

NAVIGATING THE CHANGE
PROCESS: THE EXPERIENCE OF,
AND WAYS FORWARD FOR,
FACILITY MANAGERS IN THE
RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE
INDUSTRY

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Certificate of authorship/originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Spelling in this thesis is based on the *Macquarie Dictionary (Ed 3)*, Macquarie Library North Ryde 2001. Grammar and punctuation are based on the Commonwealth of Australia *Style manual for authors, editors and printers (Ed 6)*, John Wiley and Sons Australia 2002.

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List of acronyms

ACAT	Aged Care Assessment Team
ACHSE	Australian College of Health Service Executives
ACS	Aged and Community Services
AHS	Area Health Service
AIN	Assistant in Nursing
ANHECA	Australian Nursing Home and Extended Care Association
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DON	Director of Nursing
FM	Facility Manager
IS	Industry Stakeholder
RCS	Resident Classification Scale
RN	Registered Nurse
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
TAFE	Technical and Further Education

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Abstract

The residential aged care industry in Australia has been undergoing change on multiple fronts since the introduction of the Aged Care Act 1997. Some of the sources of this change have been new regulatory systems such as accreditation and certification, concerns about financial viability, problems with recruitment and retention of staff, new models of care and increasing acuity of care provided.

Facility Managers of aged care homes are at the forefront of managing these changes. In spite of their central position within the industry, there has been almost no research on the general role and functions of Facility Managers and even less that focuses on their role in the management of change.

Using a constructivist methodology, this study set out to address this lack of research and to develop a range of practical proposals concerning the management of change in the sector. The research questions the study sought to answer were:

1. How is the role of managing change perceived and understood within the overall role of Facility Managers?
2. How is the role of managing change approached by Facility Managers?
3. How do Facility Managers learn to manage change?
4. Do Facility Managers need to be supported in their efforts to manage change and, if so, how should that support be provided, and by whom?

Data for the project came from one-to-one interviews with two groups: a randomly chosen cross-section of Facility Managers and a purposive sample of senior stakeholders within the sector. Thematic analysis was used to draw out patterns and themes in the interview transcripts, and to develop interpretations and connections to the literature.

The study found that there is not a clear understanding of how the management of change fits into the role of Facility Managers, and that the management of change is an issue that is in the background of management thinking and practice in the sector. The

change management aspects of the Facility Manager's role have been largely ignored or taken for granted. This can lead to stress on the individual manager as well as reducing the effectiveness of the change process.

There are many ways that Facility Managers can be better supported in the management of change, and the study presents a number of proposals to help achieve this. These focus on general principles and competencies underlying the management of change, an analytical model of change management, and management development practices supporting the management of change.