

Overview

In 2022, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) established the [Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center](#) (the Center) to address the critical shortage of direct care professionals essential for enabling older adults and individuals with disabilities to live independently in their communities. The Center offers resources, technical assistance, and training to state agencies, service providers, and stakeholders aiming to enhance workforce recruitment, retention, training, and professional development.

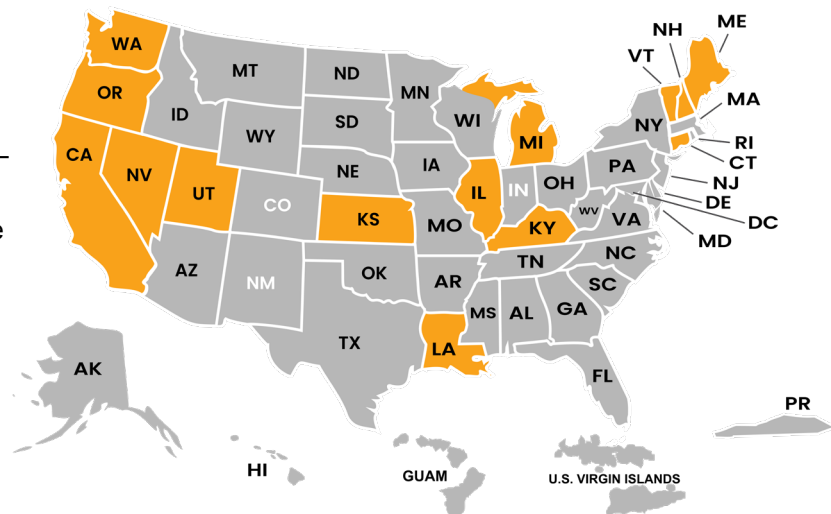
Peer Learning Collaboratives (PLCs)

In 2024, the Center launched a series of peer learning collaboratives (PLCs), which are time-limited, results-oriented working groups of states that share best promising practices, innovative strategies, and proven models for bolstering the direct care workforce. The Center selected 14 states to join the inaugural PLC initiative, which began in June 2024 and ends in March 2025.

PLC States

Center leadership and partners organized states into cohorts based upon identified areas of interest. Key topics include cross systems change—of such significant interest that Center staff created two such PLCs—and one recruitment and retention PLC:

- CA, IL, KS, CT and KY, ME, NV, VT are focused on cross-systems change.
- LA, MI, NH, OR, UT, WA are focused on recruitment and retention strategies.



Support to PLC States

Participating states have utilized the PLCs to accomplish one milestone related to their HCBS systems-change efforts to strengthen the direct care workforce. Examples of some of the milestones chosen by participating states include:

- Creating a cross-walk of regulatory and statutory requirements across DCW licensure types
- Developing a core curriculum for DCWs that is suitable across all waivers and relevant state programs
- Drafting a plan for introducing wrap-around services such as child care and transportation to help support DCW recruitment and retention

¹Cross-systems change refers to states seeking to create linkages among different state entities and offices (e.g. workforce, human services, and health care) in order to support the Direct Care Workforce.

To achieve these milestones, states receive individualized technical assistance and structured peer learning opportunities:

Individualized TA provided by National Subject Matter Experts

Participating states were connected to subject matter experts (SMEs) from organizations such as [PHI](#), [University of Minnesota Center on Community Integration](#), and others in order to help support their progress in refining and achieving their chosen milestones. SMEs provide assistance in areas such as helping to inventory existing DCW initiatives, identifying national best practices, and helping devise ongoing sustainability plans for DCW efforts. To date, participating states have received an average of 75 hours of individualized technical assistance.

Peer Learning/Educational Content

States participate in monthly Center-led PLC meetings with their groups. Meetings are structured to enable a mix of progress monitoring, expert presentation, and peer exchange.

Additional Information

For more information, please visit the [DCW website](#) or email us at Directcareworkfore@ncoa.org