**OHIO HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION**

**WORKFORCE COMMITTEE**

**November 8, 2021, 1:00 p.m.**

**Zoom Conference Call**

**312-626-6799 Meeting Number 86029392232 Passcode 2021**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Chair John Goodman opened the meeting and welcomed committee members. He pointed to the antitrust, conflict of interest and confidentiality policies located in the online folder. Next he asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October meeting. John Jones moved to approved, followed by a second by Jeremy Monroe. Ms. Erin Begin asked that attendees who called in to please send their attendance via email. Attendance is recorded in a chart at the bottom of the meeting minutes.

Mr. Goodman first invited Mr. Pete Van Runkle to discuss the Vaccine Mandates. Both the OSHA and CMS Rules on Vaccination have been released. The OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) is very broad, applicable to all employer types that have more than 100 employees. It includes a testing/masking option for those who choose not to become vaccinated. The CMS mandate is more finite, covering only healthcare providers who are regulated by federal conditions/requirements of participation and participate in the Medicare program. This includes many of our member categories but not all. The OSHA mandate also includes a provision that excludes providers that are currently covered by the previous OSHA ETS for healthcare issued in June 2021. Both mandate rules have a 60 implementation period for compliance (where staff members must be fully vaccinated). While the interim final rule does allow for comments, commenting will not impact implementation. There is already various litigation involving the Federal worker and OSHA ETS vaccine mandates, including one from Ohio. There is only one state that has filed litigation involving the CMS mandate. Due to a lawsuit in Louisiana, the OSHA mandate has a current stay pending litigation.

Mr. Van Runkle quickly moved to the topic of staffing agencies. OHCA is aware of the incredible burden the surge pricing on staffing from agency providers for our members. We are approaching this issue with amendments for legislation. There is currently a bill, not developed by OHCA, to regulate the staffing agencies. We are strategically positioning our legislation for the best chance for success and continue to work on that effort. Mr. Van Runkle asked if committee members had any questions on those two topics. One committee member asked if OHCA would provide policies towards religious exemptions. Mr. Van Runkle noted that two examples, one from the CMS mandate for federal workers and one from the EEOC, are available on religious exemptions; but that staff had determined they were not the most appropriate options for our members. OHCA would not be developing a policy for our members to follow, and employers should develop these policies dependent on the mandate that applies to your organization. Another member asked if ODH would enforce through survey. Mr. Van Runkle responded that the CMS language indicated this would be the method for enforcement, and OHCA would continue to follow up with ODH.

Chair Goodman invited Ms. Begin to discuss current Grant options OHCA has become aware of.

Ms. Begin then discussed the CDC Grant for Nursing Home strike force teams. Ohio was awarded a total of $27 million, to be used between SNF and other long term care providers, according to Director Ursel McElroy. This would include Residential Care facilities and ICFs. Required activities include offer technical assistance to support effective implementation of practices to prevent COVID transmission, and/or support outbreaks. Optional activities include supplying resources, providing infrastructure support. For optional, OHCA suggested infrastructure support in the format of scholarship or loan forgiveness programs for long term care workers and campaigns for long term care worker recruitment. For required activities, Regulatory committee suggested Regional Infection Prevention trainers who will provide in-person training for new hires and facility staff. In the information provided by the CDC, there is an example in Texas of this occurring. It seems that the state would need to work with QIO/QIN to identify trainers. Another suggestion for the use of the funds was to create a reimbursement mechanism for technology supported screening systems in every building. Also under required activities, an example listed is developing strategies to retain, support or expand existing staff to prevent shortages in LTC. Ms. Begin asked the committee to provide feedback on what they felt the best use of these funds would be. Committee members responded that student loan forgiveness would be the best tuition support option. Deanna Hatfield added that we should attempt to direct those dollars to create career pathways, such as scholarships or loan forgiveness for current STNAs that become LPNs. Ms. Begin asked that additional ideas and suggestions be sent to her for submission to ODA for OHCAs recommendations on the use of the funds. A question was asked about the private portion of the CDC grant. Ms. Begin explained that there was an additional $800 million that would be available for healthcare partners to develop new prevention interventions and capacities, control training, data collection and technical assistance, but the information and requirements were not yet available. Grant information should become available in January 2022. OHCA would continue to research this opportunity.

Building on the topic of workforce investment, Ms. Begin discussed the current Build Back Better Act which included Nursing Home Worker Training Grants. In its current form, which has not yet been passed, $1.2 billion dollars is being proposed for eligible settings (including Home health, hospice, SNFs, ODA waiver services, ALF and ICF). Funds awarded to states must be used to provide wage subsidies, student loan repayment/tuition assistance, guarantee affordable childcare or assist with transportation. States can also use the funds to reserve an emergency fund, provide legal assistance to remove employment barriers, offer 2 weeks paid leave, and for the purpose of recruitment/retention of new workers. Debbie Jenkins asked if all of these funds would go to the states, which Ms. Begin confirmed. Ms. Begin also briefly discussed the Apprentice Ohio program, which required further research. Upon first review, it appears that there are many requirements for the worker falling into certain geographic or socioeconomic categories.

Next, Chair Goodman invited Debbie Jenkins to provide an update on the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) Workforce Committee activities. Ms Jenkins reviewed the two waivers regarding age and GED requirements for DSPs discussed on the last call. She then reviewed several items currently under development with the group. These included prioritization of the Direct Support Professional (DSP) on the Ohio Means Jobs website, separate from the home health aide listings; DODD changing compliance reviews to allow for in person options; increases in both IDDD Waiver and ICF rates effective January 1, 2022; revisions to the on-site on-call program; development of a technology first rule, which would create a rapid response portal for requesting technology that would reduce reliance on staffing; revision of the Ohio HCBS ARPA plan to focus on expenditures for providers and services instead of program and system enhancements; creation of a crisis service plan that would outline the minimum services needed to protect the health and safety of the individual in times of a staffing crisis; reducing or amending the medication aide training requirements; and regulatory changes for ICFs that would allow for emergency relocation during a staffing crisis. Ms. Jenkins noted that these were just a few examples of the more than 50 action items the workforce committee was working on currently.

Ms. Begin then discussed the topic of Immigration and Refugee Resettlement programs. In our last meeting, we discussed the long process of immigration and the shorter process of obtaining refugee resettlement workers. Committee members asked for more direct instruction on how to work with the resettlement centers to obtain workers. A committee member shared that he was unable to get anywhere with his local office in Hamilton County. Debbie Jenkins stated that she hoped to connect with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services on this issue, as language barriers and remote working may be making it more difficult to connect with the relocation centers. Ms Begin stated that OHCA would prioritize this for the next meeting.

Next Ms. Begin discussed continuing efforts from OHCA on expanding access to high school career centers that offer LPN training. She pointed to a spreadsheet in the folder summarizing rule revisions currently under review for both the LPN training requirements as well as the STNA training requirements. OHCA has found that there are 5 career centers that offer LPN in high school and 25 that are approved but only offer adult. Various others work with local community colleges for accelerated placement or college learning options. OHCA has met with the career centers which offer these programs as well as the Ohio Association for Career Technical Education (OACTE) to understand barriers to offering this program in high schools. The main barriers identified are finding instructors, mitigating startup costs and obtaining cooperation from the feeder schools to send students. OHCA is looking towards ARPA dollars with the administration for the funding related issues and is working with the Ohio Nurses Association and Board of Nursing on possible rule revisions to assist with barriers related to obtaining instructors. On the STNA program, the 5 year rule review will begin soon. Steve Boymel asked when that would occur, Mandy Smith responded that it should be at the start of 2022 and she would follow up. OHCA hopes to reduce the requirements to align with industry standards or federal minimum. This includes reducing the NATCEP pass rate to 70%, increasing class rations to 1:10 from 1:8, allowing for remote learning and reducing long term care experience of instructors to 1 year. Nicole Breving asked to keep under consideration minor laws which may prevent minors from performing certain tasks.

Mandy Smith then discussed social media options for recruitment from AHCA involving TikTok. Providers which presented on this method reported great success. They used strategies such as using top hashtags. John Jones stated that his Organization would be starting a TikTok campaign very soon and would be incorporating residents. Committee members asked for the TikTok handle of the presenting provider. Mandy Smith responded it was Rehab Select of Albertville. Ms. Begin stated that she would send the link to the handle with the meeting minutes.

Ms. Begin then discussed the upcoming Workforce Summit on January 24 and 25 and requested ideas from committee members. She pointed to both operationalizing medication aides and immigration employment as previously noted topics. Committee members also suggested considerations for the Vaccine Mandate, Dealing with Burn Out, and Currently Effective Recruitment strategies. Ms. Begin asked that if other committee members thought of additional ideas, to send them to her via email.

Since the meeting ran over time, Chair Goodman then moved to adjourn the meeting.

Next meeting:

December 13, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

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| **First Name** | **Last Name** | **Nov-08** |
| Amy | Allen | P |
| Andrew | Austin |  |
| Erin | Begin | P |
| Brandi | Body | P |
| Tammy | Bonifas | P |
| Steve | Boymel | P |
| Nicole | Breving | P |
| Jamie | Brose | P |
| Nathan | Carder |  |
| Kathy | Chapman | P |
| Joe | Chesney |  |
| Tiffaney | Closson | P |
| Angena | Collier |  |
| Pam | Cooke | P |
| Melissa | Courtock | P |
| Diane | Dietz |  |
| Nancy | Erwin | P |
| Cayleigh | Esterly |  |
| Ken | Fetterman |  |
| John | Goodman | P |
| Alana | Griffin |  |
| Deanna | Hatfield | P |
| Jill | Herron | P |
| Brenda | Honigford |  |
| Judy | Howell |  |
| Eric | Hutchins |  |
| Debbie | Jenkins | P |
| Brandi | Johnson | P |
| John | Jones | P |
| Gina | Kerman |  |
| Eileen | Kilbane | P |
| Renee | Kinder |  |
| Brian | Kinzer | P |
| Karen | Knavel | P |
| Kelsey | Knisley | P |
| Eitan | Laghaie | P |
| Joan | Longhin-Howard | P |
| Heidi | McCoy | P |
| Brenda | Milanczuk |  |
| Steve | Miller | P |
| Jeremy | Monroe | P |
| Bridgett | Mundy | P |
| Shelly | Orlowski |  |
| Rob | Pivonka |  |
| Tom | Rickels | P |
| Melanie | Rittenour |  |
| Mark | Schlater |  |
| Carol | Slight | P |
| Mandy | Smith | P |
| Nicole | Sprenger | P |
| Michael | Tenenbaum |  |
| Pete | Van Runkle | P |
| Aubrey | Varner | P |