

Essential Jobs, Essential Care-NC



Update to NC Medicaid MCAC March 15, 2024

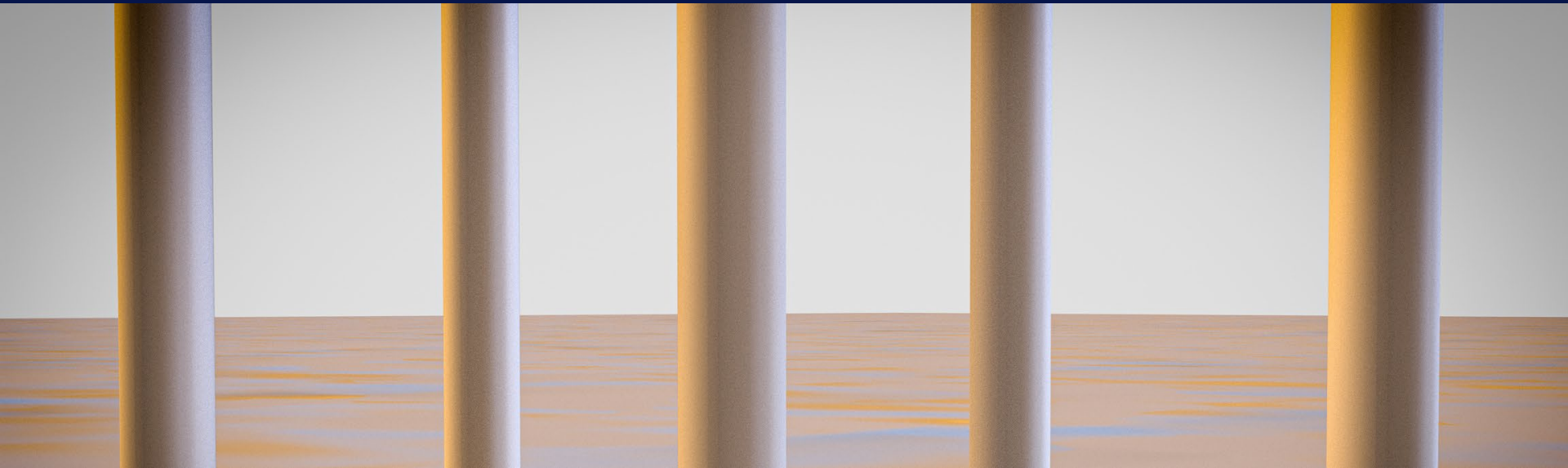


Essential Jobs, Essential Care™ is PHI's signature multi-state advocacy initiative that works closely with state leaders to advance policy reforms on the direct care workforce. From 2020-2022, PHI worked closely with the NC Coalition on Aging to design and co-lead a 3-year advocacy initiative focused on improving these essential jobs

Continued support is thanks to the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.



PHI's 5 Pillars of Job Quality



Fair
Compensation

Quality
Training

Quality
Supervision
and Support

Respect and
Recognition

Real
Opportunity

The Questions that Keep us Up at Night....

- HOW IS SUCH AN ESSENTIAL WORKFORCE SO CHRONICALLY UNDERPAID?
- HOW DO WE MITIGATE THE CURRENT DECLINE IN the LTSS WORKFORCE AT A TIME WHEN THE LTSS POPULATION IS GROWING EXPONENTIALLY?
- HOW DO PREPARE for the DEMOGRAPHIC MATH PROBLEM THAT IS ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE?
- WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHEN ELDER CAREGIVERS DIE OR CAN NO LONGER PROVIDE SUPPORT?
- HOW DO WE MITIGATE THE WORKFORCE POACHING EFFECT? BY OTHER INDUSTRIES and BY OTHER HEALTHCARE SECTORS?

Since December's MCAC Meeting:
NC Direct Care Workforce Initiative Updates
(things, if implemented, that could help us sleep better)

- NC DHHS and NC Department of Commerce's release of *Investing in North Carolina's Caregiving Workforce: Recommendations to strengthen North Carolina's nursing, direct care, and behavioral health workforce*
- NC AHEC's Recommendations for HCBS Worker Certification
- Launch of the NC Center on the Workforce for Health
- WECARE Final Recommendations and Pilot Development
- NC Olmstead Plan Workforce Measure Development
- Executive Order 280's Comprehensive Aging Plan, *All Ages, All Stages NC*
 - Recommendations are open for public comment until 3/25/2024.



Investing in North Carolina's Caregiving Workforce:

Recommendations to strengthen North Carolina's nursing, direct care, and behavioral health workforce

January 2024

Direct Care | Recommendations

INITIATIVE #3: Create a living wage for direct care workers

ACTION STEPS

1. Include NC Workforce Credential Advisory Council recommendation for high value, non-degree direct care related credentials.
2. Establish a collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Revenue to analyze wage increases for DCWs and their impact on take-home pay. Examine the relationship between wages and career advancement opportunities to identify strategies for promoting upward mobility within the direct care workforce.
3. Conduct a comprehensive wage analysis to identify and address wage discrepancies within the direct care workforce and explore innovative approaches, such as tying wages to reimbursement rates, to ensure fair compensation for direct care workers.
4. Develop an understanding of what other states have done in this space and the pain points that they have experienced.
5. Elevate training and credentialing opportunities for DCWs.
 - a. Develop credentialing programs for associate professionals, qualified professionals, and other non-licensed roles for DCWs.
 - b. Define clear standards, competencies, and training requirements for each credential to ensure portability, stackability, consistency, and quality in care delivery.
 - c. Engage with DCW organizations, industry associations, employers, and policymakers to collaborate on developing credentialing programs and addressing wage alignment.
 - d. Design uniform training requirements across both the public and private sectors to ensure a baseline level of skill and credentials for all DCWs.

Full report available at: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/investing-north-carolinas-caregiving-workforce-recommendations-strengthen-north-carolinas-nursing/download?attachment>

Additional Updates (as time allows)

Trish Farnham

NC Coalition on Aging

trish@nccoalitiononaging.org

[@NcAging](#)

