
NEWS

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PHCA President Says New U.S. Dept of Labor Grant Will Help Strengthen PA's, Nation's Long Term Care Workforce *Creating Best Practice Models for Building Long Term Care Workforce a Key Goal*

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Health Care Association (PHCA) today applauded the U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) announcement that the American Health Care Association's (AHCA) National Foundation for the Advancement of Elder and Disabled Care in America is the recipient of a \$113,000 grant to fund research on the long term care workforce shortage.

Alan G. Rosenbloom, President and CEO of PHCA, and Treasurer of AHCA's National Foundation, said this federal grant can help establish a foundation upon which to help Pennsylvania and other states suffering from chronic long term care workforce shortages.

"In the final analysis, efforts to revitalize and strengthen our long term care workforce will help us continue the progress we are making to improve care quality in nursing homes throughout the Commonwealth, and across the nation," said Rosenbloom. "I am honored to serve on this important national effort, and we intend to develop an innovative program to improve recruitment efforts for long-term health care jobs."

Rosenbloom said the Foundation will develop an infrastructure of "Best Practice" models for building a long term care workforce that can then be expanded and replicated at the state and local levels. The grant also will fund the development of a practical "How To" book on building partnerships to combat the long term care workforce crisis.

The PHCA President and CEO pointed out that many staffing trends in the Commonwealth are dangerous, and noted a Pennsylvania Department of Health report that found less than 10 percent of nurses in nursing homes are between the age of 20 and 34 -- and that almost 30 percent of registered nurses (RNs) under the age of 35 are planning to leave the field of nursing in the next 10 years. Nationally, he noted, a recent workforce study by the American Health Care Association (AHCA) found approximately 100,000 long term care jobs must be filled immediately -- just to meet current demand for care.

"In economic terms, we have a worsening supply and demand problem: more Americans are entering retirement with fewer and fewer nursing staff available to provide care," continued Rosenbloom. "We need to focus upon public policy initiatives directed towards recruiting, training and retaining our skilled nursing workforce -- especially the key frontline caregivers who provide as much as 80 percent of direct patient care."

The federal grant is one of 19 totaling \$25 million that the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration will disperse during this first phase of the DoL's High Growth Job Training Initiative.

PHCA is a statewide membership services organization representing more than 325 long-term care and senior service providers throughout the Commonwealth. Additional information about PHCA is available by calling 717-221-1800 or visiting www.phca.org.

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