

IDPH News Release

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IDPH Receives Grant to Develop Direct Care Worker Training and Credentialing Model

\$2.2 million grant will result in national model

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) has received a \$2,244,000 grant from the Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to develop and pilot a training and credentialing model for direct care professionals. The project grant, which provides \$748,000 per year for three years, is based on the recommendations of the legislatively-directed Iowa Direct Care Worker Advisory Council.

“The focus of the project is to develop a direct care training and credentialing system that can be replicated nationwide,” said Erin Drinnin of the IDPH Bureau of Health Care Access. “The goal is to provide responsive and flexible training, promote the highest quality of care, and develop career pathways to professionalize the direct care workforce in Iowa.”

The pilot project funded by the grant will target one urban and one rural geographic region of the state. The sample of direct care professionals participating in the project will work in a variety of settings and will provide services and support to Iowans with disabilities and those who are aging. IDPH will work closely with all stakeholders, including direct care professionals and employers, to encourage participation and ensure stakeholders play an active role in the development and implementation of the project.

The Direct Care Worker Advisory Council was established in by the 2008 Iowa Legislature in HF 2539. The council is charged with advising IDPH regarding training and certification of direct care workers. The Council, previously known as the Iowa Direct Care Worker Task Force, was the result of a legislative effort of the Iowa Better Jobs Better Care Project (BJBC), whose purpose was to develop and implement practices and policies to improve the recruitment and retention of direct care workers. BJBC was led by the Iowa CareGivers Association, and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Atlantic Philanthropies.