

Policy Title: Recognition and Recruitment of Direct Support Professionals

Brief Description: There is evidence that targeted marketing campaigns can be effective tools to increase recognition and recruitment of direct support professionals.* It is proposed that resources be allocated for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to oversee a statewide marketing campaign, the development and dissemination of a marketing toolkit for local use and grants for local pilots. The goals of these initiatives are to increase community awareness about the value of direct support professionals and motivate individuals to apply for positions.

- **Statewide Campaign**

The WisCaregiver Marketing and Recruitment Campaign should be continued and adapted to include direct support professionals across the spectrum of long-term care. This would include the modification of, or addition to the existing campaign's website, videos, posters and brochures.

- **Marketing Toolkit for Implementation by Local or Regional Organizations**

- There are many recognition and recruitment tools in existence, some of which are available for replication or modification.
- Data indicates that social media has been the most effective means of marketing for awareness and recruitment of untapped workers for direct support positions. A social media marketing consultant may be needed for Wisconsin-specific messaging.
- Compelling videos and other images have been used to share real workers' faces and voices about why they do the work they do. A mechanism is needed to collect stories about Wisconsin's direct care heroes and what they mean to the people who depend on them.
- Other tools may be replicated or developed such as scripts for PSAs, e-newsletters, testimony by local officials, letters to the editor, print ads for local newspapers and newsletters, web site information and other local outlets.

- **Local Pilots**

- Grants of \$25,000 each should be made available to 4 local provider consortia or organizations to promote careers in long term support through social media.

Analysis of Benefits

- *Greater awareness and appreciation of the critical role of direct support professionals—from untapped workers, current workers, the public and policy makers.*
- *Increased number of applicants for positions as direct support professionals*
- *The WisCaregiver campaign attracted over 9,000 people to register for the program focused on CNAs.*
- *Community Living Connections generated 20 new applicants a month through social media in 2019.*
- *Through \$25,000 grants using digital media campaigns Minnewaska Community Health and Mother of Mercy in Albany MN significantly increased hires with increased retention and reduced turnover.*

Potential funding options/savings/benefits

- *There are economies of scale when more employers can benefit from campaigns that move a larger pool of workers toward careers in long term care. By providing assistance with messaging and recruitment providers can focus more attention and dollars on retention and quality of care.*
- *The WisCaregiver campaign cost \$212,000. Adapting it to other direct support professionals would probably cost less.*
- *Existing materials from several sources that may be available for replication including:*
 - *America Health Care Association Workforce Recruitment Toolkit*
 - *American Network of Community Options and Resources Toolkit*
 - *Leading Age Minnesota*
 - *Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota*
- *Toolkit development/dissemination costs may include following (estimates being gathered)*
 - *Wisconsin hero story collection*
 - *Social media marketing consultant*
 - *Wisconsin tool development/modification*
 - *Part time staffing-oversight*
- *Funding: GPR or foundation grant or combination; possible in-kind assistance*

Equity issues

- *Low income consumers are affected disproportionately by care worker shortages as they are more likely to be in Medicaid funded facilities or programs where low MA rates have contributed significantly to the worker shortage. Increasing the pool of workers will help.*
- *Relative to potential new workers, registrations for the WisCaregiver program were from individuals of whom 45% were white, 45% black or African American, 5% Hispanic or Latino and 5% other races.*