



LD 898: Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee

2025 Annual Report

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Committee Overview

Established in 2021, the Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee (ESWAC) as established in Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 54-E, was created to advise the Legislature, the Governor and state agencies on the State's shortage of essential support workers, people who provide care and support to older adults, people with physical and intellectual disabilities, and those with behavioral health challenges. The Committee was not convened until 2022, and only met once that year. Thus, the Committee only started its work in earnest in 2023. In 2024 the Committee notably achieved supporting one-time funding to Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO) to do an inventory of available data to address the "care gap" as well as supporting the omnibus bill to ensure the creation of a Universal Standardized Core Curriculum & Credentialing Stakeholder Group. Throughout 2025 these efforts came to fruition as detailed below.

2025 Executive Summary

The primary duties of the Committee are to examine staffing level needs and monitor worker shortages to examine if efforts to promote these jobs and recruit and retain workers in this field have been successful. And then, based on this information, make recommendations to all levels of state government on improving recruitment and retention.

The Committee continued its work to deepen the understanding of the impacts of the tight labor market across essential support worker sectors. Throughout 2025 the Committee learned about mechanisms to address the essential care workforce and the impacts of the gap on the State economy. The Committee learned that the care gap in Maine (the gap between those who are eligible for care and support through MaineCare or state funded programs and those who are getting that care) is growing significantly for older people entitled to care, and that this data is not available for other populations. The Committee determined that the best way to measure growth in the essential support workforce is to measure the gap in care year over year.

At the height of the legislative season, the Committee issued recommendations as a result of the special meeting:

1. Raise the labor portion of the state's reimbursement rate for supports and services provided by essential support workers under MaineCare or state-funded programs to a competitive rate of pay to ensure growth in this workforce.
2. Require Maine's Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) to designate a technology implementation lead and to produce a plan by October 15, 2026 with strong stakeholder involvement to advance the use of technology to assist in reducing the care gap that exists in Maine.
3. Create a Standardized Core Foundational Curriculum that is consistent throughout the state, across populations served, and regardless of where services are delivered; and ensure the training is available frequently enough to reduce training wait times.
4. Require the Legislature to commission a report to: a) study the full cost to the state for providing all MaineCare approved services each year in order to budget appropriately to avoid deficits; b) forecast this cost into the future as Maine's population continues to age; c) review utilization data for those not receiving their approved care due to the workforce shortage in order to understand the cost to the state when people cannot obtain lower-cost, in-home care.

Over the course of the remaining meetings throughout 2025, a majority of the Committee developed the following recommendations:

- a. The committee recommends that the Maine Department of Labor and Department of Health and Human Services evaluate the impact of ICE enforcement activities on **essential support** workforce

recruitment and retention, to the extent possible within existing data, as well as on the safety and well-being of individuals receiving services.

- b. The committee recommends that the State & Legislature prioritize its statutory commitment to annual COLAs and rate adjustments to create stability in this workforce. The Committee finds that consistent and predictable COLAs were a key factor in improving workforce stability last year, and that uncertainty regarding future adjustments has created significant challenges for providers and workers, and has had a demonstrable negative impact on the overall workforce.
- c. The committee recommends quantifying the number of workers necessary to deliver all authorized services, in order to ensure adequate workforce planning and resource allocation.
- d. The committee recommends that it be meaningfully engaged by DHHS and MDOL in advising policymaking processes, consistent with its advisory role.

Committee Members

The advisory committee consists of 14 appointed members including:

- A committee seat for a member of the Senate is currently vacant.
- **Representative Flavia DeBrito** from the Maine House of Representatives. Representative DeBrito was appointed by the Speaker of the Maine House.
- **Dan Belyea** from the Maine Community College System, representing an institution of higher education engaged in workforce development, and was appointed by the President of the Senate.
- **Stephanie Capano Hatcher** from Northeast Residential Services, an essential support worker, and was appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- **Donald Dufour** from Spurwink Services, representing an organization providing services to persons with behavioral health challenges who is a member of a statewide association of providers of services to persons with behavioral health challenges, and appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- **Jess Maurer (Chair)** from the Maine Council on Aging, representing a statewide advocacy association that broadly advocates for people who are entitled to receive essential support worker services, and was appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- **Kim Moore** is the designee for the Commissioner of Labor.
- **Tom Newman** from Alpha One, representing an organization promoting independent living for persons with disabilities, and was appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- **Gloria Noyes** from Westbrook CTE, representing a career and technical education center or region, and was appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- **Mary Jane Richards** from North County Associates, representing a facility-based long-term care provider who is a member of a statewide association of facility-based long-term care providers, and was appointed by the President of the Senate.
- **Betsy Sawyer-Manter** from Seniors Plus, representing a service coordination agency for people receiving homebased and community-based long-term care, and was appointed by the President of the Senate.
- **Michael Smith** from Catholic Charities Maine, representing an organization providing statewide homemaker services through a state-funded, independent, support service program, and was appointed by the President of the Senate.
- **Jaime Spencer** is the designee for the Commissioner of Health and Human Services.
- **Catherine Thibedeau (Vice Chair)** from 3Rivers, representing an organization providing services to persons with intellectual disabilities and autism who is a member of a statewide association of providers of services to persons with intellectual disabilities and autism, and was appointed by the President of the Senate.

Staffing

The law provides funding for a part-time labor program specialist position at the Maine Department of Labor and is staffed by Angelina Klouthis Jean, Director of Strategy and Innovation in the Bureau of Employment Services.

Committee Duties and Powers

The advisory committee shall:

- a) Collaborate with MDOL, DHHS, the State's institutions of higher education, the State's adult education programs and career and technical education centers and regions and any other state agencies to examine staffing level needs in the essential support workforce, including entities funded by the State and through the MaineCare program;
- b) Make recommendations to state agencies and the Legislature related to recruitment and retention of essential support workers;
- c) Monitor essential support worker shortages and the expansion of the essential support workforce to examine if actions taken to promote expansion in the essential support workforce have been successful;
- d) Make recommendations to the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Legislature and other state agencies regarding additional research needed to further the expansion of the essential support workforce;
- e) Collect data related to the essential support workforce;
- f) Examine benefit cliff effects on essential support workers and recommend and develop a pilot project to mitigate benefit cliff effects on essential support workers; and
- g) Make recommendations to the Legislature, including any suggested legislation.
- h) Examine and monitor staffing levels, make recommendations on recruitment and retention of essential care workers, including benefit cliff pilot project and data collection efforts.

2025 Meeting Overview

In 2025 the committee held one meeting per quarter including on February 3rd, June 2nd, September 8th, and December 10th as well as one “special meeting” on April 7th. During the scheduled meetings, the chairs invited speakers from the committee, MDOL, DHHS, and partner agencies to provide relevant information. The Chairs ensured that interested parties who were not members of the committee were able to participate during public comment periods. MDOL has established a webpage to make meeting recordings and materials accessible and available (<https://www.maine.gov/labor/eswa/>). The webpage was approved by the committee and launched in November 2023. Over the course of 2025, the webpage has had 336 unique views.

2025 Meeting Summaries

February 3, 2025

The agenda for the February 3rd, 2025 LD 898 meeting included: general updates on appointments, surrogacy, and a vote to present the report at the Health and Human Services Committee.

Featured speakers included:

- Arthur Phillips at MECEP and Paul Saucier from DHHS with an overview of the challenges being faced by providers
- Jaime Spencer from DHHS with a Credentialing update
- Bev Uhlenhake and Renate Scholz providing an introduction to the Maine Association of Personal Care Agencies (MAPCA)
- Nichole Marchesi from Direct Care and Support Professional Advisory Council from Opportunity

Opportunity for public comment was offered. There were 18 members of the public registered to attend. The full meeting recording is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSk0Srh5sEY>

Sector Specific Updates

The Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee convened to discuss key issues affecting the state's direct care and support workforce. The meeting began with introductions and administrative updates, followed by a detailed review of LD 898, the legislation guiding the committee's work. Members discussed the current status of the bill, its implementation challenges, and the committee's role in supporting recruitment, retention, and data collection efforts. Workforce shortages across various care settings were highlighted, with particular attention to regional disparities and barriers to accurate staffing data. A significant portion of the discussion focused on addressing "benefit cliffs," where small salary increases can result in the loss of public benefits, and potential pilot projects were proposed to mitigate these challenges. The committee also explored strategies to strengthen career pathways and credentialing for essential support workers, emphasizing the need for standardized skills, training partnerships, and engagement with educational institutions. Interagency coordination was another key theme, with members considering ways for state agencies and community providers to collaborate more effectively. Public comments underscored real-world challenges faced by providers and workers, including funding, burnout, and regulatory burdens. The meeting concluded with planning for future sessions, including further data collection, stakeholder engagement, and development of recommendations or pilot proposals to inform policy and support the workforce.

Quarterly Updates from DHHS and MDOL

DHHS shared a presentation available in Appendix A.

April 7th, 2025 (SPECIAL MEETING)

A special meeting was called for by the chairs in addition to the regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. The meeting included a brief welcome followed by presentations about Legislative Activity. This included special guests: Arthur Phillips from MECEP provided an overview of FY 26-27 Budget related to COLA and UU language, and Brenda Peluso from the Maine Council on Ageing who provided an overview of the Omnibus Bill. The group invited members of the public for comment and voted on 4 recommendations as action items. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Raise the labor portion of the state's reimbursement rate for supports and services provided by essential support workers under MaineCare or state-funded programs to a competitive rate of pay to ensure growth in this workforce.
2. Require Maine's Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) to designate a technology implementation lead and to produce a plan by October 15, 2026 with strong stakeholder involvement to advance the use of technology to assist in reducing the care gap that exists in Maine.
3. Create a Standardized Core Foundational Curriculum that is consistent throughout the state, across populations served, and regardless of where services are delivered; and ensure the training is available frequently enough to reduce training wait times.
4. Require the Legislature to commission a report to: a) study the full cost to the state for providing all MaineCare approved services each year in order to budget appropriately to avoid deficits; b) forecast this cost into the future as Maine's population continues to age; c) review utilization data for those not receiving their approved care due to the workforce shortage in order to understand the cost to the state when people cannot obtain lower-cost, in-home care.

The full meeting recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSPkT8_C648

June 2, 2025

The agenda for the June 2nd, 2025 LD 898 meeting included three unique topics. This includes: Essential Care Partnership Updates reported by Brenda Peluso from the Maine Council on Aging, Direct Service Worker

curriculum and credentialing Jaime Spencer from DHHS and Brenda Peluso, Careers with Purpose campaign and future plans with that program presented by Jaime Spencer.

The Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee (ESWAC) met on June 2, 2025, to discuss ongoing workforce challenges across long-term care, home- and community-based services, and direct care programs. Members shared updates highlighting the continued lack of cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), stalled or unfunded rate studies across multiple service sections, and the resulting impacts on wages, workforce shortages, and service capacity. Providers reported growing waitlists, reliance on contract staff, difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified workers, and increasing safety concerns related to staff working multiple jobs and extended shifts.

The committee also received updates from the Essential Care Partnership on legislative advocacy efforts, including an omnibus bill carried over to the next session and ongoing work to restore COLAs and fund workforce data collection through LD 977. MDHHS and partner organizations shared progress on direct service worker curriculum and credentialing pilots, as well as recruitment efforts through the Careers with a Purpose campaign, including newly released “day-in-the-life” videos highlighting CNA, PSS, and DSP roles. The meeting concluded with planning for the next session in September, which will feature a presentation from PHI on workforce strategies used in other states.

There were four members of the public in attendance. The full meeting recording is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PUi0x9VgDM>

Quarterly Updates from DHHS and MDOL

DHHS shared a powerpoint presentation available in Appendix B.

September 8th, 2025

The September meeting focused on updates regarding the Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO) and the Department of Labor’s initiatives related to the direct support workforce (DSW). LD977, which was passed and funded in the legislative session, has initiated early-stage work to assess existing data and its potential uses for long-term workforce planning, though completion within the original timeline is unlikely. MHDO is engaging with state departments and advocacy organizations to ensure data collection is designed for maximum utility, including exploring broader issues such as housing for individuals currently in hospitals. The committee also received updates on Maine’s participation in the Direct Care Workforce Strategy Center and other national initiatives, emphasizing career progression, credential portability, and potential specialty training, such as dementia care micro-credentials.

A detailed update was provided on the DSW core curriculum pilot program. The first pilot, launched with private pay agencies due to MaineCare funding constraints, included 89 learners and six certified trainers, achieving a 100% pass rate on online modules and positive feedback on skills demonstrations. A second pilot, with 115 learners, launched in August and is expected to conclude in mid-October. Challenges discussed included policy revisions needed for statewide implementation, strategies for supporting learners without digital access, and consideration of incorporating behavioral health professionals. The committee also explored ways to improve tracking and reporting of unmet care needs, including waitlists for services, with an emphasis on understanding the qualitative impact on individuals not receiving care. Planning for the next meeting includes discussion of enhanced data collection and reporting to better monitor workforce shortages and service gaps. There were five members of the public in attendance. The full meeting recording is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9r89rnTNe0>

Quarterly Updates from DHHS and MDOL

DHHS shared a powerpoint presentation available in Appendix C.

December 10th, 2025

The agenda for the December 10th, 2025 LD 898 meeting included an opportunity to review committee appointments and terms, receive updates on workforce data initiatives, and hear sector-specific reports from providers across long-term care, behavioral health, home- and community-based services, and personal care agencies.

A major focus of the meeting was an update from the Maine Health Data Organization (MHDO) on LD 977, outlining plans to measure the gap between authorized and delivered services using existing claims and administrative data. Committee members emphasized the importance of transparent, granular workforce data to inform policy and investment decisions, noting that workforce shortages remain difficult to address without reliable measurement. Discussion highlighted that funding constraints continue to limit the pace and scope of this work.

Sector updates underscored persistent and worsening workforce challenges statewide, including long waitlists for services, high turnover, reliance on contract labor, rural service closures, and growing safety concerns tied to staffing instability. Providers consistently cited inadequate reimbursement rates and the loss of statutory COLAs as primary drivers of workforce attrition, with particular concern for direct support professionals, CNAs, and behavioral health staff. Additional discussion addressed the impacts of immigration enforcement activity on workforce retention, barriers created by non-crosswalked credentials, and increasing burnout across care settings.

There were twenty-four members of the public in attendance. The full meeting recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_7WxWvjXBc

Quarterly Updates from DHHS and MDOL

Updates from DHHS and MDOL highlighted ongoing recruitment efforts, credentialing pilots, and marketing initiatives, including Careers with a Purpose and Healthcare Training for ME. The meeting concluded with discussion of recommendations for ESWAC's annual report, including prioritizing COLAs, quantifying workforce needs, examining the impact of immigration enforcement on service delivery, and strengthening the committee's advisory role in workforce policy development. MDOL's written update is provided in Appendix D.

Appendices

Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee Update from DHHS on Universal Core Curriculum

February 3, 2025



Curriculum Goals

For the past two years, DHHS has been working with internal and external partners on the Worker Portability and Advancement Initiative.

DHHS has created a base-credential titled the Direct Service Worker (DSW) course based on the prior HRSA-funded work.

The DSW curriculum is to streamline entry to direct care and support across settings and groups of people.

Goal: To provide a base level of training across intellectual disability, brain injury, physical disability and aging service areas that address core competencies endorsed by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The DSW course creates stronger training for those who work with Maine's aging population (currently known as Personal Support Specialists or PSS) and provides needed aging training to Direct Support Professionals (DSP).

Career Pathways of Core Competencies

The department's goal is to launch the DSW course and the updated DSP training **in the second half of 2025**

The department is developing an updated DSP training that elevates the learning and remains in alignment with current training hours.



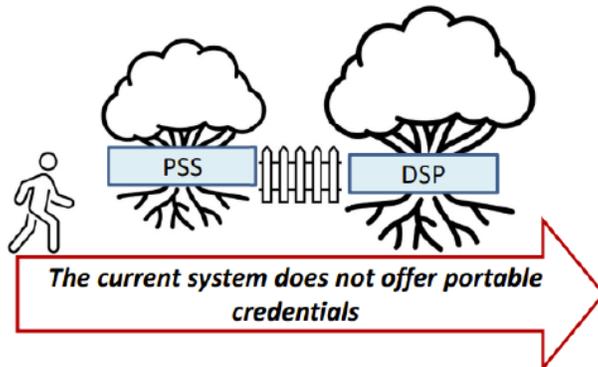
Key Curriculum Considerations

Quality

While previous PSS curriculum was based on CNA textbooks, the new DSW curriculum is based on and aligns with Home and Community Based Services Best practices as outlined by CMS

- Created interactive curriculum with less reading
- Curriculum will be translated to additional languages and American Sign Language
 - Closed captioning and narration provided in every lesson
- Curriculum has been reviewed by national and local subject matter experts, area providers and interested parties

Goal: Portability



The current system does not allow DSW's to easily change the service populations that they serve and the settings in which they work

However, much of the base level training for PSS and DSP staff is similar

Aging/ IDD providers and trainers have expressed frustration that similarities between training credentials are not acknowledged

CMS Core Competencies

1. Communication	7. Empowerment and Advocacy
2. Person-Centered Practices	8. Health and Wellness
3. Evaluation and Observation	9. Community Living Skills and Supports
4. Crisis Prevention and Intervention	10. Community Inclusion and Networking
5. Safety	11. Cultural Competency
6. Professionalism and Ethics	12. Education, Training and Self-Development

DSW Curriculum Structure



12 hours of Online Training

7 Units - each with end of unit quiz
Final exam



8 hours LIVE training

Unit 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Unit 2: Communication Skills and Interpersonal Relationships

Unit 3: Supporting Health and Wellness (including Behavioral Health)

Unit 4: Individual Needs, Rights and Choices

Unit 5: Safety

Unit 6: Documentation

Unit 7: Supporting Activities of Daily Living

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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Learning Platform: Learning Management System

- Units completed in order
- Must pass each quiz (80%) to move on
- Learners will earn Certificate of Completion upon successfully passing final exam (80%)
- After earning certificate of completion, the learner is eligible to perform skills demonstration with trainer



Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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Reviews

The Department has received multiple levels of review. Feedback is critical to creating a strong training program.

Learners will be surveyed for feedback to maintain continuing improvements to the curriculum

National Experts representing Advancing States and PHI have reviewed and provided feedback on the curriculum

The department is working to translate training into ASL and the top 5 New Mainer languages

All trainers and provider agencies were given the opportunity to participate and provide feedback on the DSW course

Discussion

Please reach out to Jaime Brave for any questions on the DSW curriculum work
Jaime.Brave@maine.gov

Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee Update from DHHS on Careers with Purpose Campaign

June 2, 2025



Direct Care and Support Media Campaign

Background

Caring for ME campaign | Build on successes and Opportunities identified:

- Elevate the voice of persons providing the care and support services
- Target different audiences

Outcomes

- Website has received over 203,000 views
- Campaign links to other statewide initiatives, such as Healthcare Training for ME and can connect job seekers to Healthcare Career Consultants.
- Focus on roles in home and community-based services
- New content highlights Behavioral Health roles



Direct Care and Support Media Campaign



“Day in the Life” videos that highlight the important roles of:

Direct Support Professional (DSP)



Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)



Personal Support Specialist (PSS)



These videos offer a realistic look into the rewarding careers in Direct Support.

<https://www.youtube.com/@TheMaineLong-TermCareOmbudsman>

<https://mainecareerswithpurpose.org/stories/>

<https://essentialworkforce.org/2025/05/day-in-the-life-videos-careers-with-a-purpose/>

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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Direct Care and Support Media Campaign



Example of how the “Day in the Life” videos will be shared across multiple platforms, in addition to being hosted on the LTCOP YouTube channel and Careers with Purpose website.

Next Steps

- No new content after June, website will remain functional through December
- Media Library with all content for future recruitment/retention efforts
- New Rural Campaign for recruitment



Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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Discussion

Please reach out to Jaime Spencer for any questions
Jaime.Spencer@maine.gov

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT WORKFORCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE FROM DHHS



September 8, 2025

- LD 977 Resolve, Requiring the Maine Health Data Organization to Develop a Plan for Measuring Gaps in Home and Community-based Services
- NCOA, DCW Strategies Center Participation
- DSW Pilot Update

STATE ADVANCEMENT LAB (SAL) MAINE'S FOCUS ON CAREER PROGRESSION

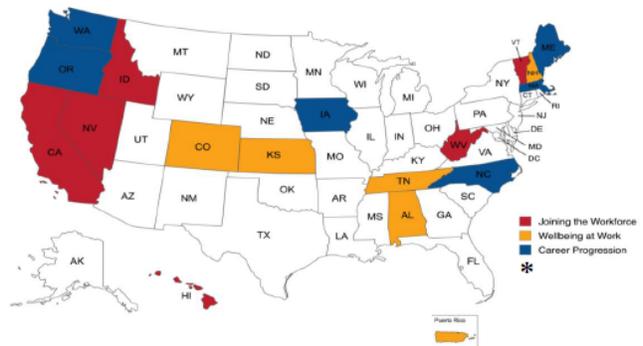


Continuation of partnership with DCW strategy center's 2024 PLC, peer cohort focused on cross-systems change Technical Assistance program from subject matter experts

- Jake MacDonald, PHI

2025 cohorts focus on three core themes:

- Career progression
- Joining the workforce
- Wellbeing at work



GOALS OF PARTICIPATION



Maine's Career Progression Focus:

- Directly builds upon Maine's existing work through the Direct Service Worker (DSW) Core Curriculum and the forthcoming Direct Support Professional (DSP) add-on credentials.
- Emphasizes strategies to strengthen long-term career development and workforce stability.
- Supports the creation of specialized tracks that recognize areas of expertise and enhance the portability of credentials across care settings.
- Aligns with current discussions on micro-credentials in dementia care, which demonstrate potential for specialty training and credential stacking.

Currently in Discovery Process- Completed first meeting as cohort and Introductory call with SME, Jake

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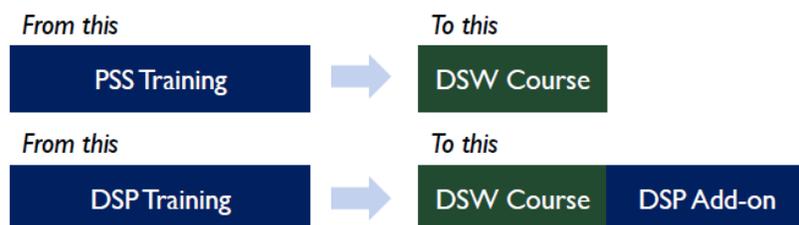
DIRECT SERVICE WORKER (DSW) CORE CURRICULUM

Career Pathways of Core Competencies

The DSW Course is complete and is hosted in the LMS at USM.

Translation in 5 top new Mainer languages is complete and ASL interpretation project is underway.

DSP training add-on is currently under development. It is anticipated that opportunities for review and to provide feedback will be available this fall.



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DSW PILOT PROGRAM

Barrier to implementation due to necessary policy revisions in Sections 19 & 96. Current policy states that PSS trainings must include at least **50** hours of instruction, demonstration and examination.

DSW Pilot program launched to private pay personal care agencies (June 1 – Aug 15)

Workers trained and certified under the pilot will meet the Department's staff training requirements under the PCA licensure.

- 4 private pay agencies
- 6 DSW instructors, certified trainers for DSW course through DLC
- 89 learners enrolled in the launch of the pilot



Online modules: 12 hours

100% pass rate



Live Skills Demonstration: <8 hours

Rubric for each skill, outlining critical steps

Recommended list of equipment, time estimates and activities to demonstrate competency

Checklist and demonstrations are foundational skills based on requirements for both PSS and DSP

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DSW PILOT PROGRAM

67 learners have completed the DSW core curriculum training pilot.



Certifications are listed in the State ALMS database and can be found on DLC's website

@<https://www.pfr.maine.gov/ALMSOnline/ALMSQuery/SearchIndividual.aspx>

Adding to the DSW workforce

DSW certified trainers can continue to use the DSW core curriculum

New hires to the pilot agencies are being enrolled to the DSW course

16 new learners added last week



Pilot #2 launched (Aug 1- Oct 15)

- 5 private pay agencies
- 115 learners enrolled

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- Please reach out to Jaime Spencer @ Jaime.Spencer@Maine.gov with any questions

DHHS UPDATE SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

Appendix D: MDOL Written Memo December 10, 2025



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
54 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0055

Laura A. Fortman
COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Essential Support Workforce Advisory Committee
FROM: Maine Department of Labor
DATE: December 10, 2025
RE: Quarterly Updates to the Advisory Committee (LD 898) Regarding Efforts to Expand the State's Essential Support Workforce

DOL and DHHS are working closely with the Department of Education (DOE), Maine Community College System (MCCS) and the University of Maine System (UMS) partners to coordinate a centralized approach to healthcare training opportunities and training funding via [Healthcare Training For ME](#) (launched in April 2022). The Healthcare Training for ME website has had 63,000+ views since launch. The funding that launched the website supported training opportunities for employers and jobseekers using a combination of approximately \$7 million in "Tuition Remission" program funding from the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan as well as MCCS funding.

The Tuition Remission program has funded more than 1,645 healthcare workers. Participants included in this training opportunity have until December 2026 to complete training programs. At this point in time 73% have completed their training programs to be upskilled, 8% are in-progress, and 15% did not complete the training program. Among the participants who have exited the program more than 2 quarters ago, 89% remain employed in Maine and more than 64% are experiencing wage gain.

The funding notable for this committee supported: 297 Certified Nursing Assistants, 173 Mental Health Rehabilitation Technicians (MHRT), 144 Rehabilitation Counselors (ACRE), 128 Licensed Practical Nurses, 99 Certified Residential Medication Aides (CRMA), 70 Personal Support Specialists, 46 Registered Nurses, 5 Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors, and 1 Certified Clinical Supervisor, representing approximately 58% of the trainings funded with this resource.

DHHS, DOL and DOE continue to collaborate on a number of workforce development initiatives beyond Healthcare Training for ME including:

Healthcare Navigator CareerCenter Consultants

Supported by Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan funding, DOL hired two full-time CareerCenter Counselors with expertise in healthcare to assist individuals statewide interested in healthcare careers get connected to training and job opportunities. Since the inception of the Maine Jobs Plan, these CareerCenter Counselors have worked with individuals who are referred from a variety of sources, including the Caring For ME/ Careers with Purpose campaign. As of December 5th, 2025 the Healthcare Navigators have served more than 758 customers

representing every county in Maine. They have notably worked with community members with a variety of barriers including 101 people with a disability, 37 people with a history of substance abuse, and 194 people with a high school degree or less. 24% of all clients served by a Healthcare Navigator have been further enrolled in a workforce training program. A

Many leads for the Healthcare Navigators come from the marketing efforts of Caring for ME/ Careers with Purpose. The new marketing efforts with Careers with Purpose began in July 2024, which accounted for 34% of all leads while ads were boosted for direct care positions.

Day In The Life Videos

On December 1, 2024, the Department of Labor contracted with Broadreach Public Relations and the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) to create "Day in The Life" videos. A video for Certified Nursing Assistant, Direct Support Professional, and Personal Support Specialist were created based upon employer feedback about which careers would be most meaningful to them as a recruitment tool.

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6jmf7nNDXE>

Personal Support Specialist (PSS): <https://youtube/Oep7f2VZgi4?si=L9NUwND0snCmF9IV>

Direct Support Professional (DSP) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndX32IKatw0&t=7s>

The videos were posted and promoted through the following channels: The YouTube channel for The Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, On Maine Careers with Purpose website and its Facebook and Instagram channels. An "Employer Resource Guide" has been shared both online and in-person to members of the LTCOP, in-person events and online promotion efforts.

The videos were viewed statewide by employers, current and prospective job applicants, as well as community organizations that serve as centers of influence. 142,331 people have viewed the videos, and that number will continue to grow as the content is evergreen and possible for employers to use long term for onboarding.