

# Addressing the Direct Care Workforce Shortage

ACL Presentation to the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Workforce Supports Subcommittee

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*October 10th, 2024*



## **Mission**

Maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers.

## **Vision**

All people, regardless of age and disability, live with dignity, make their own choices, and participate fully in society.

## **Areas of Impact**

Administering disability and aging programs

Funding services and supports provided by networks of community-based organizations

Engaging in research, education, and innovation

Advising the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services on aging and disability policy



*Advancing independence and inclusion of  
older adults and people with disabilities*



# ACL's Aging and Disability Networks

Connecting people to services	Consumer choice and control	Data Collection	Employment
Empowering Advocacy	Programs for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians	Health, Wellness, and Nutrition	Program Evaluation and Reports
Protecting Rights and Preventing Abuse	Research and Development	Retirement Planning and Pension Support	Strengthening Aging and Disability Networks
Support for people with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias	Support for people with limb loss, paralysis, and TBI	Support to paid and unpaid caregivers	Find more at <a href="https://acl.gov">ACL.gov</a>



# ACL Priorities for Community Living

- Caregiving Infrastructure
- Affordable, Accessible Housing and Coordination with Services
- Protecting Rights and Preventing Abuse
- Disaster and Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Advance Equity



# Priorities: Care Infrastructure

## Direct Care Workforce

- National crisis: Long-standing shortages worsened by COVID
- People needing services are increasing
  - 1.3 million workers needed by 2029
- Without DCW services:
  - Many forced to live in institutions
  - Health and safety in the community is at risk

## Family Caregivers

- 53m+ caregivers in the U.S. provide \$470B in unpaid care each year
- COVID increased demands and reduced support
- Lack of support hurts caregivers'
  - Physical and mental health
  - Economic security (\$522B in lost income each year)



# Direct Care Professionals

- 84% of the workforce are women
- 67% of the workforce are people of color
- 40% live in a low-income household
- Median age of 47
- Variety of job titles (personal care attendants, direct support professionals, home health aides and other titles)



# The Workforce is in Crisis

- Annual Turnover Rates: 42.8% – 64.8%
- Vacancy Rates: 8.5% -11.2%
- Demand for workers exceed available working age adults
- Low wages and few benefits
- Dissatisfaction with employer

Millbank Memorial Fund: [Direct Care Workforce Policy and Action Guide](#)

National Academy for State Health Policy state tracker: [States Use American Rescue Plan Act Funds to Strengthen Home and Community-Based Service Workforce](#)



# Fewer Services are Available and Harmful Events are Increasing

Measures	2021	2022
Turning away referrals	77%	83%
Discontinuing programs and services	58%	63%
Struggling to achieve quality standards	81%	92%
Sources:	<a href="#"><u>ANCOR Study 2021</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ANCOR Study 2022</u></a>

# Direct Care Workforce: A Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Initiative



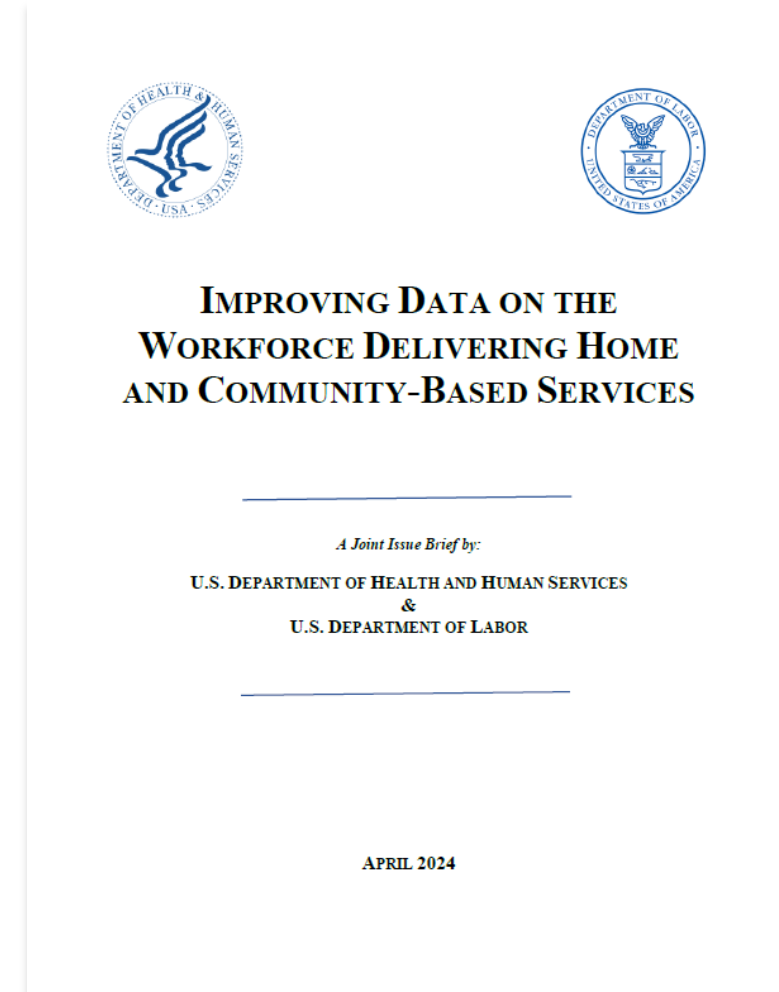
- 5-year grant that established the Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center
  - Provides technical assistance to improve the recruitment, retention, training, and professional development of members of the direct care workforce.
  - Builds upon ongoing collaboration between ACL, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
- The Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center:
  - Provides tools and training to support the development and coordination of policies and programs that contribute to a stable, robust direct care workforce.
  - Facilitates peer-to-peer sharing of lessons learned and promising practices across state teams, including Medicaid, aging, disability, and workforce agencies.
  - Maintains a website and library of resources and promising practices available to the public.

<https://acl.gov/DCWcenter>

# Home and Community-Based Services Federal Opportunities Regarding Workforce and Research Data (HCBS FORWARD) Workgroup



- HCBS FORWARD Process
  - Identify key policy questions on this workforce to establish data priorities
  - Analyze existing data sources on this workforce
  - Identify ways to fill critical gaps in knowledge
  - Focus on policy: what data we need to support the workforce, meet the growing demand for these workers, improve access to high-quality services, and track the impacts of policy changes over time?
  - Gather external input from stakeholders
- Major Gaps Identified
  - Significant gaps in available national data
  - Existing data is insufficient for measuring the stability of the workforce or its capacity to meet rising demand
  - Data are needed to better understand emerging trends





# HCBS FORWARD Recommendations

- Establish and regularly field a nationally representative survey of the HCBS workforce
- Establish and regularly field a nationally representative survey of adults with disabilities (ages 18 to 64) about their need for, and receipt of, services and supports
- Enhance consistent and systematic state data collection efforts and share evidence-informed best practices of state data collection on the HCBS workforce
- Maximize the availability of existing federal data sources to produce additional information on the HCBS workforce
- Maximize existing administrative data sources to provide information on the HCBS workforce



# HCBS FORWARD Resources

- HCBS FORWARD workgroup products are available at <https://acl.gov/DCWcenter/HCBS-Forward>
- HHS/DOL Issue Brief: [Improving Data on the Workforce Delivering Home and Community-Based Services](#)
- Webinar: Call-to-Action for Building the Home and Community-Based Services Workforce Data Infrastructure  
[TA webinar recording with slides and ASL](#) | [TA webinar slides](#)



# DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE STRATEGIES CENTER

*Building national capacity to support community living*

## **Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center Overview**

**Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities –  
*Workforce Supports Subcommittee***

**October 10, 2024**

# Building national capacity to support community living

Created by the Administration for Community Living in 2022, the Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center (Strategies Center) provides technical assistance to states and service providers and facilitates collaboration with stakeholders to improve the recruitment, retention, training, and professional development of members of the direct care workforce.

**Provide tools and training to assist state systems and service providers**

**Facilitate peer-to-peer sharing of lessons learned and promising systems-change practices**

**Maintain a clearinghouse of resources and promising practices**

# Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center Partners

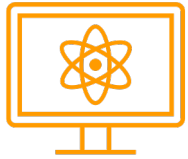


# DCW Strategies Center Objectives

- Identify evidence-based, promising, and innovative practices.
- Catalogue practices and models.
- Leverage best and promising practices to provide technical assistance (TA).
- Assess the effectiveness of TA models.
- Use data and evaluation to drive continuous improvement.



# Year Two Activities Overview



## Resource Hub

Emphasis on resource curation for the [DCW website](#) with the development of materials being driven mainly by TA demand.



## Advisory Committee

Emphasis on opportunities to elevate the voices of direct care workers and service recipients/ Providing supports to members to participate.



## Technical Assistance (TA)

TA opportunities to include both state Intensive TA (ITA), State Peer-Learning Collaboratives (PLCs), and self-guided TA.



## Center Data Project

Provide enhanced data collection efforts related to DCW, including policy briefs and expanded surveys.

# Strategies Center Year Two Accomplishments

- ✓ Launched national technical assistance programs, providing **technical assistance to 20 total states** (14 PLC, 6 ITA).
- ✓ **Fourteen PLC states** engage monthly in cohort meetings, attend regularly-scheduled cross-cohort webinars, and meet regularly with SMEs to advance towards identified milestones.
- ✓ **Six intensive technical assistance states** completed their readiness assessment phase activities, meet regularly with TA coaches, and convene together monthly to discuss themes.
- ✓ Hosted **four national webinars** open to the public on a wide variety of topics related to the direct care workforce, with several others planned for the remainder of the year.
- ✓ Facilitated the first meetings of the Strategies Center's **Advisory Committee of nearly 30 individuals** representing unique perspectives across the field.
- ✓ Formally announced the **Strategies Center's Resource Hub** on the website, with resources on topics ranging from self-direction to recruitment and retention.

# Strategies Center Technical Assistance

In 2024, **20 states** are receiving technical assistance through the DCW Strategies Center:

- **Alaska**
- **California**
- **Colorado**
- **Connecticut**
- **Delaware**
- **Illinois**
- **Indiana**
- **Kansas**
- **Kentucky**
- **Louisiana**
- **Maine**
- **Michigan**
- **Nevada**
- **New Hampshire**
- **New Jersey**
- **New Mexico**
- **Oregon**
- **Utah**
- **Vermont**
- **Washington**

# Strategies Center Webinar Series

- **Federal Action to Address the Direct Care Workforce Crisis** (March 2024)  
[TA webinar recording with speakers and ASL](#) | [Event TA webinar recording with speakers and slides](#) | [TA webinar slides](#)
- **Addressing the Shortage: The Current State of the Direct Care Workforce** (April 2024)  
[TA webinar recording with slides and ASL](#) | [TA webinar slides](#)
- **Call-to-Action for Building the Home and Community-Based Services Workforce Data Infrastructure** (May 2024)  
[TA webinar recording with slides and ASL](#) | [TA webinar slides](#)
- **Workforce Investment Systems 101: Engaging with State Workforce Systems – Learning the Language to Build Partnerships** (June 2024)  
[TA webinar recording with slides and ASL](#)
- **Using Marketing Campaigns to Expand & Advance the Direct Care Workforce: The WisCaregiver Careers Experience** (July 2024)  
[TA webinar recording with slides and ASL](#)

# Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center Contacts

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