

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

Date of meeting: Thursday, September 7, 2023

Start time: 10am to 11am

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members Participating Remotely	
1	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc.
2	Andrew Levrault – Deputy General Counsel, Disabled Persons Protection Commission
3	Representative Kay Khan – Massachusetts House of Representatives
Members Not Present	
4	Angela Ortiz (Chair) – Director of Operations, Partners for Youth with Disabilities

Action Items	Person Responsible
1 Thanking Valerie Bradley and request to share paper from the National Association of Resources for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Angela and Imene

**Welcome, Roll Calls, and Introductions**

- Members welcomed each other.
- Imene introduced guest speaker Valerie Bradley from Human Services Research Institute (HSRI)

**Examining Direct Support Providers (DSP) Turnover and Tenure in MA using National Core Indicators-Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) State of the Workforce Survey Data (HSRI) Presentation**

Comments and questions from Commissioners:

- Andrew- You shared an 80% goal rate that will go to direct care staff. Are those locality-based rates?
  - Yes, there no such thing as a national rate, each state has a rate setting methodology. A day program in Idaho will be less costly than in MA. The Feds are taking this workforce crisis seriously, 80% of these rates should show up in the DSP paychecks.
- Rep Khan- Professionalizing the role of workers is important by providing certificates. Connecting through the community colleges, training as a group for providers, etc. are some ideas. Shared about a nursing program she created for school nurses in mental health: it provided opportunities to connect these nurses with each other and feeling valued as a nursing community.
- Valerie shared that reaching out to community colleges and designing a credentialed standardized curriculum for DSPs is a great start. New York SUNY is leading the way but there is still work to be done. There is a yearly nationally DSP conference that provides awards, information, and training.
- Chris-
  - Surprised by the 18% vacancy rate. Was this related to self-selecting for folks filling out the survey HSRI put out?
    - Not taking a deep dive on who isn't responding. It is hard getting responses back.
  - One of the struggles with rates is dealing with the problem with compression.
    - At Road to Responsibility, 27% of their DSPs have been working for 35 years and yet the pay isn't significantly different from a newly hired DSP. Any advice or have you seen any model in other states where compression has been seriously dealt with?
      - Unsure but an HSRI connection from the National Association of Resources for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities addressed this issue in a paper, Valerie will share this paper with the subcommittee.
  - Legislators lack understand of how compression works.
    - Compression: whenever rates are established and they are reviewed every two years, there's a model budget by the state and a blended rate for DSPs: there's an average for DC1, DC2, DC3, the difference is that DC3 is a program manager for a group home with significantly more responsibilities. In the most

recent blended rate for day employment, pay is \$19.50/hour for DC1 through DC3.

- Gave example of Dunkin Donuts. Blended rate is so low with no wiggle room. The gap between a DSP and increased responsibilities in addition to low pay makes it very difficult and limited that it's hard to attract people to take on more job responsibilities.
  - "My program manager spends 37% of their time to find people".
  - It is only going to get worse as the aging worker population is aging.
- Kristianne Widman in the chat shared that Association of Professionals Supporting Employment (APSE) is a good organization for Job Developers/Employment Specialist. They offer a certification called "CESP". CESP is Certified Employment Support Professional. The MA Chapter of ASPE does an annual conference in Worcester each Fall.

## **Adjournment**

## **Next Meetings**

- November 9, 2023, 10am -11am

## **Meeting documents:**

- [Human Services Research Institute Presentation Slides](#)
- [2021 State of the Workforce Survey report](#)
- [CMS Access Rule Summary](#)