

**Nursing Home Workforce Stabilization Council
Meeting Minutes**

Date Thursday, March 30, 2023, 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Location Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Council Attendance

| Name | Representing | Attendance |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Alison Hirschel | Residents | Present |
| Dian Palmer | Workforce | Present |
| Mark Berger | Employers | Present |
| Nancy M. Hebert | Workforce | Present |
| Erica Holman | Employers | Not Present |
| Jannice L. Lamm | Employers | Not Present |
| Mary McClendon | Workforce | Present |
| Michael Munter | Employers | Not Present |
| Martha M. Nichols | Workforce | Present |
| Robert L. Norcross | Employers | Present |
| Jennifer Root | Workforce | Present |
| Terence Thomas | Residents | Present |
| Yvonne M. White | Advocates | Present |
| Salli Pung | Residents | Present |

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Staff:

Farah Hanley, Nicole Hudson, Marcus Connolly, Kenny Wirth, Scott Wamsley, Neila Sanders, Lauren Swanson-Aprill, Erin Emerson, Jennifer Cornell

Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) Staff:

Valerie Jemerson

Guests:

Minutes: The Nursing Home Workforce Stabilization Council meeting was held virtually on March 30, 2023 with eleven (11) council members in attendance.

Quorum was fulfilled.

1. Council Business

Presented by Farah Hanley and Kenny Wirth

- A. Meeting called to order at 1:06 P.M.
- B. Welcome and Introductions
- C. Virtual Meeting Housekeeping
- D. Approve Future Meeting Dates
 - Motion by Thomas, seconded by Hirschel to approve tentative meeting dates. All in favor, motion carried.

2. MDHHS Updates

Presented by Kenny Wirth, Farah Hanley, and Nicole Hudson

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- MDHHS seeking proposals for quality-of-life enrichment projects for residents of nursing homes. Information is available on the Department's website ([NFEP-2024 RFP Press Release](#)).
- MDHHS continuing to offer free, qualitative fit testing apparatus kits and MIOSHA training resources to ensure respiratory protection standards met throughout state. Please contact Kenny Wirth (wirthk4@michigan.gov) for more information.
- BPHASA presented FY24 Budget Recommendation on March 8.
 - i. \$1.50/hr wage increase for Direct Care Workers (DCWs) including SNF care community-based supports, HFA/AFC, and in-home services. DCWs include registered professional nurses, LPNs, competency-evaluated nursing assistants, respiratory therapists (\$210.1 million gross).
 - ii. Increase to wages for non-direct care staff employed in LTC facilities – includes housekeeping, maintenance, plant operations, laundry, dining room assistants, dietary workers, medical records, social services, and other diversional therapy staff (\$90 million gross).
 - iii. Funding to support nursing facilities over 2-year timeframe as new reimbursement model phased in (\$110 million gross).

3. DCW Advisory Committee Updates

Presented by Lauren Swanson-Aprill, MDHHS

- A. Essential Jobs/Essential Care (EJEC) Wage and Training Workgroup is proposing a \$4.00 per hour wage increase over and above the existing \$2.35 already provided. This proposal also extends the \$4.00 increase to immediate supervisors of DCWs. *Funding and Training Initiatives for Direct Care Workers* document will be shared with Council members.
- B. Commission on Services to the Aging supports Governor's wage increase recommendation, asking that additional increase be considered.
- C. MDHHS DCW Steering Committee contracted with Public Sector Consultants (PSC) and Health Management Associates to hold focus groups and research best approaches to addressing wages and skill barriers and recommend policy changes.
- D. MICA grant being implemented through Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) to build foundation of DCW training infrastructure.
- E. Education and Credentialing Workgroups developing credentialing system aligning with recently approved Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) training curricula updates, behavioral health models, and the state Professional DCW Competency Guidelines. IMPART Alliance is training trainers as part of MICA grant pilot project, hope to begin training DCWs in Spring and Summer.
- F. DCW Advisory Committee Education/Communications Workgroup refining a survey, FAQ answers and mailing letters to 800 DCWs, employers, and trainers registered to learn about State-approved Professional DCW Competencies.
- G. DCW Advisory Committee Recommendations and Strategies Workgroup refining key components of DCW policy recommendations. Working on listing

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short-, intermediate-, and long-range goals to meet mutual workforce needs. Plan to have draft recommendations ready for May DCW Advisory Committee meeting. Will share this with this Council too.

4. NWHFSC Subgroup Updates

Facilitated by Kenny Wirth and Nicole Hudson

A. Quality Subgroup

- Salli Pung leading this group.
- With upcoming staffing requirements coming from CMS and new reimbursement system in Michigan, feel they need to better understand what new rules/regulations are on horizon before making recommendations that will fit within those parameters.

B. Retention, Professional Development, Mentoring, and Nurse Aide Training Programs

- No updates for this meeting.

C. Wages, Benefits, and Staffing

- Mark Berger and Jennifer Root leading.
- Identifying 3-5 areas for recommendations that are most critical to supporting workforce development and stabilizing workforce as a whole.
- Bill 690 was a good move by Governor. Other states looking to emulate this bill. How do we ensure that there is longevity and there are plans to ensure this increase is supported over the years.
- CMS coming out with minimum staffing approach, so what do we need to think about in preparation for that?
- Reimbursement is one big piece. How does this impact the staffing levels of facilities.
- What are some of the retention pieces that can be recommended? Med-tech legislation, reciprocity, unique benefits for frontline workers, micro-credentialling, etc.

5. Council Discussion

Facilitated by Kenny Wirth and Nicole Hudson

- M. Berger – priority is to identify someone at MDHHS who can provide insight into new reimbursement system to ensure that subgroups can come up with concrete recommendations that won't interfere with the new reimbursement system. Any changes made to reimbursement will impact staffing.
- Discussion of timeline for Council report and recommendations. Subgroups continue through July. Compile recommendations in July/August. In September, recommendations will be discussed and finalized by full Council and subgoals will be detailed. Draft report ready for October meeting to review and revise. November would be used to finalize the report and discuss any final revisions before transmitting the report to the Governor in December.

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- A. Hirschel – subgroups are eager to learn more about the reimbursement system. Believes implementation of new reimbursement system needs to be slowed down to ensure all concerns can be addressed. Things are moving very quickly, but not all questions are answered at this point. Maybe the questions have been answered, but they don't have the answers currently.
- M. Berger – agrees that the new reimbursement system needs to be looked at very closely to ensure that all impacts on the workforce, quality of care, etc. can be recognized and addressed before implementation.

6. Public Comment

Facilitated by Kenny Wirth

1. V. Jemerson, LEO

7. Adjourn

- Motion by Hirschel, seconded by Root to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:55 pm.

Next meeting scheduled for April 27, 2023 at 1:00pm. Virtual meeting.