown that (induction) video to have had tears and quite an emotional response because I don't think - well, I know - they have not realised the significance of the land. But also that this is the redemption of a promise that was made a long time ago. This building might be great from a health perspective, but actually it is far more than that. The video delivers the message in a non-confrontational way and is really beautifully done. I think anybody seeing it and then working on the site is going to have an understanding of how important their role is on that hospital and on that land."

Industry sector Manager

Training and qualifications

Workforce Central Dunedin coordinate a wide range of onsite training packages for workers on the New Dunedin Hospital site. This includes licensing, compliance tickets, literacy and numeracy, cadetships, apprentice training, cultural awareness, as well as mental health and wellbeing support.

Over 1121 people have been trained so far which already exceeds WFCD's funding target for training and qualifications of 900.

All workers are inducted onsite and Workforce Central Dunedin has co-designed a complete induction package with stakeholders that focusses on Health & Safety, Mental and Physical Wellbeing, Green Star building and the cultural value of the New Dunedin Hospital and the construction site to mana whenua.

WFCD also recently introduced Site Safe Passport training which is an entry level

Ongoing industry challenge

The construction and infrastructure industries have a skills shortage and recruitment challenges. Perceptions that it is "dirty and grimy," physically challenging (and therefore skewed to males) and offers a lack of career progression are factors.

WFCD has played a critical role in helping challenge these perceptions by demonstrating the diverse range of career options the industry offers.

"It is lack of visibility. Nobody talks about what's going on in the trades and I think that's a massive, MASSIVE, thing. If you could just get everybody starting to talk about the opportunities, they'd realise they are huge. Especially in infrastructure. In the electricity supply industry for example, they are making heaps of money and they are having a great time but nobody knows about it. It is like a shop with no doors - nobody knows how to get in there and nobody knows what is going on."

Area Manager, Industry sector

Skilled & ready workforce – outcomes



Employment

- 254 employed (target 300)

**Economic
value**

\$17.54m+



Training & qualifications

- 1121 trained and inducted (above target 900)

This includes:

- Site inductions
- Licensing
- Compliance tickets
- Cadetships and Apprentice training
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Literacy and numeracy
- Cultural awareness
- etc



Employment seminars

- 16 free employment seminars (held 1st Wed of every month)

330 people seeking work have attended, and 40 employers with real jobs to offer

Skilled & ready workforce – Meet Taylor



2023 Pre-trade course (Heavy Automotive) Otago Polytechnic
Despite this, struggled to find work – on Jobseeker benefit

First role - employed via WFCD & Stellar Recruitment
Steel Installer Labourer for Dart Engineering (at NDH site)

Skilled and ready thanks to WFCD
Induction (MATES in Construction general awareness training, Greenstar, and Mana Whenua cultural narrative), Site Safe Passport, Elevated Work Platforms

New role with Alpha Interiors, still working on N
Dart finished works on NDH in December 2024 meaning Taylor needed a new role. His experience quickly led to work with Alpha Interiors, still on the new hospital build. "The atmosphere here is great. I enjoy working with Alpha and the people here, and seeing the progress on the hospital," says Taylor.

Taylor is a young Pasifika man that met WFCD at the start of his employment journey. He is now making use of his skills and qualifications with full-time work on the new hospital, and has great long-term career options.

Wellbeing & productivity



Wellbeing & productivity - approach

Construction productivity and efficiency are essential for the success of any building project. Workforce Central Dunedin are helping address onsite worker productivity with pastoral support initiatives to enhance physical and mental wellbeing.

Sobering challenges

MATES in Construction report that the construction industry is losing nearly one person every week to suicide and the industry is nine times more likely to lose someone to suicide than workplace accidents. 99% of those are men. MATES in Construction makes it easier to talk about mental health.

Construction is also the highest-ranking industry for ACC work-related claims. Construction Health and Safety New Zealand (CHASNZ) recently reported that ACC accepted 21,085 soft-tissue injury claims from the trades sector in 2023, which CHASNZ estimated resulted in a total of 562,405 days off work, at an average of 27 days per claim. It noted 2024 was worse and that average had increased from 27 to 36 days.

Workforce Central Dunedin is focussed on supporting workers, encouraging health and wellbeing, and helping people thrive.

"Without a doubt, what WFCD has done has been of huge value. I think that a workforce that is cared for, that has attention paid to them and has got these things available is going to be absolutely more successful than a workforce that doesn't. And the money that you are going to put into doing things like this you are going to get paid dividends in how your workforce performs."

Manager, Infrastructure Training

"When we look at people who are involved in large infrastructure sites, one of the huge success factors is really that pastoral support; having people there that are independent to your employer who are there to help you look after yourself. Because a lot of people coming into work - fulltime work, and different work than they've been in before, don't understand the nuances of that kind of work or that kind of sector."

Manager, Workforce Development

Health checks at work

The construction sector is male dominated and there is a lot of research that shows that men are less likely than women to seek medical help or advice. Traditional views on masculinity and fear of bad news are just two of the most common reasons men give for putting off check-ups.

This can lead to potentially harmful conditions being ignored and men losing out on valuable information about their overall health. "I don't have the time" and the cost of healthcare are factors, as is the misconception "it will get better on its own," which unfortunately can mean missing the opportunity to catch something serious early on.

To help combat this, Workforce Central Dunedin offers a free onsite health clinic for workers four hours each week. The clinic was set up with the premise that the

impact on secondary care could be reduced by early intervention and prevention. To date there have been 105 Nurse Practitioner consults and referrals made where necessary. Blood sugar, blood pressure, vision, muscular issues, medical conditions, and health screening services are provided.

As a result of these consults, some issues amongst the workforce have been identified. For example, high blood pressure; diabetes; psychosocial risk of long hours and working away from home; the cost of healthcare; and unwillingness to take time off to access healthcare.

The health clinic continues to encourage workers to enrol in primary care for their own benefit and this will help reduce any related impact on hospital Emergency Department and Urgent Doctors.

Several health delivery partnerships have been set up with local providers to make healthcare affordable for workers, such as subsidised GP vouchers for urgent need, as well as access to ½ price eye tests, physio students and free flu vaccines for example.

"WFCD have said, let's try and take a more macro view - what would help the average construction person that's in front of us today? People might have ill health; people might have high blood pressure and don't even know it, let's try and put all those things in and almost be a good employer in a way – they are almost taking the employers view, despite not being the employer. And so the people that are closest to it are getting well looked after – they can pop in and see the barber and have a consultation if they've got anything to unload, get a bit of extra training, & they are getting some general health tools – get your prostate checked, whatever else is going on, the Nurse is available."

Construction Manager

Mental health awareness

Workforce Central Dunedin hosts regional MATES in Construction Field Officers onsite who are trained in suicide intervention skills and have experience in the Building and Construction industry.

Mental health and wellbeing are regularly discussed onsite via Toolbox Talks and all inductions. MATES in Construction reported over 53,660 worker interactions nationally across its programmes in 2024.

"If we can look after our construction workers in different ways like this, things will get built faster; safety will increase; more people will speak up onsite; less chance of injury. ACC is happy, the healthcare system is happy. All those benefits for something as little as having a haircut can hopefully make a difference."

Advisor, Sector Workforce

Haircuts (yes really!)

The connection between looking good and feeling good is not new but a barber onsite certainly is! WFCD's barber has a background in mental healthcare which carries over to the conversational aspect of his service. 401 haircuts later, this is a very popular service with workers who make a koha donation to charity for their haircut and then choose who benefits.

"The teams don't know how lucky they are to have all this sort of stuff! I think they really do appreciate it - look at how much uptake the nurse has had – I think it is definitely well worth it and well appreciated. The barber – he's always booked out – and it is not just about getting a haircut, its about having a chat. I know a lot of our guys go. Motivation is different for everyone – it is cheap, its easy, but at the same time you have a good chat with him and you disconnect so I rate it."

Advisor, Build partner

Wellbeing & productivity – outcomes



Health checks

- 105 free Nurse Practitioner onsite consults
- 6 free Urgent GP consults
- 14 free Prostate PSA blood tests
- 13 free Hearing tests/wax removal
- 29 Physiotherapy referrals
- 6 free Covid-19 boosters
- 66 free Flu vaccines 'Flu jab'



Mental health help

- **Regional MATES in Construction Field Officers onsite**
- **16 onsite volunteer Connectors & ASIST participants trained by MATES in Construction**
- **Regular onsite Suicide Prevention Toolbox Talks (414 nationwide, reaching 16,412 industry workers)**



Haircuts

- 401 onsite haircuts

Koha donated to New Zealand charities

[illegible]

Outreach & education



Outreach & education - approach

WFCD work alongside local iwi, school leavers, university and polytechnic leavers, jobseekers (including career and job changers) and many others to promote careers in construction and prove the industry offers pathways and progression beyond typical perceptions.

Education to employment

Just as many potential construction workers for the New Dunedin Hospital's Inpatient Building are in Year 12 right now, when the hospital opens it could well be staffed by clinicians who are currently in primary school!

Workforce Central Dunedin are an important facilitator in encouraging participation and interaction with the construction and infrastructure industries, as well as providing access to the project wherever possible as the new hospital's public engagement gateway.

Over the last five years, WFCD has reached 7,493 people which is 10% of the Dunedin City population 10-49 years (2024).

Inspiring pathways

As well as increasing engagement and awareness, Workforce Central Dunedin has provided opportunities to signpost potential entry points into the industry such as apprenticeships and internships to ensure that these initiatives are promoted to young people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

WFCD has worked with many educators to deliver sessions that meet the specific needs of schools and pupils. Workforce Central Dunedin has also ensured the New

Dunedin Hospital has had a significant presence in careers expos and special events. For example, in 2023 WFCD played a key role with its collaborators to develop the first 'Pasifika Navigators of Tomorrow'. Over 300 young Pacific people (Years 11-13) attended from 19 different schools across the region.

Role models are priceless

Workforce Central Dunedin have also offered a unique opportunity for schools, school leavers and jobseekers to visit the site and meet site supervisors, demolition experts, archaeologists, scaffolders, labourers, project managers and many more in action at work on the largest health infrastructure build in the country. These role models have openly shared how they entered the industry and how they have progressed their own careers.

"I think it's been really good for students to see, look at the site and the scale of this, and to hear from people that are working there, that there are all these opportunities. It serves again for those kids that think 'I'm not an academic and I'm a practical learner' to give value to what their skills are so I think it has been really important. And certainly for staff – I've been along to the site, I know that other careers advisors have. I've come back and talked to department people about what's happening so it actually gives everybody context that we can use to keep kids motivated, to help them know where it might lead and all of that sort of stuff."

Pathways Team Leader

Addressing the perceptions

As well as promoting role models to demonstrate the wide range of career opportunities the industry offers, WFCD has developed a new 'Student to Workforce' initiative where students are matched to host employers for a work placement (with support of their school) that provides a realistic insight to what the career is like and hands-on experience.

"People have a perception often of this sector as labourers – moving cones around on the roads that keep us safe, hammerhands, and that kind of thing. We know it's a lot broader and richer now but I'm not convinced to be quite honest, that we've struck the right balance."

Partnerships Manager

"Often its parents that we come up against – they think 'oh no, you should go to university' and we say no, no, no, you should go into a trade. It's starting to slowly shift in statistics we see that parents of the next generation that is coming through now, parents are starting to understand that. Once you've been an apprentice for a couple of years, you are earning \$80-100k if you are in one of these industries – we are not talking chicken feed here. And they are actually transportable skills. But it is simply down to lack of visibility. Parents, kids, young adults don't understand what opportunities are actually available. Most can name a plumber, electrician, builder. Well gosh, those are 3 of them but there is literally another 300 they just don't know about!"

Manager, Industry Training

Addressing the gender gap

The number of women entering construction is slowly growing – the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) reports a shift across the sector with more than 6% of women apprentices training (up from less than 1% in 2015). Carpentry, painting and decorating, and timber joinery are the most popular trades amongst women.

Despite some progress, women are still under-represented in skilled trades. WFCD has worked with BCITO and schools to promote gender diversity and help young women develop their skills and confidence with initiatives such as the Girls' Shed. The Girls' Shed started as an idea to deliver hard materials experiences to girls in high school and has grown from a few events per year into a subject choice.

"I think that there are more girls now vocalising a desire to get into the sector. Before they didn't see a way, they didn't see it as a choice for them. Something like a site visit opens kids eyes and opens it up for families who are excited that students can do this stuff so it is increasing the likelihood of young women going into trades."

Education Mentor

Influencing the influencers

Many perceptions of construction as a career are generational and often relate to a family member's own experience or knowledge. They influence career choice.

Workforce Central Dunedin has worked with minimal resource throughout, both in terms of a small (but mighty) team and budget. WFCD acknowledges more could be done to expand its reach with key influencers if funding was available.

"In terms of challenges, the other piece of this puzzle is that we need to bring our parents on board and our communities and all those community influencers and champions to really raise the profile of construction and infrastructure so they have an understanding of the wide range of opportunities that the sector offers."

Mngr, Engagement & Partnerships

"It is not just about the jobseeker; it is about the parents. And it's even about the parents if the person is 25 – Mum and Dad still have a massive influence into what they should be doing. It is that perception that the trades are underpaid and a dirty, grimy job. It is not the case anymore."

Workbase Learning Manager

Outreach & education – outcomes



Site visits

- 393 people have visited New Dunedin Hospital site

Unique opportunity to meet site supervisors, demolition experts, archaeologists, scaffolders, labourers, project managers and more in action!

(There are approx. 300 construction & infrastructure industry career options)



Career expos/events

- 11 free student career events (Dunedin Central, Clutha)
- 3 public NDH meetings (Dunedin Central)



Inspiring pathways

- **‘Student to Workforce’ Academy work placement option (new)**
- **Tailored school visits**
(As requested) Unique opportunity to learn more about the project from clinician and construction managers
- **Tailored advice to schools**
(As requested) Advice on incorporating construction and infrastructure within career pathway programmes

Generating jobs – a final word

The New Dunedin Hospital, along with other construction builds in Dunedin, is providing the next generation with an exciting opportunity to explore, grow, and shape the region's future.

Workforce Central Dunedin thanks the innovators, leaders, educators, and wider community who share the common goal of creating a world leading health facility and achieving all the broader outcome benefits that come from the country's largest health infrastructure project being built in right here in Ōtepoti.

"Our dream is that our workforce thrives and the New Dunedin Hospital build continues to support local businesses and workers. It's also a great chance for our education community to re-imagine the future of construction training. What better place to test, pilot or try out something new."

Mā te wā from all of us at
Workforce Central Dunedin



"On behalf of the WFCD Advisory Board, I'd like to congratulate the team on their success and willingness to walk the extra mile to achieve such great results."

Hon Pete Hodgson, WFCD Advisory Board



Calculating value - skilled & ready workforce

Stakeholders	Intended/ Unintended changes	Outputs	The outcomes	The outcomes (what changes)						Deadweight	Attribution	Impact
Stakeholder	Change for stakeholders	Summary of activity in numbers	Description: How would you describe the change	Indicator: How would you measure it?	Source: Where did you get the information?	Quantity: How much change was there? (units of change)	Financial proxy: What proxy would you use to value the change?	Value (\$): What is the value of the change?	Source: Where did you get the information?	What would have happened without the activity?	Who else contributed to the change?	Quantity x financial proxy – deadweight, displacement, attribution, and drop-off
Construction & Infrastructure Jobseeker (Apprentice)	Gains skills and experience to enter workforce as apprentice	1 person for one year in paid employment	Is now an employed apprentice (but could have been on Jobseeker Support benefit without WFCD)	Number of people recruited by WFCD and average wage (12mths)	WFCD records	16	Difference between builder apprentice gross rate (\$19.30 per hr = \$40,144 pa) and Jobseeker Support benefit (Single 20-24yrs, \$356.72 gross per week = \$18,513 pa)	\$21,631	https://www.jobted.co.nz/salary/builder https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/main-benefits-rates/jobseeker-support-current.html		0	\$242,267
Construction & Infrastructure Jobseeker	Gains employment	1 person for one year in paid employment	Is now employed (but could have been on Jobseeker Support benefit without WFCD)	Number of people recruited by WFCD and average wage (12mths)	WFCD records	86	Based on difference between Trade Me Salary Guide - Jan 2025 industry average gross salary and Jobseeker Support benefit (1 Person/Married with children \$347.18 gross per week = \$18,053 pa)	\$60,163	https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/construction-roading	Have applied 30% deadweight* across all on the basis that some jobseekers may have found jobs via other means or other recruitment services *Sensitivity analysis: if this deadweight percentage changes it impacts the overall SROI value, e.g. 0% = \$7.14 20% = \$5.74 25% = \$5.39 30% = \$5.04 50% = \$3.64	0	\$3,621,813
Civil Jobseeker						5		\$60,163	(Not reported category so have used construction) https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/construction-roading		0	\$210,570
Transport Jobseeker						11		\$49,607	https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/transport-logistics		0	\$381,974
Manufacturing & Factory Jobseeker						34		\$46,966	https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/manufacturing-operations		0	\$1,117,791
Primary Industry & Forestry Jobseeker						56		\$52,904	https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/agriculture-fishing-forestry		0	\$2,073,837
Administration Jobseeker						9		\$46,360	https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/office-administration		0	\$292,068
Social Services Jobseeker						6		\$46,360	(Not reported category so have used administration) https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/office-administration		0	\$194,712
Retail & Hospitality Jobseekers						31		\$42,208	https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/jobs/salary-guide/retail		0	\$915,913
Jobseekers	Has opportunity to attend job seminar and learn more about roles and meet potential employers	Number of people attending seminars (16 seminars in total)	Is employed or connected to training required (outcomes reflected in employment numbers)	Number of people attending	WFCD records	330	Outcomes reflected in employee placements above	\$0		0	Various employers	\$0

Calculating value - skilled & ready workforce (cont.)

Stakeholders	Intended/ Unintended changes	Outputs	The outcomes	The outcomes (what changes)						Deadweight	Attribution	Impact
Stakeholder	Change for stakeholders	Summary of activity in numbers	Description: How would you describe the change	Indicator: How would you measure it?	Source: Where did you get the information?	Quantity: How much change was there? (units of change)	Financial proxy: What proxy would you use to value the change?	Value (\$): What is the value of the change?	Source: Where did you get the information?	What would have happened without the activity?	Who else contributed to the change?	Quantity x financial proxy – deadweight, displacement, attribution, and drop-off
Onsite worker	Has consistent induction and understands where to get help and advice	1 hr induction for one new site employee	Has consistent message – understands cultural significance of site, knows where to get MATES help and knows where to get training/advice WFCD	Number of people inducted (across 2 years)	WFCD records	724	0.25 FTE Average salary for HR Advisor between \$85,000 pa and \$95,000 pa for 2 years	\$180,000	https://www.seek.co.nz/career-advice/role/human-resources-adviser/salary	0	0	\$45,000
			Workers understand how Māori culture connects the principles of the hospital's design and functionality				Unique initiative with nothing directly comparable. Have used 10min calculation of 1-day (5hr) tikanga course (cost \$650)	\$22	https://www.manukau.ac.nz/study/short-courses/maori-language-and-culture/cultural-competency-te-tiriti-o-waitangi-workshop	0	0	\$15,928
			Workers understand where to get help from MATES in Construction & its services - Field Officer, helpline or callback service				Cost of Field Officer included under 'Health and Wellbeing'	0	0	0	MATES in Construction 100%	\$0
Onsite worker, project & operational managers	Have more knowledge and fulfil responsibilities (and requirements) of their role	Training (H&S, Industry & General)	Has understanding, knowledge and certification to perform their role	Number of people trained	WFCD records	288	Average cost (many included under Zero Fees schemes)	\$74.70	Various – includes SiteSafe, Fire Extinguisher, First Aid, OSH etc	100% Must have happened regardless to fulfil compliance	Some certification included under various Zero Fee schemes	\$0
		Ticketing (General & Specialised) & Licences				60	Average cost (many included under Zero Fees schemes)	\$232	Various – includes MWEP, EWP etc	75% Most required for compliance	0	\$3,480
		Training (Admin & Management)				49	Average cost	\$182.50	Various	25%	0	\$6,707

Calculating value - wellbeing & productivity

Stakeholders	Intended/ Unintended changes	Outputs	The outcomes	The outcomes (what changes)						Deadweight	Attribution	Impact
Stakeholder	Change for stakeholders	Summary of activity in numbers	Description: How would you describe the change	Indicator: How would you measure it?	Source: Where did you get the information?	Quantity: How much change was there? (units of change)	Financial proxy: What proxy would you use to value the change?	Value (\$): What is the value of the change?	Source: Where did you get the information?	What would have happened without the activity?	Who else contributed to the change?	Quantity x financial proxy – deadweight, displacement, attribution, and drop-off
Onsite worker	Gets advice/care for health problem	1 free NP consult	Gets help for health issue (may not have gone to health professional at all because of cost/time off work reasons)	Number of NP consults at WFCD Health Clinic	WFCD records	105	Nurse Practitioner consult (full cost \$55-\$65 18yrs+ without CSC)	\$60	https://www.dunedinout-hmedical.co.nz/our-services/payments-fees	0	0	\$6,300
Onsite worker	Gets urgent care for health problem	1 free Urgent GP consult	Gets help for chronic health issue (may have presented in hospital ED instead)	Number of Urgent GP consults paid	WFCD records	6	Urgent GP consult	\$155	https://www.dunedinout-hmedical.co.nz/our-services/payments-fees	0	0	\$930
Onsite worker Male 50yrs+	Gets screening test for prostate cancer	1 free PSA blood test	Detection of high PSA levels may be a sign of a prostate condition and finding it early may mean it is easier to treat	Number of people tested	WFCD records	14	Cost of PSA blood test (\$30) at MyTest (PRIMA home self-test kit from Life Pharmacy is \$38)	\$30	https://www.mytests.co.nz/our-tests/psa/ https://www.life pharmacy.co.nz/products/prima-home-test-prostate-psa-test-1pk	0	0	\$420
Onsite worker	Gets hearing tested & earwax removed	1 free hearing check and earwax removal	Test will determine measurable hearing loss or not and solution can be recommended if needed	Number of people who have ears cleaned/hearing tested	WFCD records	13	Cost of ear wax removal (includes free hearing check)	\$60	https://www.audiologyso-uth.co.nz/what-we-do/ear-wax-removal/	0	0	\$780
Onsite worker	Gets flu vaccine ahead of winter	1 free Flu jab	Has protection from influenza virus, which causes seasonal flu	Number of people immunised	WFCD records	66	Cost between \$25-\$45 (non-funded)	\$35	https://info.health.nz/immunisations/vaccines-aotearoa/flu-vaccine#the-2025-flu-vaccine-is-free-for-some-people-5387	0	0	\$2,310
Onsite worker	Gets physiotherapy for injury, disability or health condition	1 physiotherapy session (supervised student)	Gets help to restore movement and function	Number of people treated by student physiotherapist	WFCD records	29	Difference between supervised student \$35 and fully qualified physiotherapist \$80	\$45	https://www.otago.ac.nz/physio-clinic/dunedin/fees	0	0	\$1,305
Onsite worker	Gets Covid Booster for added protection	1 free Covid-19 Booster	Booster provides enhanced protection against current variants	Number of people vaccinated	WFCD Records	6	Free Booster available	\$0	https://www.unichem.co.nz/services/covid-19-vaccination	0	0	0
Onsite worker	Seeks help from onsite Connector/MATES in Construction Field Officer, helpline or callback service	1 Regional MATES in Construction Field Officer onsite (60% time on NDH). Second officer not valued as did not start until May 2025	Situation de-escalates, worker gets help, learns coping skills and is connected to ongoing support where needed	Part annual salary (60%) for 1 onsite Field Officer (NB: number of people seeking help is strictly confidential and cannot be reported)	MATES in Construction	2 years (to date)	60% of Field Officer average annual salary between \$49,065 (Trades/Services) & \$87,500 (Education/Training) = \$68,284 x 2	\$81,940	https://www.seek.co.nz/career-advice/role/field-officer	Serious injury or fatality	MATES in Construction	\$81,940
Onsite worker	Gets psychological uplift from haircut "Look good, feel good"	1 haircut (small Koha donation in lieu of payment)	Chance to unwind, opportunity to engage in conversation, or simply a quiet time to relax. (And don't have to fit it into weekend time so more time to spend with family).	Number of haircuts	WFCD records	401	Difference between cost of barber classic cut \$30 x 401 = \$12,030 and Koha paid \$4,096 (\$14.27)	\$15.73	https://neatman.co.nz/	0	0	\$6,308

Calculating value - outreach & education

Stakeholders	Intended/ Unintended changes	Outputs	The outcomes	The outcomes (what changes)						Deadweight	Attribution	Impact
Stakeholder	Change for stakeholders	Summary of activity in numbers	Description: How would you describe the change	Indicator: How would you measure it?	Source: Where did you get the information?	Quantity: How much change was there? (units of change)	Financial proxy: What proxy would you use to value the change?	Value (\$): What is the value of the change?	Source: Where did you get the information?	What would have happened without the activity?	Who else contributed to the change?	Quantity x financial proxy – deadweight, displacement, attribution, and drop-off

Measurable outcomes

Students, teachers, career advisors and industry	Stakeholders get authoritative information about the project and various opportunities it provides and Health NZ Te Whatu Ora NDH Project saves cost of resource to manage public engagement)	1 part time project Engagement lead onsite to provide project information to stakeholders and public. Produce presentations where required and organise/host meetings and tours	Site visits	0.5 FTE Annual salary for an onsite project Engagement Lead for 2 years	WFCD records	393	Difference between Communications Manager \$120-\$130,000 and Communications & Stakeholder Engagement Advisor average annual salary between \$85-\$95,000 = \$107,500 pa x 2 divided by 2	\$107,500	https://www.seek.co.nz/career-advice/role/communications-manager/salary https://www.seek.co.nz/career-advice/role/communications-and-engagement-advisor/salary	0	0	\$107,500
Students, teachers (and some families)			Career expos/events			11						
Public			Public meetings			3						
Students			'Student to Workforce' Academy			(New)						

Acknowledgements

Our grateful thanks to those listed who were available to take part in this process and discuss their experiences of working with Workforce Central Dunedin. It was a privilege to have people share their views and considerable knowledge. Tēnā koutou, thank you to you all.

New Dunedin Hospital (NDH) project owner:

Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora, Infrastructure and Investment Group (IIG)

NDH build partners:

- Ceres New Zealand (Demolition)
- CPB Contractors (Early Contractor Engagement, Inpatient Building)
- Southbase Construction (Lead Contractor, Outpatient Building)

WFCD board, collaborators, and stakeholders:

- Connexis, New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology | Te Pūkenga
- Department of Corrections | Ara Poutama Aotearoa
- Disabled Persons Assembly NZ
- Dunedin City Council | kaunihera a-rohe o Ōtepoti
- Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities
- KUMA Southern Māori Business Network | Te Kupeka Umaka Māori ki Āraiteuru
- MATES in Construction
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment | Hīkina Whakatutuki
 - (Former) Otago Regional Skills Leadership Group, (RSLG)
 - Kānoa Regional Development Sector Workforce Engagement Programme (SWEP)
- Ministry of Education | Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
- Ministry of Māori Development | Te Puni Kōkiri
- Ministry of Social Development | Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora
- Otago Polytechnic | Te Kura Matatini ki Otago, Māori Learner Success
- Platinum Recruitment
- Queen's High School, Dunedin
- Stellar Recruitment
- Tertiary Education Commission | Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua
- Workforce Development Council | Waihanga Ara Rau, Pacific Partnership

Author

This report was produced by Magnifi Limited's Director, Suzanne Stephenson, for Workforce Central Dunedin's Advisory Board. Suzanne is particularly interested in helping organisations evaluate their performance and report on the economic benefits of their work programmes.

References

Aukaha - New Dunedin Hospital cultural narrative

Aukaha is a mana whenua-owned organisation that delivers services across the takiwā of Papatipu Rūnaka shareholders. Aukaha developed the cultural narrative that guides the New Dunedin Hospital project.

<https://aukaha.co.nz/>

Barangaroo Project – NSW waterfront renewal

Barangaroo is a significant waterfront renewal project in Sydney's CBD; transforming a once neglected and inaccessible 22-hectare area of the city into a dynamic cultural, residential, business and retail hub.

https://www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au/media/3bmp2ewe/barangaroo-realising-the-vision_april-2020.pdf
<https://www.barangaroo.com/past-present-future/history-of-barangaroo/timeline>

New Dunedin Hospital Project – Health New Zealand

The Infrastructure and Investment Group (IIG) of Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora is responsible for the planning and delivery of more than 110 Health Capital Envelope (HCE)-funded projects across the motu, including the New Dunedin Hospital.

The New Dunedin Hospital will benefit generations of people across the Southern region. The modern, fit for purpose facility is currently the largest ever health infrastructure investment in New Zealand.

<https://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/health-services-and-programmes/infrastructure-and-investment>

Sector Workforce Engagement Programme (SWEP)

SWEP is a cross-government initiative that provides a coordinated government response in partnership with key industries to address labour market issues they face. Working strategically with the government levers of immigration, education and welfare, SWEP works to develop the right workforce, in the right place, at the right time.

Social Return on Investment (SROI)

This report has been guided by the framework developed by Social Value UK that is publicly available for anyone interested in measuring, managing, and accounting for social value or social impact.

<https://socialvalueuk.org/resources/a-guide-to-social-return-on-investment-2012/>

Workforce Central Dunedin (WFCD)

Contact us if you are a jobseeker or looking for staff, we can help. Email: kiaora@wfcd.co.nz

<https://www.wfcd.co.nz/>



PASIFIKA NAVIGATORS OF TOMORROW

STEERING YOUR FUTURE BEYOND THE STARS

Workforce Central Dunedin helped stage the first Pasifika careers event of its kind (*Pasifika Navigators of Tomorrow*) at Forsyth Barr Stadium in March 2023. WFCD and the Outpatient Building lead contractor, Southbase Construction, demonstrated the New Dunedin Hospital build to 300 young Pacific people in years 11-13 from 19 different schools.