

**Colorado Commission on Aging**

**Workforce Committee**

**February 22, 2022**

**10 am to 11:30 am (MT)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81920195506?pwd=c3FKNE45UVd3cFJxNnhJVm1JY2RCZz09>

Meeting ID: 819 2019 5506

Passcode: 718251

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Direct Care Workforce Collaborative (DCWC) Update – Policy/Legislative Ideas

- 10:00 am Introductions
- 10:10 am: Penny Whitney & Oliver Giminaro – Chair & Co-Chair - Overview
- 10:20 am: DCWC Compensation and Benefits Committee – Deborah Lively – Co-Chair – presentation by Penny Whitney
- 10:30 am: DCWC Awareness and Value Committee – Hope Carwile & Pascale Adou – Chair & Co-Chair
- 10:40 am: Discussion & Consideration of Potential Policy Suggestions for 2024
- 11:05 am: DCWC Training and Career Advancement Committee – Joe Valdez – Co-Chair
- 11:15 am: Brief review of SAPGA Direct Workforce Recommendations
- 11:25 am: Next Steps for Policy Considerations for 2024: Includes discussion with the CCOA (March 2023) and the CCOA Policy Committee (post session so after May 8, 2023) and at the August 2023 CCOA Workforce Committee meeting)
- Next CCOA Workforce meeting - March 22, 2022 – Digital Equity  
Opportunity to influence digital equity state planning in 2023 and seek funding in 2024 to enhance digital equity/literacy for older adult population) which should help in securing work and living life to its fullest.
- 11:30 am: Adjourn Meeting

*See attached SAPGA Direct Care Workforce Recommendations (2016-2022)*

**Recommendations of the Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging (SAPGA)**  
**for the Direct Care Workforce**  
**2016-2022**

**Support and Collaborate on Recruitment for DCWF:** Support and collaborate on recruitment efforts, particularly those that raise awareness and provide information and education about DCW roles. Use state and/or stimulus funding to increase the talent pipeline for direct care workers.

- Support a public awareness campaign
- Collaborate on the creation of a resource hub (e.g., [Teach.org](https://www.teach.org/) analog)
- Better utilize the workforce centers to bring new individuals into the field
  - Train Workforce Centers on direct care workforce (help us understand what would work best or how best to do this)?
  - Host sessions on direct care workforce w/State Workforce Center Boards
  - Support career pathways/lattice development
  - Prioritize the direct care workforce in the development of clear pathways for advancement to other allied health positions
  - Connect with people seeking jobs and coming off unemployment – how would we best educate them about the direct care workforce opportunities?

**Expand Opportunities to Increase Nurses:** The state has a nursing shortage, in part, because there are not enough educators to train interested students. CWDC, along with the state education system, should incent older nurses who may be close to retiring or who have retired to become educators. The education system could design/offer schedules that allow for more flexible and part-time work to entice older nurses to teach incoming students to help shore up the shortages.

**Support Informal and Formal Direct Care Workforce** (caring for older adults): The state should fund two robust pilots of [TCARE](#) in Colorado including both formal and informal caregivers – cost range of \$250K - \$5,000,000 depending on the scope of the projects. TCare is an evidence-based platform with solutions to support the direct care population.

**Support Mechanisms to Increase Pay for Direct Care Workers:** The state should increase Medicaid reimbursement rates with ongoing, sustainable funding. The state should create a long-term funding source to ensure sustainable funding. In the interim, stimulus funds should be used to temporarily increase Medicaid reimbursement rates. Additionally, to ensure higher compensation for direct care workers, increased reimbursement rates should be accompanied by either: a wage floor for workers or a requirement that a certain percentage of increased funds be used for worker wages and benefits.

**Universal Job Descriptions/Stackable Credentials:** The state and its varying departments should continue working together to create industry standards for the different job titles/occupations with a goal to have the final standardization done by January 1, 2023. The state should also create stackable credentials that allow workers to move up and across career ladders, and thus see wage increases commensurate with their increased expertise.

**Technology and Direct Care Workforce (Formal/Informal):** The State should create a Technology and Direct Care Workforce Task Force to investigate the role of technology in supporting the direct care workforce, older adults and their families, and employers. Given the extensive shortages of direct care

workers today and into the future, the state should explore how to improve lives, reduce costs and potential number of direct care workers needed. A part of this task force would include ensuring ways to increase the digital literacy of the existing and current workforce, the organizations they work for, as well as families and older adults seeking support.

**Childcare Support:** The state should (alone or with employers) support direct care workers with childcare resources. This could be done with onsite day care or the development of childcare cooperatives. State funding could support pilots of such programs.