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Aged care crisis hits families

The families of elderly nursing home residents will have to bathe them, feed them and give them their medicines because there are not enough staff to cope with growing demand, Catholic Health Australia warned yesterday.

Catholic Health Australia provides one in nine of the nation's aged care beds.

Chief executive Martin Lavery yesterday said analysis showed the aged care workforce would have to increase by 155 per cent in the next 20 years if current care levels were to be maintained.

In 2007 there were 175,000 people working in aged care but, as the population ages and more people enter aged care homes, a workforce of 426,000 will be required in two decades time.

'We have a situation where family members may have to provide direct care for relatives in aged care homes,' he said.