Strategies for Improving the Recruitment and Retention of Front Line, Direct Care Workers

American Society on Aging Conference
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Overview of Session

- Care for Elders and Workforce Initiatives
- Current Direct Care Workforce Realities and Challenges
- Implications of Growing Diversity
- Target Audiences and Key Messages to Inspire Action
- Examples of Best and Promising Practices
- National Policies with Opportunity for Impact
Care for Elders

- Partnership of organizations in Houston, Texas
- More than 80 partners since 1999

Purpose
- Inform policy
- Influence community practice

Goals
- Increase access to services
- Improve the quality of care
- Enhance the quality of life
Direct Care Workforce
Major Initiatives

- Enhanced Screening Pilot
- Orientation and Training Pilot
- Advocacy for Screening and Training
- Worker Recognition Pilot
- Annual Conference for Workers
- New – Houston Area Worker Association
- New – Direct Care Worker Support Specialist
A typical direct care worker…

- Female
- Older than average workers
- Works in a home setting
- Performs a physically demanding job
Direct-Care Workforce Reaches Historic Proportions

By 2018, there will be more direct-care workers than teachers (K-12), law enforcement and public safety workers, fast food and counter workers, and registered nurses.

- Registered Nurses: 3.2 m
- Fast Food and Counter Workers: 3.7 m
- Law Enforcement/Public Safety Workers: 3.7 m
- Teachers from K-12: 3.9 m
- Direct-Care Workers: 4.3 m

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# Top Ten Fastest-Growing Occupations in the United States, 2008-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Growth rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Biomedical engineers</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Network systems &amp; data communications analysts</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Home health aides</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Personal &amp; home care aides</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Financial examiners</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Medical scientists, except epidemiologists</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Physicians assistants</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Skin care specialists</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Biochemists and biophysicists</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Athletic trainers</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Projected Aging of the Direct-Care Workforce, 2008-2018

2008
(3.2 million workers)

- age 16-54: 78%
- age 55+: 22%

2018
(4.3 million workers)

- age 16-54: 71%
- age 55+: 29%
Accidents and Injuries Among Direct Care Workforce

- In 2009, nursing aides, orderlies and attendants had the **second largest number of occupational injuries** that required time away from work.
Direct-Care Workers Without Health Coverage by Setting, 2009

- Hospitals: 14%
- Nursing & Residential Care: 26%
- Home Health Care Services: 37%
Wages Comparison, 2009

- Meter Readers, Utilities: $16.58
- Garbage Collectors: $15.42
- Telephone Operators: $14.70
- Nursing Aides, Orderlies, & Attendants: $11.56
- Home Health Aides: $9.85
- Personal & Home Care Aides: $9.46

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Snapshot of Ethnic Diversity

**Older Adults**
- 86.9% White
- 8.9% African American
- 4.9% Hispanic
- 2.3% Asian

**Direct Care Workers**
- 47% White
- 30% African American
- 16% Hispanic
- 7% Other
Race/Ethnicity of Direct Care Workers

Data Source: Who Are Direct Care Workers? PHI Facts 3

- White, Non-Hispanic: 47%
- African American: 30%
- Hispanic, Latino: 16%
- Other: 7%
Opportunities and Challenges of Cultural Diversity

Pearls of Wisdom about Honoring Culture
Target Audiences and Key Messages

- Provider/Employers
- Workers
- Consumers/Clients
- Funders - Public and Private
- Policy makers/Elected officials
Best and Promising Practices: Providers/Employers

Cooperative Home Care Associates
- Worker-owned
- Four-week training
- Guaranteed Hours Program
- Offers no-interest loans that average $250

Caregiver Training Institute
- 200 plus hours of training
- Job placement
Best and Promising Practices: Consumers

Education and Communication

- How to Select a Home Care Provider
  - Ensure a non-bias perspective

- Bill of Rights for Workers
  - Promote mutual respect

- Realistic Expectations
  - Encourage understanding
Best and Promising Practices: Workers

Professional Associations

- Advocacy
- Education
- Networking
- Support
Best and Promising Practices: Funding Organizations

Public Sector
- Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative
- Area Agency on Aging/ Older Americans Act

Private Sector
- United Way of Greater Houston
- Private Foundations
Policies with Direct Implications for Direct Care Workers

Personal Care Attendants Workforce Advisory Panel
- Advising Secretary of HHS and Congress
  - Adequacy of the number of workers
  - Wages and benefits for workers
  - Access to services provided by workers

Training Grants
- Personal and Home Care Aide State Training Programs
  - Demonstration programs for states to develop core competencies, pilot training curricula, and develop certification programs
- Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide Program
  - Awards community colleges and/or community-based training programs to promote career advancement into nursing careers
  - Support for the development, evaluation and demonstration of a competency-based curriculum
- Other Training Opportunities
  - Funding for accredited institutions of higher education already partnering with a long-term care provider to provide new training for direct care workers
  - Graduates must work in geriatrics, disability services, long term care or chronic care management for two years

- Recruitment and retention AND management improvement grants
- Grants and incentives to be awarded to long-term care facilities or community-based long-term care agencies
- To implement programs offering improved training, career ladders, and wage/benefit increases
Policies with Indirect Implications

National Health Care Workforce Commission
- Recommendations about health workforce priorities and goals
  - Formally includes direct care workforce
- Evaluate education and training activities
- Disseminate policies and practices that affect recruitment, training and retention

The CLASS Act (Community Living Assistance Services and Support)
- Social insurance program to support home and community-based services
- States required to ensure an infrastructure to support a well prepared personal care attendant workforce

Money Follows the Person
- Additional provisions to extend rebalancing and independence at home program
- Support for community-based collaborative care networks and transition programs
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