

Direct Care Workforce Initiatives

Transitions Stakeholder Advisory Council
December 2021 Meeting

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Agenda

1. Stabilizing and Strengthening Colorado's Direct Care Workforce
2. Direct Care Workforce Collaborative
3. American Rescue Plan Act- Direct Care Workforce Projects
4. Questions



Stabilizing and Strengthening Colorado's Direct Care Workforce



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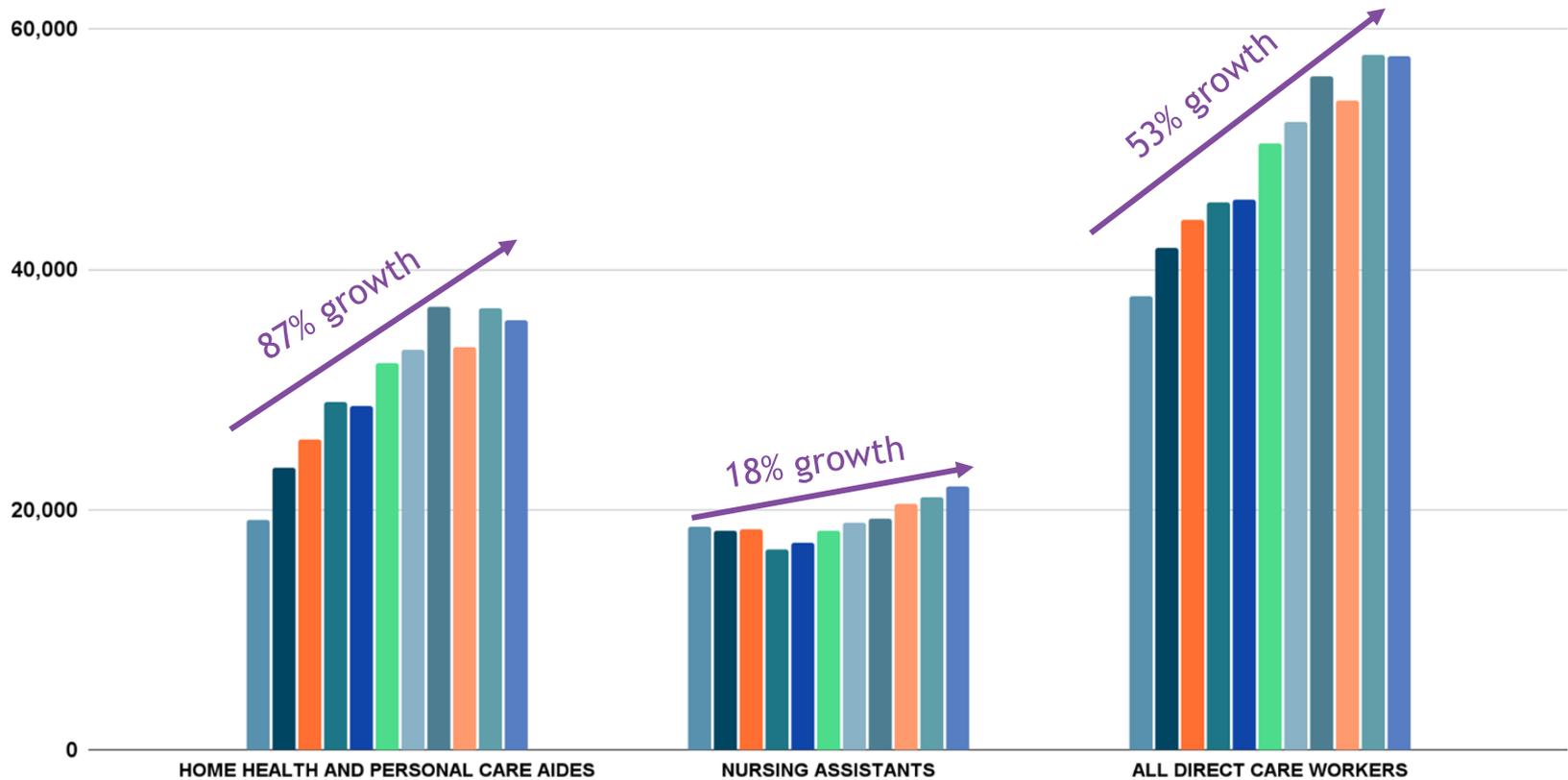
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Direct Care Workers



Direct Care Workers are **paid frontline workers** who provide hands-on care, services, and support to older adults and individuals with disabilities **across the long-term services and supports continuum**, from home and community-based settings to skilled nursing facilities. There are a variety of job titles that currently refer to these workers including, but not limited to, **attendants, assisted living aides, home health and home care aides, nurse aides, nursing assistants, personal care aides, and direct support professionals**. Direct care workers also include those employed under the consumer-directed model.

Growth in Colorado's Direct Care Workforce (2009-2019)

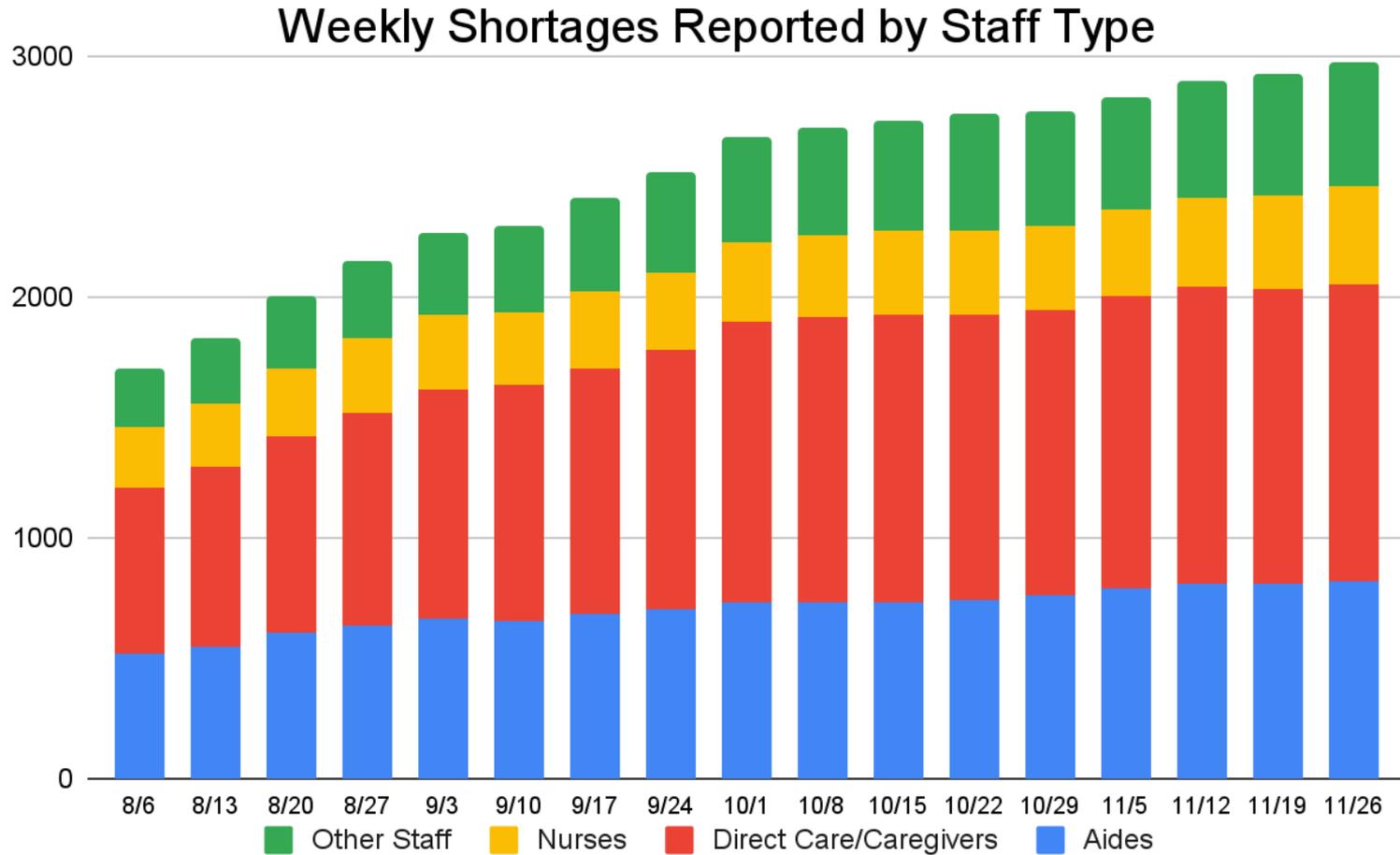


❖ The population of older adults and adults with disabilities is growing

❖ Growth in the direct care workforce has been significant over the last decade



Residential Care Staff Shortages



Growth

Direct Care Worker Projected Growth 2018-2028

	Growth	% Growth
Personal Care Aides	14,780	51%
Home Health Aides	4,240	43%
Nursing Assistants	5,390	25%
TOTAL	24,410	40%

The supply of direct care workers will need to keep up, but our data shows otherwise

- From 2018 to 2028, we expect a 40% increase in direct care workers

High turnover presents a huge barrier to meeting the current and future demand

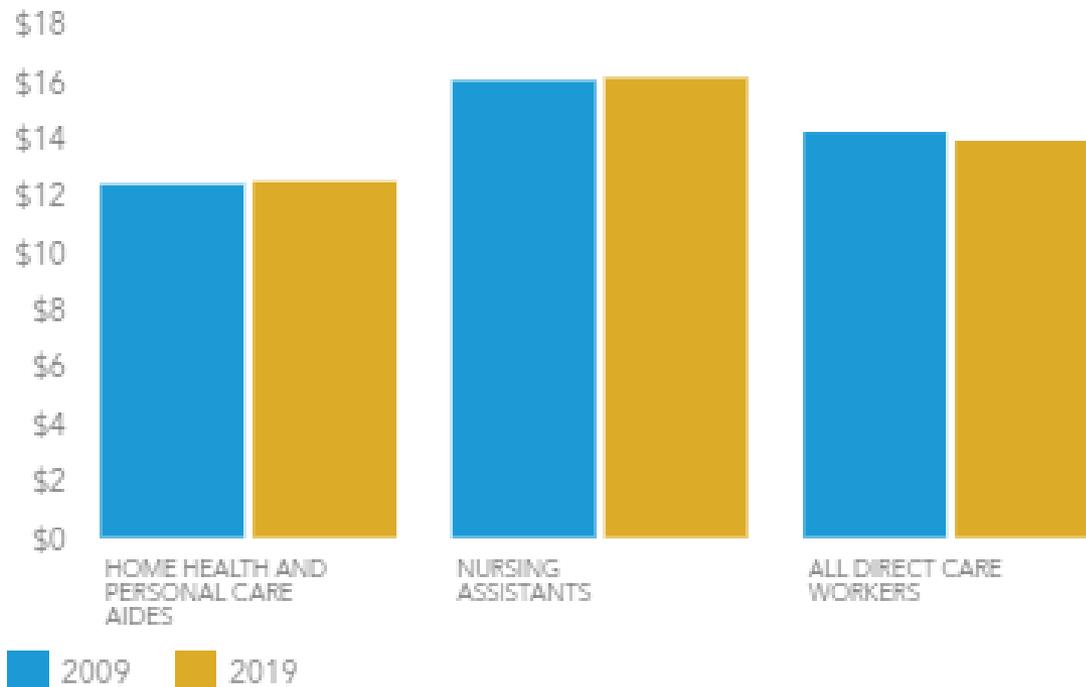
- Between 2018 and 2028, there are anticipated to be 91,690 separations
- Accounting for growth, Colorado will need 116,100 direct care workers to meet demand



Compensation

DIRECT CARE WORKER MEDIAN HOURLY WAGES ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION, 2009 TO 2019

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The workforce is undervalued, as evidenced by the poor compensation and barriers to career advancement

Wages for direct care workers decreased by 2% between 2009 and 2019 and nearly 30% are at less than 138% of the poverty level



THE 5 PILLARS OF DIRECT CARE JOB QUALITY



QUALITY TRAINING

- Training is accessible, affordable, and relevant to the job
- Content covers a range of relational and technical skills associated with quality care
- Competency-based, adult learner-centered instruction with opportunities for hands-on learning
- Programs account for cultural, linguistic, and learning differences
- Documentation and verification of program completion and/or certification, with connections to employment



FAIR COMPENSATION

- Living wage as a base wage
- Access to full-time hours
- Consistent scheduling and notice of scheduling changes
- Employer- or union-sponsored benefit plans
- Paid sick days and paid family and medical leave
- Grief support and bereavement leave
- Financial support and asset development programs
- Access to merit, longevity, and other base pay increases



QUALITY SUPERVISION & SUPPORT

- Clear presentation of job requirements, responsibilities, workflows, and reporting structures
- Consistent, accessible, and supportive supervision
- Access to personal protective equipment and other supplies to ensure worker and client safety
- Connection to peer mentors and peer support networks
- Connection to community-based organizations to address employment-related barriers



RESPECT & RECOGNITION

- Direct care workers reflected in organizational mission, values, and business plans
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion formalized in organizational practices
- Consistent feedback is given on work performance and retention is celebrated
- Opportunities for direct care workers to influence organizational decisions
- Clear communication about changes affecting workers, with opportunities for feedback
- Direct care workers empowered to participate in care planning and coordination
- Other staff trained to value direct care workers' input and skills



REAL OPPORTUNITY

- Employer-sponsored continuous learning available to build core and specialized direct care skills
- Opportunities for promotion into advanced direct care roles with wage and title increases
- Organizational commitment to cross-training workers and promoting from within
- Connections to external training and job development programs for other health care and social service careers

Goals & Actions- 2021-2023

01

Crisis Response

- Direct staffing support to prevent closure or moving of residents
- Provider payments and wage increases to workers

02

Expand Cross-Agency Collaboration

- Build capacity within CDLE, CCCS, and CDHE to assist in career pathway development
- Leverage stimulus funding and activities to further DCW efforts
- Raise awareness across the state about the DCW crisis
- Increase cross-agency data sharing

03

Recruit New Individuals into the Field

- Expand successful recruitment or entry-level programs and pilot new pipeline programs
- Provide resources and training to workforce centers
- Create a one-stop resource hub
- Launch a public awareness campaign



Goals & Actions

04

Expand Career Advancement Opportunities

- Revise current position credentials
- Develop and implement a standardized state-wide universal homemaker and personal care worker training
- Develop and expand opportunities to advance within direct care
- Expand career pathway opportunities

05

Improve Retention

- Make best practice tools and resources for retaining workers easily accessible to employers
- Address issues related to the devaluing of direct care workers, such as the low pay and limited access to benefits

06

Activate Stakeholders to Accelerate Efforts

- Advance the work of the Direct Care Workforce Collaborative, including releasing the Action group Action Plans- Training & Advancement, Compensation & Benefits, and Value & Awareness



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Direct Care Workforce Collaborative

A Stakeholder-Led Initiative to Help Stabilize the Direct Care Workforce



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DCW Collaborative

Mission

To stabilize the workforce by implementing strategies that support priority issues and raise awareness about their value.

Vision

To be recognized as the central hub for action, expertise, and advocacy on the direct care workforce.

Action Groups

- Three core areas selected from stakeholder input
- Identify the problem, determine solutions, and develop and execute an action plan

Meetings

- Collaborative Meetings (Bi-Monthly), Action Group Meetings (Monthly), Leadership Meetings (Monthly)

Leadership

- The group is entirely stakeholder-run- Collaborative Co-Chairs; Action Group Co-Chairs



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Action Group - Value & Awareness

Strategies

- **Direct Care Worker Representation-** Utilize current and untapped Collaborative stakeholder communication channels to increase active participation in Collaborative meetings
- **Key Stakeholder Partnership-** Create comprehensive list of key stakeholders
- **Awareness Campaign-** Hire a firm specializing in ad campaigns to lead in the planning, implementation, and assessment of our campaign framework



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Action Group - Compensation & Benefits

Strategies

- **Support the awareness campaign** - Connect specific stakeholders who have influence and/or insight into Direct Care Worker compensation growth
- **Research and synthesize provider costs** - Create recommendations for available changes that can lower/mitigate costs
- **Research and evaluate the rate setting process** - Create recommendations for more effectively aligning service rates with provider costs
- **Create a one page resource guide for improving child care accessibility** - Research current community resources & create new partnerships; Promote resource guide



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Action Group - Training & Career Advancement

Strategies

- **Streamline Positions** - Research and promote other state models; create visual representation
- **Develop a standardized statewide curriculum** - Research other state models; develop & pilot curriculum
- **Create career ladders for specialization & advancement to Allied Health positions** - Map current growth opportunities; research barriers; create network of partners
- **Partner with Community College System** - Develop or enhance programs for credit
- **Examine and align state regulations** - Align across HCPF, CDPHE, & DORA

Collaborative Impact to Date

Overview by numbers January - October 2021

- 400+ persons have engaged (Collaborative meeting, AG, DCWC Leadership), approximately:
 - 70% service providers
 - 32% general stakeholders & advocates
 - 12% DCW or family member
- Quality of info very to extremely informative (73%)
- Participation through word-of-mouth and newsletter (73%)

Going Forward

- Continue to grow participation/awareness/action with milestones and metrics to measure success

American Rescue Plan Act: HCPF Workforce Initiatives



ARPA Background

- The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was passed by Congress on 3/11/2021
- Section 9817 - a provision outlining funding to support increased access to home and community-based services (HCBS) for Medicaid beneficiaries
 - Eligible services include: 1915 (c) HCBS Waivers, Personal Care, Targeted Case Management, Home Health Care, Private Duty Nursing, Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), Behavioral Health
- Total funding approx. \$500 million
- [Colorado spending plan](#) approved by CMS and CO Joint Budget Committee (JBC) on 9/21/2021



ARPA DCW Initiatives

Direct Care Workforce Projects account for **50%+** of the total budget
(\$262 million)

Project:	Budget:
Increase Payments to Providers and Workers	\$244 million
Direct Care Workforce Data Infrastructure	\$1.1 million
Standardized Core Curriculum & Specialization	\$3.1 million
Resource & Job Hub	\$750 k
Establish a Training Fund	\$9.2 million
Career Pathways	\$500 k
Public Awareness Campaign	\$400 k
Workforce Compensation Research	\$50 k

Visit <https://hcpf.colorado.gov/arpa> for more in depth information on all these projects



Increase Payments to Providers and Workers

- A 2.11% increase will be applied retroactively to April 1, 2021 and will be in effect through March 31, 2022 for some HCBS waiver benefits outlined in the memorandum below
 - Please find the HCPF OM 21-071 [link](#) for further information
- Effective January 1, 2022 the JBC approved a \$15.00 per hour base wage requirement for all Direct Care Workers in HCBS setting
- This funding is part of the overarching effort to leverage the HCBS ARPA funds to stabilize and increase the Direct Care Workforce, while supporting hiring and retention efforts

Direct Care Workforce Data Infrastructure

- Develop two new surveys focused on the direct care workforce
- Survey #1: A **staff stability survey** for the non-IDD population employers
 - Will include data on:
 - The number of DCWs providing care, Turnover rates of DCWs, Percentage of DCWs that are full-time or part-time, DCW vacancy rates, and Hourly wages for all DCW
- Survey #2: A **direct care workforce survey**
 - To determine satisfaction with compensation, benefits, career advancement, training, and overall satisfaction with the position



Standardized Core Curriculum & Specialization

- Develop a standardized, competency-based, adult-learner centered homemaker and personal care worker curriculum
 - Develop additional modules on specialized topics
 - Example: Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and mental and behavioral health care.
 - Make the hybrid training available for free in-person (through a train-the-trainer model) and online
- Trainings will be developed using a 'universal worker' structure- designed for use by individuals working in a variety of settings and with different populations

Resource & Job Hub

- To support both recruitment of new individuals into the field and to allow for low barrier to entry by making training easy and accessible, this funding will support the development of a Direct Care Workforce website where interested individuals could:
 - Go to receive information and resources about these positions,
 - Access free training, and
 - View job boards to quickly be placed in positions.
- The newly developed Personal Care/Homemaker worker training would be accessible through this site
 - Individuals who completed the training would be entered into a database for easy tracking of certification



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Establish a Training Fund

- Funding to support training for workers in high demand jobs, as well as to fund upskilling opportunities
- Funds could be distributed directly to:
 - A prospective or current worker,
 - The employer to provide the training to their employees, or
 - A training provider
- Additionally, funds may be used to expand
 - Standard training,
 - Provider resources or
 - Trainor availability where gaps exist.
- Focus includes cultural competency for priority populations



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Career Pathways

- Through three IAs with CCCS, DHE, and CDLE, hire term limited staff to sit within these agencies
- Work with these staff (and others within the sister agencies) to develop career pathways for direct care workers into allied health professions.
- These new staff will work with the OCL workforce team and the Long-Term Direct Care Workforce group on this effort

Public Awareness Campaign

- A public awareness campaign will not only bring awareness to, but will also help grow and professionalize the Direct Care Workforce
- Ultimately, this campaign will help build the workforce, so Coloradans will have dependable and exemplary care now and in the future
- The marketing effort is usually through media, messaging, and an organized set of communication tactics
- These campaigns target a large number of people over a specific period of time to try and generate specific outcomes or achieve predetermined goals

Workforce Compensation Research

- This project will fund a contractor to identify ways to:
 - Soften the benefit cliff and/or provide child care for direct care workers;
 - Explore funding for shift differentials; and
 - Identify other practices that could better support low-income workers'
- This project will be looking at both direct care workers and case managers



Opportunities to Engage

Direct Care Workforce Collaborative

Collaborative Mtgs: Second Wednesday of every other month, 10:00-11:30 am

Action Group Mtgs: [Sign-Up Here](#)

Compensation - 3rd Friday/Month 1:00-2:00 pm

Training - 1st Friday/Month, 9:00-10:00 am

Value - 4th Friday/Month, 1:00-2:00 pm

(Next Mtg: December 17, 2021 - All action groups combined)



Questions



Thank You!

More information about the Collaborative, Workforce Initiatives, upcoming meetings and resources is on our [website](#) and the [OCL's Stakeholder Engagement Calendar](#)

Email us with your questions or comments:
HCPF_DCworkforce@state.co.us