



CAROLYN J. COOPER

EXECUTIVE LEARNING SET FACILITATOR & COACH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Carolyn J Cooper is a seasoned health executive and registered nurse with over three decades of senior leadership experience across New Zealand and Australia. Her expertise spans aged care, hospital operations, clinical governance, cultural transformation, and strategic leadership in both public and private sectors.

As Aged Care Commissioner for New Zealand, Carolyn provided national leadership and advocacy to improve quality outcomes and safeguard the wellbeing of older people. Her career has consistently focused on delivering compassionate, effective, and sustainable health services through inclusive leadership and systems reform.

MY EXPERTISE

- Health System & Regulatory Reform
- Public Sector Governance
- Organisational Performance & Risk
- Clinical Quality & Safety
- Executive Leadership & Strategic Policy

CAROLYN'S CAREER

Carolyn's leadership journey includes key executive roles such as Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer at Bupa Villages and Aged Care NZ, Executive Director of Clinical Operations at Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD in Australia, and senior positions across several New Zealand District Health Boards.

She has led large, multi-site organisations with up to 5,500 staff, directed national strategy, appeared at Australia's Royal Commission into Aged Care, and implemented structural and cultural reforms across healthcare systems. Her leadership was instrumental in improving patient safety, staff engagement, and service delivery during major system transitions and public health crises.

Carolyn has served as Chair of Bupa NZ's governance boards and held board roles across the Aged Care Association, Retirement Villages Association, and InterRAI Governance Board.

Carolyn is values-driven and people-focused. Known for her collaborative and empowering leadership style, she brings clarity to complex systems and builds strong cultures of safety, care, and accountability. Her strategic foresight and operational excellence are matched by a deep commitment to equity, diversity, and culturally responsive services.