

Direct Care Workforce Initiatives & Participant Direction

Office of Community Living
Department of Health Care Policy & Financing



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Stabilizing and Strengthening Colorado's Direct Care Workforce



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 to Meet Demand

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 a challenging outlook

- 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 ~116,000 direct care workers to meet demand



Compensation

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

COLORADO



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

Colorado Goals & Actions- 2021-2023

01	Crisis Response	04	Expand Career Advancement Opportunities
02	Expand Cross-Agency Collaboration	05	Improve Retention
03	Recruit New Individuals into the Field	06	Activate Stakeholders to Accelerate Efforts



Direct Care Workforce Collaborative



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

DCW Collaborative

Four-Prong Structure

1. Collaborative meeting participants
2. Action groups
3. Leadership team
4. State partners

Engagement

- 400+ people have engaged:
 - ~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%)

Vision

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



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Action Groups

Value & Awareness

- Increase Direct Care Worker Representation
- Build Key Stakeholder Partnerships
- Assist with HCPF Awareness Campaign

Compensation & Benefits

- Research and Synthesize Provider Costs
- Research and Evaluate Rate Setting Process
- Create a Child Care Resource Guide

Training & Career Advancement

- Develop a Standardized Statewide Curriculum
- Create Career Ladders
- Partner with Community College System



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): HCPF Workforce Initiatives



ARPA Background

- 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:	Goals:
Increase Payments to Providers & Workers	\$244MM	Stabilize & increase the DCW
Direct Care Workforce Data Infrastructure	\$1.1MM	Survey data on factors impacting current workforce growth & satisfaction
Standardized Core Curriculum & Specialization	\$3.1MM	Adaptable, accessible, and low-cost for competency & skill advancement
Resource & Job Hub	\$750K	Centralized info & resources for DCWs
Establish a Training Fund	\$9.2MM	Direct funds for high demand workers and creating upskilling opportunities
Career Pathways	\$500K	CCCS, DHE, & CDLE alignment of defined, consolidated pathways
Public Awareness Campaign	\$400K	Grow community support leading to legislative change
Workforce Compensation Research	\$50K	Contractor-identified measures for long-term DCW support & recognition

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



Participant-Directed Programs Workforce



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

CDASS

- There are approximately 3,600 CDASS members employing approximately 12,000 attendants.
- The average attendant wage is \$18.59 (as of Dec. 2021)
- Last quarter, members received an average of 37.4 hrs/wk of service.
- 38% of attendants qualify for the EVV Live-In Exemption
- Tax benefits under Difficulty of Care Exemption (IRS Notice 2014-7)
- Flexible schedules and access to a network of other members for job sharing.
- Formalize and compensate relatives who do this work already.
- Employer relationship can be more responsive to employee needs, unlike many other fields.
- The opportunity to build a relationship leads to better care and a more rewarding experience for the employee.



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

IHSS

- There are approximately 6,985 IHSS members working with 171 agencies.
- 60% of attendants qualify for the EVV Live-In Exemption.
- Tax benefits under Difficulty of Care Exemption (IRS Notice 2014-7).
- Flexible schedules.
- Access to a Registered Nurse and 24-hour backup care.
- Formalize and compensate relatives who do this work already.
- Employer relationship can be more responsive to employee needs, unlike many other fields.
- The opportunity to build a relationship leads to better care and a more rewarding experience for the employee.



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Open Discussion



Questions

1. What strategies have you found effective to recruit and retain your attendants?
2. What specific challenges have you faced to recruit and retain attendants?
3. What can we do through PDPPC to mitigate these challenges?
4. What should the Collaborative do to support CDASS & IHSS particularly?



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Ways to Contribute the CDASS & IHSS Perspective

Quarterly Collaborative Meetings (Mar., Jun., Sep., Dec.)

Second Wednesday 10:00-11:30am, Zoom

Access at: <https://hcpf.colorado.gov/direct-care-workforce-collaborative>

Bi-Monthly Action Group Meetings (May, Jul., Sep., Nov.)

Training - 1st Friday, 9:00-10:00am, Zoom

Compensation - 3rd Friday, 1:00-2:00pm, Zoom

Value - 4th Friday, 1:00-2:00pm, Zoom

[Sign-Up Here](#) or email HCPF_DCWorkforce@state.co.us

[HCPF ARPA Question/Comment Form](#)



COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Ways to Stay Informed

Google search:

- [Direct Care Workforce Collaborative](#)
- [HCPF American Rescue Plan Projects](#)
- [HCPF Resources for HCBS Providers Website](#)
- [Participant-Directed Programs](#)

[Sign Up for the *ARPA Project Pulse* Newsletter](#)

