



SPRING 2024

Breaking News

Washington among 14 states selected to participate in nationwide peer-learning collaboratives

The [Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center](#), led by the [National Council on Aging](#) has chosen 14 states to participate in [State Peer-Learning Collaboratives](#) where they can share demonstrated models for growing the direct care workforce.

According to [PHI](#), between 2021 and 2031, the direct care workforce is projected to add over 1 million new jobs, yet nearly 9.3 million total direct care jobs will need to be filled during that same period. The Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center is addressing this challenge by providing resources, technical assistance, and training to state systems, providers, and stakeholders to improve recruitment, training, and retention.

Each state in the Peer-Learning Collaboratives will participate in monthly working groups to discuss innovative strategies for growing and enhancing the direct care workforce to make it easier to replicate proven solutions across the country.



Data Drives Us
Steve Sickles
Management Analyst

Data analysis is shaping service delivery!

The Workforce Development Team is examining information to gain insights related to Prometric's testing of Home Care Aides. We've partnered with Data Services to create a new report and begun validating the data to create the foundation for the remainder of the report.

Soon we will have a quarterly planning meeting to determine ways to automate processes to allow our Navigators more time with potential caregivers. We plan to evaluate past marketing plans, prior presentations and outreach events and overlay those time-specific activities with our referral dates Navigators received. We will determine if there are times Navigators have too many candidates to assist or gaps in our work. The objective is to create quarterly marketing campaigns and adjust our strategy to assist as many referrals find employment as Home Care Aides as possible.



Christine Morris
TCWD Office Chief

New bill to impact long-term care worker CE courses

The legislature passed Senate Bill 5811 that includes a section requiring the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to convene a work group by July 1, 2024, to review the existing continuing education courses for long-term care workers and provide recommendations for the development of new courses to the secretary and the contracted training entity by March 1, 2025.

This work group is to include:

- Stakeholders with an interest in continuing education requirements for individual providers, including care those that receive care.
- Individual providers caring for a family member with an intellectual or developmental disability.
- Individual providers who are adult children who are caregivers to a parent.
- The contracted training entity that provides continuing education to individual providers.
- Those receiving care from an individual provider who is a family member.

The contracted training entity is to provide the Secretary and the relevant committees of the legislature with a continuing education course development plan that includes a timeline for developing the topics identified by the work group and is to begin prioritizing the identified topics beginning September 1, 2025.

Please email caregivercareerswa@dshs.wa.gov
for questions or comments.



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Transforming lives

Long-term care Workforce Navigators help caregivers become employed

Three long-term care Workforce Navigators were hired in July 2023 to provide individualized support to people interested in employment as a direct care worker. Navigators have helped approximately 90 individuals find employment as a paid caregiver over the last four months. Most of these new caregivers support older adults and people with disabilities in their own homes by providing care as an individual provider or an employee of a home care agency. A small number of these new direct care workers have found employment in assisted living facilities, adult family homes, and nursing homes.

Getting referrals:

Navigators receive referrals from prospective caregivers through several pipelines including, but not limited to, job and employment fairs, presentations in the community, as well as relationships with agencies helping people find employment, by Home and Community Services and the Area Agency on Aging case management staff, along with people interested in caregiving who reach out via the [CaregiverCareersWa.com](https://www.CaregiverCareersWa.com) website. The number of referrals increased substantially during the ALISA Caregiver marketing campaign that was promoted to the public from mid-January through the end of February.

Providing individualized support:

Each person who contacts the Navigators comes with a unique set of circumstances and barriers to becoming a caregiver. The Navigators meet every individual where they are in the process and take a person-centered approach to helping them be successfully employed as a caregiver.

Tracking barriers:

Navigators track the successful employment of caregivers, while also working at identifying and tracking the most common barriers to becoming a caregiver. For example, the predominant language of caregivers being hired is English, even though Navigators support many people who speak different languages. Prospective caregivers with limited English proficiency often face extra barriers to becoming paid caregivers. These can include difficulty in some areas with finding employers who will hire them, finding training available in their primary language, and language-specific support to navigate through the process.



Caregiver Stories
Yan Hang
Workforce Navigator

Navigator assists caregiver in overcoming obstacles

Recently, a bilingual (Spanish/English) speaking individual named Martha contacted me about becoming a caregiver. When she first reached out, Martha was very frustrated, and she expressed how exhausted she was and felt she had little hope of getting her issues resolved as she had been transferred to so many people without resolution. Martha said when she finally was able to converse with those people, she hoped would help her, she felt increasingly unheard and belittled, especially related to her accent.

I asked her to slow down a little, listened to her, and validated her feelings of frustration. I reassured Martha that I would do my best to help her, and she began to calm down. After about an hour we were able to identify some of the issues she was facing, which included the misspelling of her name in some systems along with issues around communication between DSHS and her employer. We were able to correct the spelling of her name as well as her client's, which prevented correct communications between various systems and staff. After spending the time to listen to her, and to help correct the errors causing such confusion, Martha said she was very appreciative of my help and has since begun her employment and is providing ongoing care to the client in need.

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Retention Activities Stephanie Marko Retention Program Specialist

New module to further support of LTC staff

The first week of March, with help from Maitri Edwards, from the Training Development and Learning Management team, we launched a new module for the Retention Toolkit. This module addresses how to support long-term care staff when they experience harassment, abuse, and discrimination.

Did you know? Service Employees International Union, SEIU, 775 in a survey of Washington caregivers found 47% reported experiencing verbal abuse while working, 24% reported physical violence, and 12% reported sexual harassment.

In 2020, Senate Bill 6520 was passed to address long-term care workers that experience harassment, abuse, and discrimination, while working as an individual provider or at home care agencies. It only instructed residential facilities to adopt a policy without much direction. The hope with the new module is it will bring this important topic back into the spotlight and help leadership in an adult family home or assisted living facility, revisit the guidelines set forth for individual providers and agency workers, and assess their own policies. The module provides resources to support staff.



Leader Outlook Stacy Graff Workforce Development Unit Manager

Teaming up to bring about caregiver solutions

The direct care workforce shortage continues to impact older adults and people with disabilities throughout Washington state and nationwide. While the situation can feel dire, I am in awe at the number of people throughout our communities devoted to improving the future of caregiving. By recognizing the substantial need for caregivers, listening to the voices of direct care staff, and working together to improve processes, pipelines, and the culture of caregiving, I am convinced we are on the right path to developing and implementing meaningful solutions.

The Workforce Development team, in collaboration with the Workforce Development Communications and Marketing Manager, continues to work diligently and creatively to support AL TSA's strategic objectives around building and maintaining a strong direct care workforce.

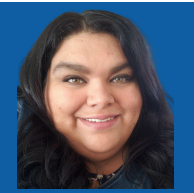


Marketing Campaigns Jeff Kleingartner, Workforce Development Communications & Marketing Manager

Spring Marketing Campaign Underway

Later this month, a new caregiver recruitment and retention marketing campaign kicks off through the end of June. The campaign theme is “Caregivers do HEART work” and will focus on recognizing the vital work caregivers do every day and their efforts are seen and appreciated for the community heroes they are.

The campaign is expected to include advertising on social media, streaming platforms, transit buses and e-mail marketing. Advertising will be launched statewide, with primary promotional efforts in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. These markets have a potential audience size of over 3.5 million people.



Outreach Opportunities Jovana Netelenbos Outreach Coordinator

Spring caregiver recruitment events focus on reaching diverse populations

This spring has seen an uptick in the number of career fairs at colleges along with several community resources fairs. The months of May and June includes numerous presentations statewide to various groups related to the Home Care Aide role as a paid caregiver in a wide range of work settings, from adult family homes and assisted living facilities to helping in a client’s own home.

Presentations planned for May include translations for those who speak Vietnamese, Cambodian and Korean, while presentations in June may include translations for those that speak Spanish. These are planned to reach a more diverse caregiver workforce. As the Outreach Coordinator, Jovana has learned from employers of caregivers, that demand for more language and a culturally diverse caregiver pool is growing.

Employers across the state have mentioned that some clients prefer caregivers who know how to speak their language as well as be able to help prepare culturally appropriate food and cultural customs. Additional outreach will take place later this year to reach those that speak Ukrainian, Russian and Punjabi.