

***Summary of Healthcare Workforce Meeting
For
Long Term Residential and Skilled Nursing Facilities and Home Health Providers***

The Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago (WBMC) in partnership with the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council (MCHC) convened a meeting with healthcare providers in long term residential and skilled nursing settings and home health settings on June 23, 2011. The WBMC are responsible for overseeing local workforce development systems throughout the metropolitan Chicago region and working with employers to ensure that an adequate supply of qualified workers are available to meet their needs. The MCHC has a specific interest in ensuring the region’s citizens have access to quality care and that employers in the healthcare industry have qualified, capable workers to deliver that care. This subsector of the healthcare industry represents a current regional workforce of more than 109,000 that is expected to increase 25% over the next 10 years. While labor market data can inform our decisions related to the region’s supply of and demand for workers, it is much more meaningful to hear directly from businesses regarding their workforce needs.

The June meeting is viewed as a “first step” in establishing a relationship with businesses providing long term care in residential and skilled nursing care facilities and healthcare services in a home setting. A total of 46 individuals attended the meeting which included representatives of the WBMC, MCHC, organizations administering Health Profession Opportunity Grant programs, other interested organizations, and businesses. A summary of attendees is provided as Attachment A.

A copy of the meeting agenda is provided as Attachment B. Presentations focused on:

- An introduction to the roles and responsibilities of the WBMC and MCHC.
- Regional data that provides an understanding of the composition of the region’s healthcare workforce, current demand occupations, and projected high growth occupations.

- A review of current initiatives that are designed to increase the pool of skilled healthcare workers available to the region's employers.

Presentations are available at <http://www.workforceboardsmetrochicago.org/industry/healthcare.asp>

A significant portion of the meeting was devoted to small group discussions. Following is a summary of small group responses to eight discussion questions.

- ***For which of positions do you have the most difficulty finding qualified job candidates?***

There was general consensus among small groups that the following positions were the most difficult to fill: Registered Nurses, particularly nurse managers; Physical Therapists; Occupational Therapists; Physical Therapy Assistants; and Occupational Therapy Assistants. Generally, there are individuals available to fill Certified Nursing Assistant positions but the challenge is finding individuals with experience that are willing to work for \$10 to \$12 per hour and absorb transportation costs. There is also some apprehension on the part of Certified Nursing Assistants of being classified as in-home companions rather than healthcare professionals in the home health setting. Registered Nurses willing to work in a long term care (LTC) setting are generally older and/or doing so as a second career. Additionally, one of the groups identified the lack of qualified job candidates for LTC management positions and the need to access a pool of job candidates with diverse ethnicity.

- ***In addition to the required certifications and/or licenses, what special skills sets do you need for candidates to have? Bilingual? Job readiness skills?***

Special skill sets that were identified included: bilingual with focus on Spanish (increasing need for Polish and Arabic); hospice care (very cultural); job seeking skills (e.g., interviewing, appropriate dress); specialized pediatric care; specialized geriatric care; clinical competency; basic job readiness and appropriate business/professional conduct (e.g., dress, punctuality, ethics, confidentiality, etc.); time management; customer service skills; technology (e.g., electronic medical records and tablets, case notes, etc.); generational skills; problem-solving skills ("quick on your feet"); and ability to be flexible

- ***Which positions have the highest rate of turnover? What factors contribute to the turnover?***

Attendees indicated that Certified Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Registered Nurses have the highest rate of turnover. This was largely attributed to the level of pay and benefits, with this subsector of the healthcare industry generally paying less than hospitals. Additionally, transportation costs for Certified Nursing Assistants providing home health services was identified as a factor contributing to changing employers, with individuals seeking employment closer to home. It was also noted that home health employment may represent a second or even third job for individuals and, as such, it is often the first job the individual quits.

- ***In which positions do you accept new grads? Specifically, do you hire newly licensed graduate RNs?***

There was no consensus in responding to this question. Some groups indicated that they would not hire new grads that lacked experience, stating that there was simply too much risk. While the overall preference is to hire RNs with a minimum of 1 year experience, some businesses hire new grads in a variety of positions and provide internal training. There was general agreement that individuals are not adequately prepared through existing educational programs, and there is a need for this industry and schools to do a better job in partnering to address student deficiencies. It was noted that Certified Nursing Assistants often do not know the limitations associated with their certification. Additionally, Medicare requirements limit hiring of new grads (1-2 years experience or top 10% of class and/or Board exams).

- ***Are there specific retention issues associated with hiring new grads?***

As identified in response to the question regarding turnover rate, the groups indicated that retention is generally a problem even with new grads given LTC and home health providers offer lower pay. In terms of nurses, generally LTC is not a Registered Nurse's first choice. LTC settings do not provide the versatility of experiences that acute care offers and the opportunity to use their full range of skills. Certified Nursing Assistants entering the home care setting often do not have a realistic understanding of the work environment.

- ***Do you think there will be a shortage of any skilled healthcare professionals that you employ 5 years from now? What positions?***

There was general agreement that current shortages of healthcare professionals will continue to increase in the coming years. The most severe shortages are anticipated for all therapist and therapist assistant positions and medical coders. One group indicated that there will not be a need for Licensed Practical Nurses as they will be used less in the coming years with Registered Nurses becoming the norm and the move towards more bachelor's prepared RNs rather than ADNs. It was also noted that Medicare may impose new requirements which raise the minimum qualifications of personnel providing care; this will further constrain the pool of qualified workers available to LTC and home health providers.

- ***Would you be interested in partnering on any of the regional initiatives presented today? Which ones and how?***

Generally, attendees expressed an interest in more collaboration with the WBMC and MCHC on regional initiatives to address healthcare workforce challenges but specifically to serve as clinical sites, serve as guest speakers, and to provide work experience to individuals as part of their training experience.

- ***What should the education and training system be doing to address current and avert future shortages of skilled healthcare professionals?***

Recommendations for how the education and training community can best assist in developing a pipeline of skilled healthcare professionals for current and future high demand occupations include: increase program offerings for occupational training programs with a wait list; provide students with grants to prepare for high growth occupations; and expose students to healthcare occupational opportunities early. One group also noted that community based organizations should be encouraged to offer more training programs since they are generally more conveniently located in communities. Suggestions that specifically address the level of skills individuals acquire through training and/or their preparedness for the workplace included: form partnerships with the public sector to provide work-based experiences (e.g., internships and job shadowing); design better system to assess individuals' attainment/demonstration of competencies; incorporate work ethics, documentation and case notes, communication skills, and job readiness skills as part of the occupational training curriculum; and provide honest,

constructive evaluations to students. McHenry County College indicated that they are developing curriculum and training programs specifically designed for the LTC industry.

The last item of the day was a general discussion of next steps and a request that attendees complete an evaluation of the meeting. Representatives of the WBMC and MCHC stated that they would review information provided by breakout groups and feedback on the evaluations to identify appropriate “next steps” in working with businesses to address regional workforce needs. As part of the evaluation form, individuals were asked to indicate if they were willing to be part of future events or serve as informational resources. Responses from businesses are reflected on Attachment A.

Attachment A

Attendees			
First Name	Last Name	Organization	Private Sector Interested in Participating in Future Events/Serving as Resource
Julie	Bailey	Amidei Nursing Registry, Inc.	X
Patricia	Bolivar	instituto del Progreso Latino	
Michele	Bromberg	Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation	
Jennifer	Brown	Homewatch CareGivers	X
Jeanette	Cesaretti	Suburban Home Care	X
Eddie	Corres	Instituto del Progreso Latino	
Rose	Cousins	Marklund	X
Jan	Etzkorn	WBMC	
Pat	Fera	Workforce Investment Board of Will County	
Joan	Flanagan	McHenry County College	
Lorne	Greene	Central States SER	
Joanna	Greene	Chicago Workforce Investment Council	
Chris	Hargreaves		X
Peter	Jacobsen	Alice Home Services, Inc.	X
Marybeth	Janak	Mount Saint Joseph	X
Leticia	Jimenez	Pacific Home Healthcare, Inc.	X
Rhondean	Johnson	A Touch of Grace Hospice	X
Kirk	Jones	First Choice Health Services Inc	X
Mary Kay	Kacmarek	Providence Life Services	
Mary Anne	Kelly	Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council	
Timothy	King	Jewish Vocational Service	
Christine	Kolakowski	St. Rita Home Healthcare	X
Kelly	Lapetino	Joliet Junior College	
Lavacchi	Lauren	Home Health of Illinois	X
Stephanie	Lilly	Providence Life Services	
Emmanuel	Mandujano	instituto del Progreso Latino	X
Mary Beth	Marshall	DuPage Workforce Board	
Guadalupe	Martinez	Instituto del Progreso Latino	
Elizabeth	Masching	Central States SER	
Pashun	Mcnulty	a touch of grace hospice	
Kathy	Melesio	Amidei Nursing Registry, Inc.	X
Michele	Molina	Home Health of Illinois	X
Cathy	Nelson	Life Services Network	X
Patricia	Ocampo	MCHC	
Susan	O'Keefe	Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council	

Attendees			
First Name	Last Name	Organization	Private Sector Interested in Participating in Future Events/Serving as Resource
Mike	O'Rourke	Resurrection Health Care-HR	X
Terrie	Perdue	Physicians Preferred Home Care	
Jeffrey	Poynter	McHenry County Workforce Investment Board	
Cecile	Regner	Joliet Junior College	
Linda B.	Roberts	IDFPR/IL Center for Nursing	
Joan	Rubino	Marklund	X
Sue	Schaller	Joliet Area Community Hospice	X
Dave	Stillmunkes	Medical Staffing Network	X
Addie	Syed	United Home Health, LLC	
Holley	Tygrett	Ingalls Home Care	X
Jennifer	Ulmer	DuPage Convalescent Center	X

**Healthcare Workforce Meeting
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**University Center
525 S. State Street, Chicago**

**Agenda
June 23, 2011**

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| 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. | Registration and Networking Breakfast |
| 9:30 to 9:45 a.m. | Welcome
Who We Are and What We Do
<i>Mary Beth Marshall, DuPage Workforce Board</i> |
| 9:45 to 10:15 a.m. | Regional Data - Current and Future Workforce Needs
<i>Pat Fera, Workforce Investment Board of Will County</i>

Overview of Regional Healthcare Workforce Initiatives
<i>Mary Anne Kelly, Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council</i> |
| 10:15 to 10:30 a.m. | Break |
| 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. | Small Group Discussions |
| 11:30 to Noon | Small Group Reports

Next Steps |