

National Core Indicators® Releases New Report on Aging and Disability Workforce

Report Reveals Promising Trends in Aging and Disability Direct Service Workforce

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National Core Indicators—Aging & Disabilities (NCI-AD®) has released the [2023 NCI State of the Workforce for Aging and Disabilities Report](#)—the most comprehensive data on provider agencies and the Direct Service Workers (DSWs) who support the aging and physical disability population (AD population).



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National Core Indicators - IDD logo

This year's report offers encouraging signs amid continued workforce challenges, highlighting data collected from 1,232 provider agencies representing 88,855 DSWs across six states:

Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Oregon, and Wisconsin.



We are excited to support states to use the data in new and innovative ways to uplift, promote, and recognize the DSW workforce and providers for the critical work that they do.”

Dorothy Hiersteiner, Co-Director of National Core Indicators

SOME KEY FINDINGS:

- Wages are rising: In 2023, the median hourly wage for DSWs was \$16.00, with 97% of providers paying above the state minimum wage. Meanwhile, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who support adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) earned an median of \$17.20 per hour, according to the 2023 National Core Indicators State of the Workforce for IDD Report (available here: <https://shorturl.at/BMmsR>).
- Turnover is trending down: The weighted average turnover ratio among DSWs was 47.8%. In two states that

also participated in the 2022 survey, turnover dropped considerably in 2023.

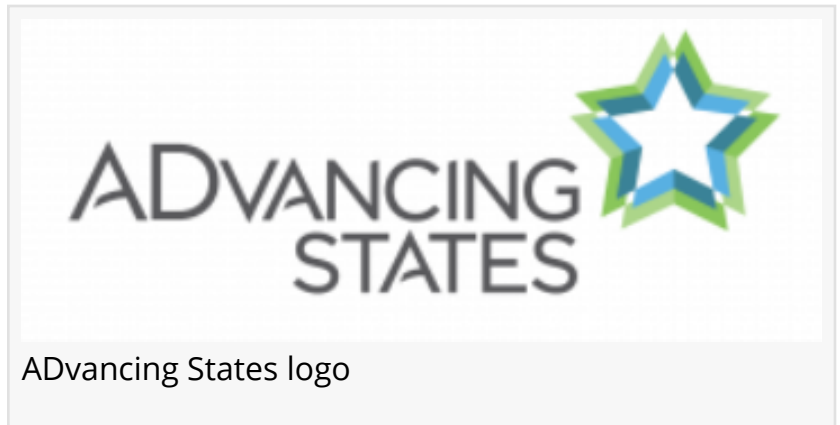
- Fewer referrals are being turned away: Staffing shortages continue to strain providers, yet only 28.8% of AD agencies reported turning away or halting new referrals in 2023.

- Organizational trends differ: Agencies supporting the AD population are far more likely to be private, for-profit organizations (83.8%), compared to 59.0% for IDD agencies. Nonprofit models dominate the IDD space, with 36.1% of agencies classified as nonprofit compared to just 11.8% for AD.

- Benefit offerings vary: Just over half (55.1%) of AD providers offer paid time

off to some or all DSWs, compared to 75.9% of IDD providers. The report also breaks down access to other key benefits like health insurance and retirement plans.

- Innovative recruitment and retention strategies: Agencies are exploring a range of workforce solutions—from realistic job previews and apprenticeship programs to training credentials and hiring bonuses.



NEXT STEPS

State AD agencies have worked tirelessly to address the ongoing workforce shortages for DSWs, and these data suggest slight but hopeful trends in key indicators. Participating provider agencies responded in large numbers to provide current, timely, and critical data on their workforce.

“The release of the NCI State of the Workforce for Aging and Disabilities represents an important and timely opportunity for state systems to examine their direct service workforce, compare to other states, and contrast with data on the workforce supporting adults with IDD,” said Dorothy Hiersteiner, Co-Director of National Core Indicators (NCI). “Though the data show positive trends, we know that direct service workers continue to face challenges inside and outside of the workplace and providers incur costs and stress due to high workforce instability. We are excited to support states to use the data in new and innovative ways to uplift, promote, and recognize the DSW workforce and providers for the critical work that they do.”

As project partners, Human Services Research Institute and ADvancing States will collaborate with state leaders to translate these findings into strategies that strengthen service delivery systems, ensuring DSWs receive the recognition and support they deserve for their essential role in supporting the AD population.

To read the full report, please go to: 2023 NCI State of the Workforce for Aging and Disabilities Survey Report or view a summary, [At a Glance: 2023 NCI State of the Workforce for Aging and Disabilities](#).

ABOUT NCI-AD

The NCI-AD is an initiative designed to support states’ interest in assessing the performance of

their publicly funded long term service and supports programs and delivery systems to improve services for older adults and individuals with physical disabilities. NCI-AD is a collaborative effort between ADvancing States (formerly NASUAD) and HSRI. NCI-AD's primary aim is to collect and maintain valid and reliable data that gives states a broad view of how publicly funded services are associated with the quality of life and outcomes of service recipients.

For more information about NCI-AD and its work, please visit <https://nci-ad.org/>.

For more information about ADvancing States and its work, please visit www.advancingstates.org.

For more information about Human Services Research Institute and its work, please visit www.hsri.org.

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