

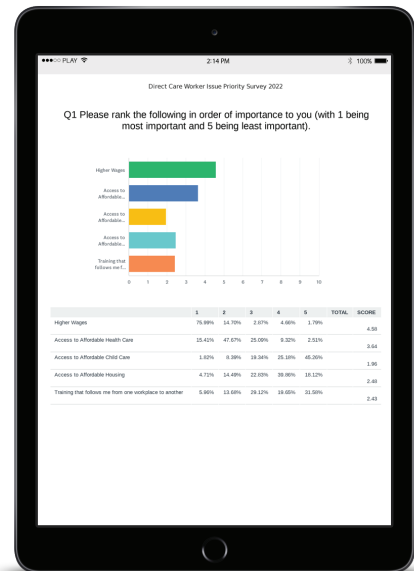


FEBRUARY 2023 Caring Community IOWA CAREGIVERS

Thank You FOR BEING PART OF OUR CARING COMMUNITY!

Dear Caring Community Member,

What I love about my job is connecting one on one with direct care workers (DCWs) and listening to their stories. We were visiting with Ashley and Kim, a mother-daughter caregiver team about the joys and challenges of their work. I was struck by the magnitude of their lived experiences: Working “short” rather than with someone who isn’t properly trained or committed to the residents. No health care coverage. Developing a hernia due to heavy lifting. Feeling guilty saying no to extra shifts for fear persons served will be neglected. Difficulties working across workplace settings because they have no continuing education standard and portable credentials. And the day-to-day compassion fatigue made worse by workforce shortages and the pandemic. ***Yet... they remain in the field to make snow angels, celebrate veterans’ service, create a sensory garden, and shoot glamour shots of those they serve.***



There is much work to be done and change can’t occur without elected officials understanding the impact this workforce has on all lowans. Obviously, the direct involvement with DCWs during our conferences, self-care, recognition, and other events is gratifying to them, our staff, Board, Direct Care Council, and volunteers. But that alone is not enough! The policy changes are vital to real change, and we must work on both doggedly and simultaneously.

Now that the Iowa Legislature is back in session, it seems to be a good time to focus on how your financial support impacts two important pillars of our mission: Research and Advocacy. Iowa CareGivers has a long history of conducting Iowa and direct care worker-specific research. In a recent issue priority survey, DCWs identified their top needs as: wages, affordable health care, affordable housing, portable training credentials, and affordable childcare. Sadly, the results are close to the findings from the first Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Needs Assessment Survey we did in 1998.

We’ve made inroads but we learned in a recent session by Iowa Workforce Development that wages for DCWs have barely budged since 2019, despite inflation, cost of living adjustment, and the high demand for this workforce.



2021 Median Hourly Wages

| | | |
|------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 2019 | \$14.42 | Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) |
| 2021 | \$13.89 | Home Health and Personal Care Aides |
| 2021 | \$18.79 | All Iowa Occupations |

Source: Iowa Department of Workforce Development Wage Report 2021 & 2019 Direct Care Worker Wage and Benefit Survey

The research you help make possible provides evidence needed for Iowa CareGivers to promote policies that will ensure DCWs receive the wages needed to **lift them out of poverty** and **reduce their reliance on worker supports** such as the State's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Children's Health Insurance Program (HAWK-I), and Childcare Assistance. Your investment makes it possible for us to: **1) educate** elected officials about who this essential workforce is and what they need to enter and remain in the field; **2) provide advocacy training** for DCWs and other stakeholders; **3) present ourselves** as a trusted resource on direct care issues; and **4) build greater grassroots engagement**.

Finally, we have embarked upon a 3-year strategic planning cycle that we are very excited about, and YOU are very much a part of those plans. Thanks again for your ongoing support of DCWs and Iowa CareGivers.

My best,



Di Findley, Executive Director, Iowa CareGivers

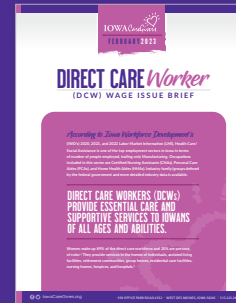
2022 Donor List

<https://www.iowacaregivers.org/uploads/pdf/2022-lists.pdf>

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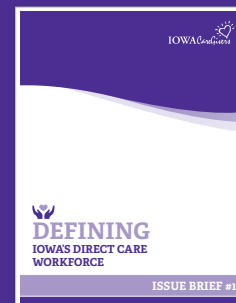
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Direct Care Worker (DCW) Wage Issue Brief – February 2023



Direct Care Workers of Iowa 2019 Wage & Benefit Survey



Issue Brief #1 – Defining Iowa's Direct Care Workforce

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