



*Building vibrant and
inclusive communities*



Provider Partners

November 2021

DCW Special Edition

This special edition of Includa's Provider Partners newsletter is built to focus on providing you with specific tools and resources for navigating the challenges of today's Direct Care Workforce (DCW) shortage. For the last decade, the DCW shortage has been a growing issue. Most recently, it has been intensified due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are dedicated to supporting our providers, with a focus on stabilizing our network to ensure sustainable, long-term solutions. Please feel free to share any of the resources found in this issue. We want all our providers to know we stand with you – we are all in this together!

Building Efficiencies

Includa is dedicated to partnering with all our providers and community members, working together in finding solutions to the Direct Care Workforce (DCW) crisis. Over the past several months and ongoing, we are trying new approaches when reaching out to providers to request services. These approaches may look different throughout the state, as we know what might work well in one area may not be practical in others.

As an example, in some of our Central and Northeastern counties we are compiling information related to member care needs for services such as Supportive Home Care, Home Health, and Personal Care. Those service requests are then sent as a combined communication to all related providers in that area, allowing providers to receive one request related to multiple members, and asking them to respond to whatever profile they may be able to support. The previous individualized outreach method resulted in multiple requests throughout the business day. Our hope in this process is that these providers will now receive a reduced amount of outreach from Includa staff, thereby freeing up time for those providers that may otherwise be spent responding to multiple service requests.

We recognize these new processes may not be perfect, so we look to you to continue providing feedback to help guide us as we strive for improvements. If you have any questions or comments related to the specific new approaches in your area, please connect directly with the Includa colleague doing the outreach. Otherwise, as always, by contacting providerrelations@includa.org we will ensure your questions will get directed to the correct representative.



Self-Care for Caregivers

Supporting the self-care of direct caregivers has become an invaluable tool for many employers when promoting a healthy work culture. Here are a few resources we hope you can utilize and build off of as you support the needs of your own staff.

Self-Care Toolkit for DSPs During COVID-19

The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) has compiled resources for direct support providers (DSP) and caregivers. These resources were created as a toolkit which consists of videos and webinars, with topics ranging from *Hiring, Engaging and Keeping DSPs During & AFTER COVID-19*, to *Meditation for DSPs in Times of Stress*. There are also handouts available for download along with links to other organizations who are working to support these ongoing efforts.

To learn more about NADSP's toolkit, please visit: nadsp.org/self-care-toolkit-for-dsps-during-covid-19.

Free Therapy for Staff of Wisconsin Long-Term Care Residential Facilities

The well-being of people who work at long-term care facilities has been challenged in the last 18 months due to COVID-19 and other events. These challenges not only have a direct impact on the individual caregiver, but they also impact the emotional

intelligence of the organization. With funding provided through a federal grant and awarded by the Wisconsin Division of Care and Treatment Services (DCTS), Behavioral Consulting Services (BCS) is currently offering FREE therapy and other wellness supports for long-term care residential workers who are struggling to cope. The program is available to all staff working in these facilities, not just direct care workers.

To learn more about BCS and their available services, please visit: <https://www.behavioralcs.com/covid-19-therapy.html>.



Wisconsin Department of Health Services Agency Staffing Resource Assistance

The following information has been provided by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and is something we hope all applicable providers are aware of:

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is pursuing several strategies simultaneously to assist acute care, skilled nursing, long term care, and assisted living facilities in mitigating volume surge challenges being experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective October 4, 2021, DHS is offering facilities supplemental temporary agency staffing. DHS has established a stepwise process to request staffing services to assist with managing a facility's staffing shortage this year.

Request Process to Obtain Temporary Agency Staffing Services

1. Acute care, skilled nursing, long term care, and assisted living facilities will submit an initial interest request to **DHS Health Staffing** to receive the Agreement to Participate in Wisconsin DHS Surge Staffing Service and the Facility Eligibility for Services Questionnaire.
2. Facilities will complete and return the Facility Eligibility for Services Questionnaire.

- A. Please be as specific as possible in documenting what the facility has done to mitigate staffing shortages to date.
 - B. Note that the information collected on the Facility Eligibility for Service Questionnaire is for informational purposes only. Your answers will not disqualify you from participating in the Wisconsin DHS Agency Staffing Resource program.
3. After receiving the completed Facility Eligibility for Service Questionnaire, DHS will request that the facility submit a Scope of Work detailing the services requested. DHS will then match the requesting facility with an appropriate temporary agency staffing vendor.
 4. While DHS will subsidize a percentage of the temporary agency staffing services, the facility will be responsible for reimbursing DHS for 40% of the facility's total temporary agency staffing costs.

For additional information, to submit a request, or to submit a question related to staffing assistance requests, please contact **DHS Health Staffing** (DHSHealthStaffing@dhs.wisconsin.gov).



DEMENTIA DID YOU KNOW?

Supporting People Living with Dementia and the Direct Care Workforce Shortage



Alzheimer's disease and other dementias may cause people to act in unpredictable and challenging ways. Some people may become angry, while others try to leave or ask repetitive questions. Some do all of the above and more.

For People [or Person] Living with Dementia (PLWD), these actions are considered 'behavioral communication' – the person is trying to communicate, but they no longer have the words. We know the PLWD is not trying to be difficult and their behaviors are communication, but this may still cause frustration, leading to lower job satisfaction and retention among caregivers.

What Can We Do?

One way to approach this is to uncover what the PLWD is communicating with the behavior and address that need. They may be in pain or need to use the bathroom. They may think it is time to go to work or school.

Solving this Communication Mystery

Work through Includa's **Dementia Toolkit**. Each part helps you find clues to solve the mystery. Providers who use the toolkit can reduce the time spent calming the PLWD and reduce stress on caregivers.

There are four parts to the Toolkit:

1. The **Personal History** form identifies the person's life story and helps us understand why the PLWD may act a certain way, anticipate problems, and reduce the time finding ways to help the PLWD.
2. The **Observation** form helps us to observe and document both triggers and what helps the PLWD.
3. The **Problem Behavior Flowchart** helps us decide if this action is a problem that needs to be fixed due to risk or is something we can let go.
4. After learning about the PLWD and their behavioral communication, we develop a **Plan of Action** to address the specific behavior.

Still have questions about how to use the Dementia Toolkit? Watch an instructional video here: **Includa's Dementia Toolkit - How To** (YouTube). If you still have questions after watching the video, please email dementiasupport@includa.org for assistance.

Continuing Efforts in Partnering with Providers

Inclusa has prioritized internal resources to partner with providers during this challenging period. We have used those resources to bring providers together, using a variety of formats to collect valuable input as to what Inclusa can do to best support caregivers, as well as generating ideas on how they can be of support to one another.

Since August there have been four sessions. Here are some of the great ideas that were brought forward:

1. Leverage low- or no-cost employee recognition programs
 - Kwik Trip gift cards (possibly donated)
 - Discount programs that have no cost to participate
 - www.ticketsatwork.com
 - [Radio Station 'Big Deals' Sites](#) (search your local area)
 - [Cable provider discounts](#) you might not know about
 - Using [Deal Hack.com](http://DealHack.com) for discount codes and sales for 15,000+ brands
2. Get the word out locally to prospective candidates to fill open positions versus using large national platforms
3. Identify how local [Department of Workforce Development \(DWD\) offices](#) can be a resource
 - Assist with costs associated with getting a driver's license
 - Reimbursement for some training
 - Identify grants that providers may be eligible for
 - [Workforce Innovation Grant Program | WEDC](#)
 - [Wisconsin Fast Forward Grants](#)
4. Leverage [Inclusa's Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) to meet individual training needs
5. Partner with other providers to make bulk purchases, so smaller providers can get volume pricing/discounts for items that nearly every provider is having to purchase

These are just a few ideas that have come out of our great discussions with providers. Inclusa is eager to assist as we understand, without great providers there would not be an Inclusa. Please contact Chris Comella (Chris.Comella@inclusa.org) or Trista DeRosa (Trista.DeRosa@inclusa.org) for more information or to provide additional ideas.

Provider Employment Resources

Local Job Centers can provide assistance to all employers. Job Centers are comprised of Business Service Teams and Local Partner Agencies that offer workforce solutions to recruit qualified workers, retain well-trained and productive employees, access workforce planning resources, and build staff diversity through a broad pool of skilled job candidates. Listed below are some of the services offered to employers to recruit and retain employees:

- **Job Service Business Service Representative:** Staff can assist with posting job openings to the Job Center of Wisconsin site, recruiting talent, coordinating on-site and virtual recruitments, and accessing available hiring incentives and tax credits. Visit [Job Center of Wisconsin.com](#) for additional information. Contact your local Business Service Team Representative by searching [Wisconsin JobCenter.org/directory/business_services](http://WisconsinJobCenter.org/directory/business_services) or call 888-258-9966.
- **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Business Services Consultant:** Tap into a highly reliable, qualified job applicant who is ready to put their diverse abilities to work for you. The Business Services Consultant connects with employers and learns about their business, provides potential qualified applicants to consider, and shares information about the benefits and financial incentives with hiring individuals with disabilities. Contact your local DVR Business Services Consultant at www.dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/business or call 888-259-9966.
- **Local Veteran Employment Representative:** Seek military experience to build an innovative, resourceful and reliable workforce. The Veteran Employment Representative can assist with recruiting veteran job seekers, identifying transferrable skills between military and civilian occupations, and accessing incentives for hiring veterans. Contact a Veteran Employment Services Representative at www.dwd.wisconsin.gov/veterans or call 888-258-9966.
- **Local Partner Agencies:** A variety of Local Partner Agencies provide employment and training services to job seekers - including Dislocated Worker Programs, Food Share Employment and Training, Wisconsin Works, Youth Programs, and Senior Community Service Employment Programs. To learn more about the Local Partner Agencies in your area and how to partner with them as an employer, visit www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/directory or call 888-258-9966.



Member Employment and Success

With over 2,600 Inclusa Members working or interested in community employment, think about Inclusa members as a solution to the workforce shortage: A qualified and reliable employee!

Inclusa has members who are interested in a variety of employment opportunities - including food service, cleaning, healthcare, retail, transportation, administrative support, and manufacturing. An increased number of employers are looking at Inclusa members as potential job applicants, broadening their pool of qualified and skilled candidates for job openings.

In addition, employers are becoming more creative and thinking outside of the box on traditional job descriptions and roles. They are evaluating what job tasks are essential, versus non-essential tasks, and looking at job sharing, determining if job tasks could be assigned to other employees to carve out other job opportunities.

In the last month there have been some wonderful success stories of members and providers being part of the solution to the nationwide workforce shortage. Providers have hired members as employees, and members have hired members as employees. Providers have also partnered with other providers to develop relationships in the recruitment of employees, and evaluating their traditional job roles/descriptions in order to expand and hire candidates. Here are just a few of those success stories:

- **Member to Provider Hire:** An Inclusa member was recently hired on for a full time Activities Coordinator position by a residential provider.
- **Member to Member Hire:** An Inclusa member utilizing Self-Directed Supports (SDS) hired another Inclusa member as their direct caregiver. The SDS option provides members the option to hire providers to assist with a variety of services which might include Supportive Home Care, Respite Care, Transportation, and Chore Services to meet their personal outcomes. Employment opportunities within SDS offer flexible scheduling for both the member and the employee.
- **Providers Collaborating with Other Providers:** Through contact with an Adult Day Care provider, an Inclusa Program Manager helped to identify that they were having difficulty recruiting employees. The Inclusa Program Manager connected the Adult Day Care provider with a local Supported Employment provider who provides job development services. The two providers collaborated and discussed the job opportunities that the Adult Day Care provider had been seeking, and discussed potential employment opportunities that they had not explored. This allowed for a larger pool of potential job candidates.
- **Evaluating Traditional Job Roles/Descriptions:** Providers are re-evaluating traditional job roles to expand the pool of candidates. They are looking at whether certain job tasks can be reassigned in order to carve out another job that may provide more job candidates, such as hiring an Activity Assistant who only does activities and does not need to perform the paperwork, or hiring an individual to only transport/drive individuals who doesn't need to do direct personal cares.

Assistive Technology as a Solution to Everyday Challenges

Technology has the ability to increase independence and self-sufficiency for people living with disabilities, as well as for people age 50 and older. It is a powerful tool that can easily be overlooked when reviewing care options. When utilized, the technology not only helps the person receiving support, but also assists all who care for the person as well - including family members and providers.

Below is a list of a few examples where assistive technology may be of a support. The first column lists some of the current challenges providers and caregivers continue to experience, the second column provides some solutions to the challenge being presented, and the third column shares hyperlinks for further exploration of these resources. This is by no means an all-inclusive list, but rather a few options to help find solutions to everyday challenges.

For more information on exploring member specific options or if you have any questions related to assistive technology, please contact Innovation@inclusa.org.

The Challenge	What Technology Can Do to Address the Challenge	Examples of Technology Options to Address the Challenge
It takes a lot of staff time to ensure the safety of residents who wander or are looking to leave the building.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location devices and trackers can play a key role in supporting members who are prone to wandering. • Geo-fencing allows the ability to map out a perimeter around a specific location, defined as a “safe zone.” An alert notification will be sent to the receiver when the person with the device has crossed the boundary of the pre-determined safe zone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angelsense - GPS Tracker (angelsense.com/gps-tracker-for-elderly) • Jiobit - More than a GPS Tracker for Kids (jiobit.com) • LifeStation - Award-winning medical alert solutions for seniors (lifestation.com) • VRI - Preserve Your Independence (vricares.com) • Night Owl Support Systems - Building Relationships with Remote Monitoring (nossllc.com) • SimplyHome (simply-home.com) • SafeTracks GPS (sengistix.com/products/safetracks-gps) • NextGenAT (nextgenat.com) • See-it Tape (seeittape.com) • SafeWander - Bed Exit Alarm Sensor for Fall and Wandering Prevention (safewander.com)
Preventing falls and responding to residents who are frequently falling is a challenge for our staff and has negative outcomes for residents, too.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental solutions: Products or services that modify the environment to reduce the risk of falls such as tape that glows (e.g., placed on a step). • Notification Systems: A sensor sends an alert to a monitored phone when the wearer starts to get up from the bed or chair. • Specialized Phones: A phone displays captioned text of every word the caller says throughout the conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CapTel Phones (captel.com): May be eligible for an Internet-based CapTel phone at no cost by submitting a Third Party Certification of Eligibility (captel.com/captel/thirdparty) – visit website for details
Having to support residents who are cognitively able to make phone calls and coordinate more elements of their care, but have hearing loss that stops them from doing this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Boards: Apps and Info Boards so residents can view daily schedules and what they are doing next. Schedule management. • Remote Monitoring: For times when physical assistance is not needed, but observation and guidance may be needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RoutineFactory (routinefactory.com/group-homes) to increase independence and self-management • Professional Caregivers (sengistix.com) • Home Monitoring System For Senior Housing Communities (grandcare.com) • Assistive Technology and Devices to Help People with Disabilities (grandcare.com) • NextGenAT (nextgenat.com)
Having extra staff on duty to provide reminders and direction to residents with daily tasks.		

Contact Information

Inclusa General

Phone: 877-622-6700

Email: info@inclusa.org

Web: www.inclusa.org (See the Providers menu for additional provider resources)

Inclusa Provider Relations

Contracting, Scopes of Service

Phone: 877-622-6700 (select Option 2, then Option 3)

Email: ProviderRelations@inclusa.org

Web: www.inclusa.org/providers/contracting

Inclusa Provider Learning

Management System (LMS)

Resources and Training

Web: providerlearning.inclusa.org

Inclusa Provider Customer Service

Inclusa Portal and Authorization & Claims Support

Web: www.inclusa.org/providers/provider-portal
www.inclusa.org/providers/claims-billing

Inclusa Provider Customer Support - Satisfaction Survey

Printable Inclusa and WPS Support Contact List

Transportation-Employment Support Team

Email: ACS-Transportation-Employment@inclusa.org

Phone: 888-544-9353, ext. 4

DME-DMS-OTC Support Team

Email: ACS-DME-DMS-OTC@inclusa.org

Phone: 888-544-9353, ext. 5

Residential-CSL-NH-Therapy Support Team

Email: ACS-Residential-CSL-NH-Therapy@inclusa.org

Phone: 888-544-9353, ext. 6

SHC-SDS-Home Health Support Team

Email: ACS-SHC-SDS-HomeHealth@inclusa.org

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