

**Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
Workforce Supports Subcommittee Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

Date of Meeting: Thursday, February 13, 2025

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual

This is a meeting of the **Workforce Supports Subcommittee** of the permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. This subcommittee will collect data and analyze initiatives that address the workforce crisis for people who provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Members Participating Remotely	
1	Andrew Levrault (Chair) – Deputy General Counsel, Disabled Persons Protection Commission
2	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc
3	Representative Kay Khan – Retired Massachusetts House of Representatives
Members Not Present	
4	Angela Ortiz – Executive Director, MA Health Council

Action items		Person responsible
1	Collaborate with Disability Employment members on Employment and Providers supports panel	Co-Chairs, Imene
2	Set a meeting cadence with Dr. Patricia Yu/EOHHS for quarterly updates on workforce solutions	Angela and Imene
3	Invite Attorney General Campbell’s Office: Meeting with a representative to discuss disability-related issues	Andrew
4	Reengage with Human Services Research Institute Valerie Bradley	Imene

Agenda

1. Welcome and Roll Call

- Approval of Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve previous meeting minutes.

2. **Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) Presentation** by Haley Farrar-Muir, Associate Director for Research; Huong Trieu, Senior Director for Research; Emma Schlitzer McNamara:

Introduction

The Massachusetts Health Care and Human Services Workforce Survey aims to address workforce shortages by providing data-driven insights into staffing trends, recruitment challenges, and retention strategies. The survey is conducted biennially, with the first survey completed in 2023 and results finalized in 2024. The next iteration in 2025 will build on prior findings to refine data collection and analysis.

Findings from the 2023-2024 Survey

Health Care Sector:

Survey participants included hospitals, nursing homes, behavioral health facilities, EMS providers, and community health centers.

Workforce composition showed that most registered nurses and physicians work in acute care settings, while licensed practical nurses and direct care workers are primarily employed in nursing homes.

Diversity in leadership remains an issue, with leadership roles predominantly held by white, non-Hispanic individuals across sectors. Some improvements were noted in community health centers, adult day health programs, and dental practices.

Vacancy rates were highest in-home health and nursing homes, while turnover rates were highest in adult day health programs.

Challenges in workforce recruitment and retention included a shortage of qualified applicants and non-competitive salaries as key barriers to hiring. Retention issues were driven by burnout, workplace mistreatment, and limited scheduling flexibility.

Workforce shortages have impacted access to care, leading to limits on new intakes for behavioral health and home health care services, as well as increased wait times for patients across sectors.

Human Services Sector

Survey participants included both private providers and state-operated services such as DCF, DDS, DMH, DYS, and DTA.

Key workforce challenges were similar to those in the health care sector, with high vacancy and turnover rates and direct care staff shortages affecting service delivery.

Recruitment and retention strategies included increasing wages, offering flexible scheduling, and providing enhanced employee support programs.

Planned Refinements for the 2025 Survey

The next survey will refine data collection by rank-ordering recruitment and retention strategies based on effectiveness, collecting more detailed wage and benefits data, and capturing information on overtime hours and contract staff usage. The survey will also provide clearer

definitions of leadership roles and direct care occupations and enhance data accuracy and completeness through improvements in methodology.

Discussion with Subcommittee Members:

Leadership positions were defined as individuals involved in strategic planning within their organizations, such as CEOs, vice presidents, and other executive-level roles.

Registered nurses were identified as the most difficult to retain, while direct care workers and home health workers also face significant retention challenges.

Clarification was provided on workforce categories. Independent clinicians include LICSWs, licensed mental health counselors, and marriage and family therapists. Non-independent licensed clinicians include certified social workers who require supervision. Direct care workers provide hands-on support, with levels one and two focused on direct service, while level three includes supervisory responsibilities.

CHIA offered to provide formal definitions used in the survey for further clarification.

The Massachusetts Medication Administration Program (MAP) allows certified direct care staff to administer medication under the supervision of a certified nurse.

There are salary disparities between public and private sector providers. State-operated services generally offer higher wages, leading to staff migration from private providers to state-run programs. Previous legislation has addressed this issue, but wage gaps remain a concern.

The next survey cohort will be conducted between March and June 2025.

CHIA is exploring the use of CTHRU as a resource for salary transparency in state-operated services. For private providers, wage transparency efforts are referenced at [Massachusetts Wage Transparency](#).

CHIA will continue tracking workforce trends by comparing benchmark data from 2023-2024 with upcoming 2025 results and later with findings from 2027.

CHIA provides objective, reliable data to EOHHS and other state agencies to support policy development. While CHIA does not make policy recommendations, its data serves as a foundation for agencies to shape workforce strategies.

3. Disability Employment & Youth Workforce Development Update

Angela and Rep. Khan's proposal recap for January:

- Possible panel discussion for young people seeking employment and personal care attendants, and job coaches supporting them.
- Consider including legislators in the panel to elevate the conversation.

- Engaging with the Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities, Committee on Labor and Workforce Development.
- Update: Disability Employment subcommittee is interested in partnering.
 - Tentative date: spring date April or May.

4. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn.
- Motion approved.

Next meeting dates:

- April 17
- May 15
- August 28
- November 13