

Olmstead Plan Workplan – Direct Care and Support Services Workforce March 2019 Plan (page 40)

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This workplan with recommended strategies and activities was developed in response to the Cross-Agency Direct Care and Support Workforce Shortage Working Group, which submitted a recommendations report to the Olmstead Subcabinet in March, 2018. This workplan is designed to improve access to needed services and increase quality of life for people with disabilities by increasing the number of qualified direct care workers and retention of experienced workers who are needed to support people to live, work and engage in their communities. Having well-trained direct care professionals in place, leads to better health outcomes, more consistent care as turnover rates drop, and supports people to be fully participating and contributing members of society. The stakeholder working group recommendations drew on research and expertise within Minnesota and nationally to understand the issues and prioritize strategies to meet the challenges Minnesota faces with demographic changes that are contributing to the current workforce shortage. This is not just a workforce shortage for direct support workers needed in long-term services and supports, but in all areas of commerce in our state. In evaluating what can be committed to at this time in a workplan, state agencies recognize their role, but cannot alone resolve the workforce challenges faced by people with disabilities. Others will pursue additional strategies and compliment efforts state agencies are able to do at this time. The workplan is a living document that will be modified to reflect future legislation or other opportunities to collaborate on strategies.

STRATEGY: Expand, diversify and improve the pool of workers who provide direct care and support services in order to produce meaningful progress toward alleviating the direct care and support workforce shortage in Minnesota.

SUB-STRATEGIES:

1. Increase worker wages and/or benefits
 - Provide a livable wage to enhance job satisfaction and retention, and address statutory limits on reimbursement rates that make it difficult for providers to pay direct care and support staff a livable wage.
 - Assess the potential of creating an employee pool group consisting of direct care and support professionals throughout the state to achieve the best possible health coverage at the most affordable price.
2. Expand the worker pool to ensure that people with disabilities have the workforce they need to live, learn, work and enjoy life in the most integrated setting.

- Expand the worker pool to non-traditional candidates.
 - Explore options to address transportation barriers for direct care workers and the people who depend on their services.
 - Provide resources to help organizations utilize recruitment and retention strategies known to increase the quality of candidates hired.
 - Develop a service corps through partnerships with colleges, universities, and/or private partners.
 - Develop apprenticeship opportunities
3. Improve the workforce by enhancing training for direct care and support professionals
 - Assess the value of developing a training and scholarship program consistent with DEED’s career pathway model.
 - Promote use of existing training and development options.
 4. Increase job satisfaction (including quality of the job)
 - Ensure access to effective supervision.
 5. Raise public awareness by promoting direct care and support careers
 - Leverage Minnesota's career, training, and business services to develop a statewide recruitment and promotional plan to attract jobseekers to direct care worker careers.
 - Create a recruitment and retention guide, promotional materials, and public service announcements on direct care and support careers targeted to potential workers.
 - Develop an educational awareness plan on direct care and support careers targeted to high school students.
 6. Promote service innovation
 - Identify and promote the use of technology solutions.
 - Examine possible policy or regulatory barriers to the employment of potential workers or the accessibility of services by the people who need them.
 7. Enhance data collection
 - Gather and report longitudinal direct care and support workforce data across long-term services and supports in Minnesota.
 - Identify ongoing data needs for monitoring workforce issues.
 - Gather and report annual direct care and support workforce data across service types and populations receiving long-term services and supports.
 - Monitor improvements or worsening of the workforce issues based on baseline data.
 - Provide funding to allow monitoring of the relationship between critical incidents, recidivism of institutionalization, and emergency room visits based on reductions or increases in vacancy and turnover rates.
 - Articulate an ideal monitoring system and data needs, determine existing data sources, determine gaps.

Sub-strategy 1: Increase worker wages and/or benefits

1	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
B.1	<p>Conduct a sample-based provider survey on the direct care workforce in Minnesota.</p> <p>Report the results of the survey. The report will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of direct care workers employed full-time and part-time; • average wage for direct care staff and supervisors; • access to and utilization of benefits for workers; • retention of staff. 	<p>Report on wages and benefits for DCWs providing HCBS services will be available to interested parties, including legislators, state agencies, providers, researchers, advocates and people who use services and their allies as they consider strategies to address workforce pressures.</p>	<p>Submit report by June 30, 2020</p>	<p>DHS</p>

Sub-strategy 2: Expand the worker pool to ensure that people with disabilities have the workforce they need to live, learn, work and enjoy life in the most integrated setting.

2	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
A	<p>Promote Direct Support Connect through mailings, social media and personal contacts to increase awareness of the PCA workforce shortage and recruit potential workers. The focus will be on new immigrants, students and non-traditional candidates. Outreach will be coordinated with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New refugee programs • Minnesota State colleges/universities • University of Minnesota • Private college consortiums • Advocacy groups <p>Annually report on recruitment efforts.</p>	<p>There will be an increase of workers entering the Direct care workforce.</p>	<p>Submit report by September 30, 2020 and annually thereafter</p>	<p>DHS , stakeholders</p>

2	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
D	<p>HealthForce Minnesota/Minnesota State will identify potential members of service corps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school juniors/seniors interested in health careers (high school credit). • Post-secondary students interested in health careers (credits/credentials) and in other academic areas e.g. <p>This group would be provided with the potential of tuition forgiveness or scholarships for part time work commitment. Annually report on the status of this activity.</p>	Development of a direct support service will increase the number of direct care workers available to support people with disabilities.	Submit report on status by July 31, 2020 and annually thereafter	Health Force MN

Sub-strategy 3: Improve the workforce by enhancing training for direct care and support professionals

3	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
A.2	Work with Minnesota State to develop and offer courses/trainings throughout Minnesota, based on recommendations above. Annually report on status of training development.	Direct care workers will have access to quality training statewide resulting in better services for people with disabilities.	Submit report by August 31, 2020 and annually thereafter	MN State

Sub-strategy 4: Increase job satisfaction (including quality of the job)

4	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
A	<p>Provide information to PCA agencies on strategies to expedite hiring and onboarding processes for PCAs to reduce time lag, from initial recruitment of first time workers to deployment.</p> <p>Annually report on status of this activity.</p>	People with disabilities will experience a decrease in wait time for hiring and onboarding new staff. This will also impact the availability of emergency staff for both traditional agencies and PCA Choice.	Report status by August 31, 2020 and annually thereafter	DHS

Sub-strategy 5: Raise public awareness by promoting direct care and support careers

5	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
D	Report on the efforts to promote awareness of PCA and DCW careers and the Direct Support Connect website.	More people will be aware of Direct Support Connect with the goal of expanding the worker pool to better support people with disabilities.	Submit report by December 31, 2019	DHS, DEED

Sub-strategy 6: Promote service innovation

6	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of assistive technology (AT), through regional meetings with case managers and conference presentations. • Continue participation in a workgroup to develop improvements in the service planning process. The use of technology will be an essential component of that planning. • Continue to work with industry representatives on a major initiative directed toward increasing the use of technology as a response to the workforce shortage. • Promote the Minnesota Guide to Assistive Technology website (https://mn.gov/admin/at/), which supports people through the process of identifying how AT can help meet their support needs. • Report on the status of these activities. 	Including discussion of how technology might be used to meet a person’s desired outcomes during service planning will increase awareness, and use of AT. DHS provides care planners with resources to support the technology discussion. The expected outcome is an increase in the use of assistive technology and targeting use of human assistance (staff) where most needed.	Submit report by July 31, 2020 and annually thereafter	DHS, STAR, MDE,
B	<p>Expand the use of technology as an option to be discussed during service planning with the goal of increasing community living, employment, and participation in meaningful activities or reducing staffing as appropriate.</p> <p>Report the status of this activity.</p>	Properly deployed technology can support people to live more independently and to appropriately reduce the need for staff in some situations.	Report status by July 31, 2020	DHS

Sub-strategy 7: Enhance data collection.

7	Key Activity	Expected Outcome	Deadline	Agency/ Partners
C	Amend the preadmission screening document to include questions that will determine whether a nursing facility admission is due to a lack of available caregiver.	There will be a better understanding of the impact on direct care worker staffing shortages on unnecessary hospitalizations/nursing home admissions.	Amend document by January 31, 2020	DHS
D	Analyze data collected in prescreening documents to determine whether admission to a long-term care facilities may be due to lack of available caregiver. Report the summary of the data analysis.	See C above	Submit report by September 30, 2020	DHS