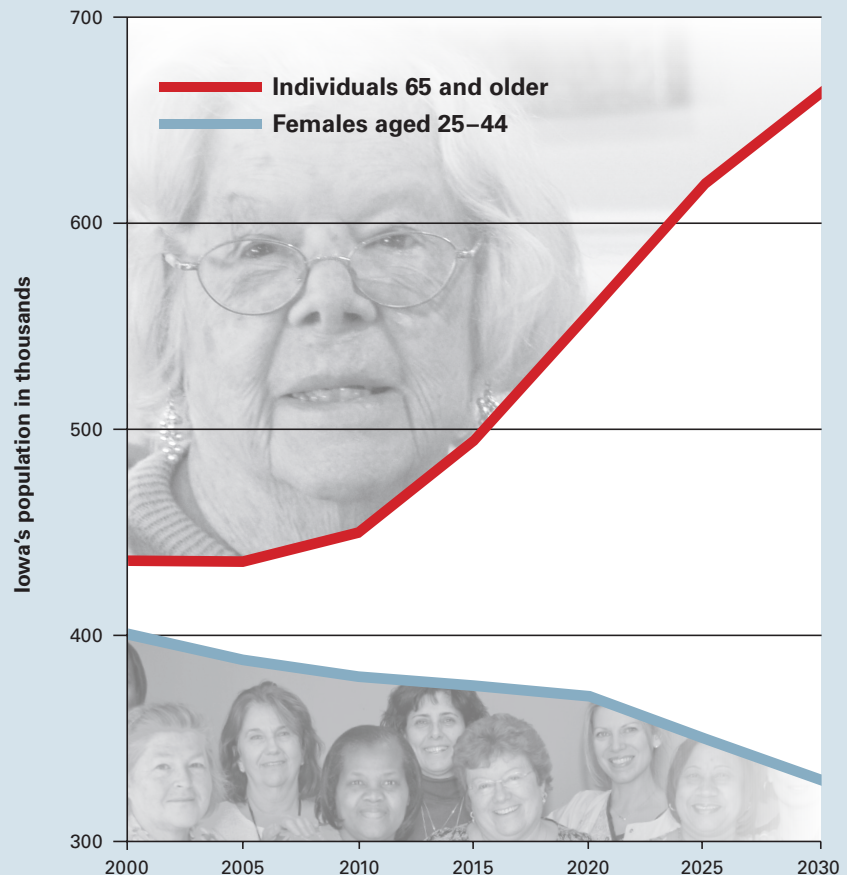


# Iowa's Care Gap



**Iowa is running out of workers to care for our growing population of elders and people with disabilities.**

As Iowa's population of elders and people with disabilities increases, the traditional source of new direct-care workers (women aged 25–44) is projected to shrink, leaving Iowa with a critical shortage of workers. In short, the demand for services is going to exceed the supply of workers to provide those services.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Interim State Population Projections, 2005. The chart reflects only the growth in Iowa's aging population. Complete and accurate data for persons with disabilities is not available.

## What does this mean for you?

Failing to address the care gap means this: you will not be able to count on a direct-care worker being there for you when and where you—or your loved ones—need them.

To prevent this care gap from becoming a crisis—and to ensure peace of mind for thousands of Iowa families—we need to invest in quality jobs for direct-care workers. That's the only way we can assure that a direct-care worker will be there to care and support our loved ones. Voices of Iowans are needed to speak out on this issue to create a sense of urgency. Ask your elected leaders or candidates for office to become champions—and make sure Iowa is prepared to care.

*(See other side.)*



## IOWA CareGivers ASSOCIATION

The Iowa CareGivers Association ([www.iowacaregivers.org](http://www.iowacaregivers.org)) is an independent, nonprofit and nonpartisan statewide organization founded in 1992 in response to the growing concerns about the shortage and high turnover rates of direct-care workers. It exists to ensure that Iowans receive good care and support when and where they need it. ICA does that by focusing on providing education, recognition, advocacy, and research in support of direct-care workers.



PHI ([www.PHInational.org](http://www.PHInational.org)) works to improve the lives of people who need home and residential care—and the lives of the workers who provide that care. Our goal is to ensure caring, stable relationships between consumers and workers, so that both may live with dignity, respect, and independence.

# Prepare Iowa to Care: Take Action Now

## Who are direct-care workers?

Direct-care workers provide over 80 percent of the hands-on care and support for Iowans of all ages in all settings. They serve kids and adults with disabilities, mental illness, Alzheimer's disease, or brain injury; those recovering from acute illness, surgery, or injury; and frail older Iowans. They help Iowans maximize their independence, their health, and their quality of life.

They go by many titles—certified nurse aide; home care and home health aide; personal care attendant; rehabilitation, medication, and hospice aides; and direct support professional—and serve Iowans in many locations: in their homes, assisted living and nursing facilities, adult day centers, hospitals, hospices, and a variety of settings for people with disabilities.

## How many workers do we need?

Totaling 50,000, direct-care workers are Iowa's largest occupation, larger than nurses, school teachers, and all public safety officers. Moreover, three of the top ten high-growth/high-demand jobs in the coming decade are in direct care.

Iowa will need 12,000 additional direct-care workers between 2008 and 2018 to meet growing demand!

## Why, even in tough economic times, are workers hard to find?

Direct-care positions are among the most difficult to attract Iowans to, and keep them in, due to low wages, lack of access to health coverage and other benefits, the physical and emotional demands of the work, and few opportunities for career advancement within the field of direct care.

## Failing to keep people in these jobs costs taxpayers, consumers, and employers dearly!

A constant revolving door of people entering and leaving the direct-care profession costs Iowans dearly. It costs millions of dollars annually (estimated at \$126 million in 2011) to fund the costs of recruiting and training new staff. And more importantly, this revolving door of staff leads to less care, delayed care and less quality of care for the Iowan's being served!

## Direct-care jobs can help our economy grow.

This is about jobs... good jobs. It's about the workers and those they care for and support. It's about businesses that hire workers to provide services. It's about the communities that benefit from the people with good jobs that spend money there and contribute to the quality of life.

## For more information or to get involved...

Contact the Iowa CareGivers Association (ICA): [information@iowacaregivers.org](mailto:information@iowacaregivers.org) • 515.223.2805 or 888.710.2762 • [www.iowacaregivers.org](http://www.iowacaregivers.org)

Contact the PHI Government Affairs Office: [cregan@PHInational.org](mailto:cregan@PHInational.org) • 202.223.8355 • [www.PHInational.org/policy](http://www.PHInational.org/policy)