

The Good Jobs Code Workshop – feedback

11/16/2016

Narrative

The Good Jobs Code workshop presented on the State of Direct Care in New Mexico and the US. Participants discussed how to ‘Raise the Floor’ on wages and conditions, ‘Build the Ladder’ for career advancement and improve quality of care for clients and patients.

When it came to raising the floor, participants emphasized the need to create good paying jobs with benefits such as sick time, workers’ compensation and a helpline for caregivers’ who need a second opinion. There is a need for all employers to comply with the recent Supreme Court decision guaranteeing minimum wage and overtime pay for all caregivers. One participant commented, “Good practices promote better employers and better workers, in turn,” while it was acknowledged that, “Raising wages is hard because it bumps up against public funds.” Improving safety on the job was important, along with reducing the stigma of caregiving. Support groups for family caregivers is another important support to raise the floor. Training, certification, regular schedules and placement were also discussed. On placement, it was noted, “When you know the strengths of caregivers and clients, then you know where to place them.”

In order to ‘build the ladder’, the need for education, training and continuing education was stressed. This included the need to include behavioral health training and De-escalation protocols, rather than solely focusing on physical disability. This in turn should lead to the promotion of career development and advancement with growing standardization and regularization. Other training needs identified included financial literacy for direct care workers. The SUNPATH grant program was shared as a potential resource to leverage.

There was a recognition that taking care of caregivers as outlined above would pay off in terms of the quality of care. “When you are cared for as an individual, ‘you care’.” Improving safe spaces for caregivers and patients alike leads to fewer injuries. It is expected that good jobs conditions such as safety, transparency and clear and timely communication should reduce turnover. Moral and stress management support was also noted as a key to improving quality of care.

Quotes

“A Good Jobs Code for any group of workers makes it a “profession” in the eyes of the public and the worker”

“Our group said to alphabetize the Principles of the Code and then state that the Principles are indivisible.”

“Good practices promote better employers, and better workers in turn”

Raising the Floor

1. **Wages x2**
 - a. **DOL new rule – increased wages**
 - b. **Incentives** to cover hard-to-fill positions
 - c. “Raising wages is hard because it bumps up against public funds”
2. **Benefits for independent contractors x2**
 - a. **Sick pay**

- b. **Workers' compensation**
 - c. **Helpline - for problem-solving in job situations**
- 3. **Safety x2**
- 4. **Support groups x2**
 - a. For family caregivers;
 - b. For stressful situations
 - c. Moral support
- 5. **Reduce stigma** for caregivers - **x2** via training and a professional Code.
- 6. **Regular schedules**
- 7. **Equity & Shared Responsibility**
- 8. **Training/Certification** (see below)
- 9. **Selecting people to work with** "When you know the strengths of caregivers and clients, then you know where to place them."
- 10. **Job creation**

Building the Ladder

- 1. **Education/training/Continuing or ongoing ed. x5**
 - a. **For family and paraprofessional caregivers**
 - b. **Areas of specialization**
 - i. **Behavioral health training/ De-escalation process** - not just training for physical conditions
 - c. **Promote career development/advancement/credentialing/certifications x2**
 - i. Standardized
 - ii. Mandatory for all caregivers
 - iii. Progression to advanced titles (CAN→nurse, dr. etc.)
 - d. **Financial literacy**
 - e. **Sunpath Grant** – community colleges – could lead to community outreach

Improving Quality of Care

- 1. "When you are cared for as an individual, 'you care'"
- 2. **Safety** - Creating a safe place for caregivers and patients; fewer injuries to both client and caregiver. X2
- 3. **Reduces turnover**
- 4. **Transparency** between case managers and workers
- 5. **Timeframe when communicating**; not waiting months to mention ongoing issues
- 6. **Recognize individual strengths.**
 - a. "When you know the strengths of caregivers and clients, then you know where to place them."
- 7. **Support** for stressful situations, moral support
- 8. **Education/Training** –
 - a. financial,
 - b. learning about other areas of care
- 9. **Pay, benefits, sick pay**
- 10. **Access to more work choices**

Implementation/Enforcement

11. Registry

- a. Statewide
- b. Implement registry of **backup caregivers – emergency system.**

12. A nonprofit consortium to:

- **Monitor patients' property**
- Provide and monitor mandatory background checks of independent contractors.
- **Provide backup**
- **Provide bonding**
- **Benefits**
- **Training/certification**
- Advocacy with legislature
- Employer buy-in
- Statewide

Ranking exercise

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Avg	Rounded	Reorder	
Safety	1	1	4	1	1.75	2	Safety	1
Stability & Flexibility	3	3	5	1	3	3	Growth & Development	2
Transparency	2	6	6	1	3.75	4	Equity & Shared Prosperity (more money)	2
Equity & Shared Prosperity (more money)	6	2	3	1	3	3	Inclusion & Input	2
Inclusion & Input	4	5	2	1	3	3	Stability & Flexibility	2
Growth & Development	5	4	1	1	2.75	3	Transparency	3

Note: Two groups recommended against ranking, stating these elements should remain indivisible.