

# Long-term Care Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

## February 1, 2024

**Jessica Zering**, HAIAR Antimicrobial Stewardship Pharmacist presented the AMS tip of the month on the AHRQ Antibiotic Stewardship Initiative.

- The initiative utilized the AHRQ 4 Moments of Antibiotic Decision-Making Framework.
- Conducted 15 webinars led by infection prevention experts over a month.
- Tools such as presentations, posters, and pocket cards were provided to support the initiative.
- Monthly antibiotic use data was submitted to AHRQ for analysis.
- Both prescribers and direct care staff actively participated in the initiative.

### Results:

- The focus was not solely on results, as the initiative expected a reduction in antibiotic use if successful.
- However, successful outcomes were noted, with a reduction in the number of urine cultures ordered.
- Emphasis on the value lying in the lessons and insights gained from the initiative.

### Key Takeaways:

- Educating direct caregivers about sending cultures only when specific signs and symptoms were present (diagnostic stewardship) contributed to a notable reduction in urine cultures.
- Engaging all staffing roles facilitated organizational cultural change.
- The inclusion of nurse assistants in the education process was highlighted as unique and beneficial.

### Next Steps:

- Continuation and promotion of antibiotic stewardship practices.
- Ongoing education and engagement of all staff roles.
- Further analysis and dissemination of lessons learned.

**Stacy Graff** introduced herself as the Workforce Development Unit Manager at the Department of Social and Health Services.

- A team of eight people under Stacy's management focuses on recruiting and retaining the direct care workforce.
- The team collaborates with the Workforce Training Board and engages in community partnerships.
- Stephanie shared information on the growing shortage of caregivers, impacting older adults and people with disabilities.
- Challenges associated with the shortage include delayed services, limited choices for care recipients, and decreased flexibility.
- Caregiver expectations were discussed, emphasizing the need for value, support, fair compensation, and work-life balance.

- Legislative actions, including House Bill 1694 and Substitute Bill 5278, were outlined, aiming to address workforce challenges.
- A draft report on reducing barriers to home care aid certification is in process.
- The ALTA team engages in statewide outreach, marketing, and campaigns to attract prospective caregivers.
- Workforce navigators assist individuals in becoming caregivers by addressing barriers and providing support.
- The High School Home Care Aid Program, a 90-hour course, aims to educate students and create a pathway to caregiving careers.
- The Direct Care Workforce Collaborative, an advocacy group, seeks to give a voice to caregivers and engage in policy discussions.
- Clear advice from caregivers emphasized the importance of passion, patience, commitment, and strong work ethics in caregiving.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Ongoing efforts in marketing campaigns and outreach activities.
- Implementation and expansion of the High School Home Care Aid Program.
- Regular meetings and activities for the Direct Care Workforce Collaborative.
- Continued collaboration with legislators and stakeholders to address workforce challenges.

**Stephanie Marko**, workforce program specialist emphasized the importance of focusing on caregiver retention alongside recruitment efforts.

- The history of the Caregiver Retention Toolkit traced back to a workforce retention subgroup that identified key areas such as coaching, leadership upskilling, wellness, recognition, and onboarding.
- The toolkit aims to educate, inspire, and empower leaders, emphasizing that retention involves more than just financial incentives.
- Insights from a 2021 survey highlighted areas of improvement, such as the lack of a realistic job preview during onboarding.
- The toolkit's four main areas of focus are onboarding, communication, wellness, and recognition, each with modules designed for educational purposes.
- Care Learn, a free platform, hosts the toolkit and offers accessible online learning for direct care professionals and unpaid caregivers in Washington state.
- The toolkit provides statistics, personal quotes, and practical tips for each focus area, encouraging leaders to engage in ongoing training.
- A post-survey is planned to gather feedback and measure the impact of the toolkit on retention efforts.
- Future plans include the release of a new module on harassment, abuse, and discrimination, along with integrating toolkit content into employer orientations and making it available to adult family home applicants.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Continued promotion and utilization of the Caregiver Retention Toolkit on Care Learn.

- Post-survey analysis and actioning of feedback.
- Integration of toolkit content into required caregiver orientations and business startup resources.
- Development and release of new modules based on ongoing feedback and needs.

**Chris Dula** from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board highlighted the importance of reinforcing the ongoing workforce development efforts at ALTSA.

- The long-term care sector faces challenges related to a patchwork of services, navigation difficulties for families, and high costs.
- The workforce issue is complex, with various efforts and limited resources, necessitating communication and collaboration.
- The increasing demand for long-term care services in Washington, particularly for the aging population, was presented.
- Chris shared various data sources, including workforce board staff and key informants, providing insights into workforce needs and vacancies.
- Legislative mandates in 2022 assigned the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board the responsibility of managing the Long-Term Care Initiative.
- Stakeholder survey results identified inadequate pay and benefits, insufficient qualified staff, recruitment and retention, and negative perceptions as major challenges.
- Direct quotes from stakeholders highlighted the need to address issues of dignity, empowerment, and respect for direct care workers.
- Projections indicated a substantial number of workforce openings and high turnover within the long-term care sector from 2020 to 2030.
- The discussion emphasized the equity issue, with 85% of direct care workers being women, a significant portion being people of color, and a considerable percentage being immigrants or refugees.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Continued collaboration and communication to address workforce challenges.
- Ongoing efforts to reinforce and support workforce development initiatives.
- Implementation of recommendations from stakeholder surveys and legislative mandates.
- Further exploration of strategies to improve working conditions and wages for direct care workers.

**Dr. Donald Smith** provided an overview of the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's role as an advocate, evaluator, policy advisor, and regulator with a focus on offering recommendations to the legislature.

- The Long-Term Care Workforce Initiative involves collaboration with various agencies and stakeholders, addressing challenges within the long-term care sector.
- Subcommittees, including the Long-Term Care Ecosystem, HR and Worker Support, Education and Career Development, and Rural and Underserved Communities, are actively working on specific aspects of the workforce initiative.

- Ongoing projects include a marketing campaign and LPN Apprenticeship Project, aiming to address challenges in recruitment, retention, and career development.
- The focus on rural and underserved communities aims to identify specific challenges unique to these areas and develop tailored solutions.
- Dr. Smith invited stakeholders to engage in the initiative, offering his contact information for further discussions and collaboration.

Dr. Donald Smith  
Long-Term Care Workforce Policy Manager  
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#### **Next Steps:**

- Continued collaboration on subcommittee initiatives.
- Advancement of ongoing projects, including the Marketing Campaign and LPN Apprenticeship.
- Stakeholder engagement and participation in the Long-Term Care Workforce Initiative.
- Preparation for the next meeting on March 7th, with an open invitation for topic suggestions.

#### **Q&A:**

Due to the lack of remaining time, members were encouraged to place questions or comments in the chat or to email them to [bonita.campo@doh.wa.gov](mailto:bonita.campo@doh.wa.gov). All questions will be routed to the appropriate subject matter expert for a response.

The meeting ended with a reminder of the [Gov Delivery newsletter](#) and an invitation for topic suggestions.

**The next meeting is March 7, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.**

#### **Resource Links:**

Jessica Zering –

- [WA PALTC and WA DOH Urine PCR Testing Guidance Document](#)
- [Do You Really Have a Penicillin Allergy Handout for Patients](#)
- [Communicating with Residents and Families about Antibiotics CE](#)
- [Antimicrobial Stewardship Toolkit for Nursing Homes](#)
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35226084/>

Stacy Graff –

- [Full Length Commercial](#)
- [Chili \(Spokane\) - Tribal Bumper \(vimeo.com\)](#)

Chris Dula –

- [Washington Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board](#)

Dr. Donald Smith –

- [2023 LTC Initiative Report](#)
- [LTC-Workforce-Annual-Report-FINAL4-2023.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#)