

# OUR CARE CAN'T WAIT



## ISSUE

### **Idaho's Direct Care Workforce is in Crisis!**

Many Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) providers cannot find the workers they need to provide essential services and support to seniors and people with disabilities. The Direct Care workforce is essential to empowering people with disabilities to live, work, and play in the communities of their choice.

**Idaho is about 3,000 workers, or 13%, short of national staffing levels\***



## TALKING POINTS

- The workforce shortage impacts all parts of Idaho's economy, people with disabilities, seniors, families of children with special health care needs, and HCBS providers.
- Idahoans with disabilities and seniors are going without critical support and services because of a lack of staff. This puts people who need these services at serious health risk and homelessness.
- Without qualified staff families often leave jobs impacting their livelihood, retirement, and benefits.



## TALKING POINTS

- Direct Care workers need a livable wage. The OPE reported a current average wage of \$14.\*
- The average living wage in Idaho for a single person with no kids is \$21.33.\*\*
- Provider rates need to be reviewed each year for cost of living increases.
- Provider agencies report a 30% average in staffing vacancies and overtime makes up 15-20% of payroll.\*\*

**Low pay, lack of training related to inadequate rates, complicated systems, and retention efforts have led to a crisis-level workforce shortage.**



## SOLUTION

**Please educate your legislators on the importance of Direct Care Workers in your life. Idaho needs to value the role of the Direct Care workforce by paying a livable wage, including benefits, and providing more training to advance in their career.**



### **Medicaid needs to build capacity to address the crisis**

- The Office of Performance Evaluation's (OPE) report on the Sustainability of Idaho's Direct Care Workforce outlines five (5) recommendations to address the workforce crisis and put Idaho on the path of creating a sustainable direct-care workforce.
- Medicaid does not have the staff to review and implement these recommendations.

**The Idaho Legislature needs to fund Medicaid staff!**

\*Sources: [Office of Performance Evaluation 2022 Report](#)

\*\*Idaho Association of Care Provider Survey 2023

\*\*\*<https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/16>

**Our Care Can't Wait, is a coalition of people with disabilities, families, disability advocacy organizations and HCBS provider agencies working to ensure people with disabilities and families have a well-qualified, reliable workforce that meets their needs to live the life they choose.**

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