**OHIO HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION WORKFORCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**November 13, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**

Erin Hart opened the meeting welcoming committee members to the call. Chair John Goodman is absent today. She pointed to the OHCA Antitrust Compliance, Conflict of Interest, and Confidentiality Policies in the meeting folder. She also stated that the minutes were not in the folder this month, and approval for October minutes would be addressed during the December meeting. Attendance for this meeting can be found at the bottom of this document.

Ms. Hart invited Pete Van Runkle to discuss the Public Policy agenda. First, Mr. Van Runkle informed committee members that the CMS Minimum Staffing Rule comment period had now closed, and he thanked the committee members who submitted comments on this issue. Thousands of comments were received by CMS, and they will address issues and concerns raised by commenters in the final rule. OHCA comments, included in the online folder, were submitted from the various perspectives of our member categories and focused on the cost and availability of workforce. AHCA expects that CMS will finalize the rule between April and June of 2024, with an implementation period to follow. AHCA is also preparing congressional strategies to fight the rule as well as a legal strategy, if necessary.

Next, Mr. Van Runkle discussed the Legislative agenda for the Ohio legislature. There is a short window until the end of the year that legislation could move. OHCA is in the process of revamping our previous Workforce Amendment that did not make it into the budget process. This includes regulatory revisions to the Medication Aide training requirements, changing the nomenclature from “STNA” to “CNA” for nursing assistants in Ohio, allowing Quality Improvement projects to include workforce, transferring oversight of the medication aide rules from the Board of Nursing to the Ohio Department of Health, and a new provision allowing all LPNs to be dually certified as STNAs/CNAs as well. This last item is in preparation of possible minimum staffing requirements. Mr. Van Runkle asked if there were any questions or comments on our agenda. Joshua Wallace stated that at the start of the pandemic, when nursing assistants were out due to COVID, facilities were permitted to allow others to operate in the capacity of a CAN. He asked if we could also propose other professionals, such as EMTs, to qualify as nursing assistants. Mr. Van Runkle responded that this is sometimes referred to challenging the exam and we have heard activity on this in other states. OHCA would look into this idea further for consideration for the current workforce amendment in draft form.

Next, Ms. Hart gave a brief update on the proposed changes from the Board of Nursing for the NCLEX pass rates for nursing programs. Since our last meeting, OHCA has learned that the Board of Nursing received considerable push back on these proposed changes, which would revise the penalties for not having the national average more severe. The BON has reportedly walked back these proposals and committed to engaging in larger stakeholder conversations. OHCA will continue to follow this issue and report any concerns to our committee.

Mandy Smith then discussed the second draft of Nursing Facility licensure rules as it relates to workforce. Any facility over 100 beds would require a full time Administrator, which is an increase from the current 16-hour requirement. ODH also proposes to require each facility to have one of its full-time employee designated as an infection preventionist, with 20 hours dedicated each week to infection prevention and control. They are also proposing to include this requirement for Residential Care Facilities. This requirement is more stringent than current federal regulations for skilled nursing facilities. OHCA has submitted comments on these rules and we anticipate that they will not take effect until February 2024 at the earliest. Additionally, Ms. Smith pointed to the updated white paper in the online folder, provided by Rolf, Goffman and Lange. This white paper is applicable to the in-service training requirements for SNF, Assisted Living and ICF providers.

Josh Anderson then provided an update on DODD activities, noting that many of our ID/DD members were attending the Summit today. The ARPA spending plan indicates that DODD will allocate $5 million towards workforce initiatives. OHCA encourages our members to submit ideas for this funding to submit to the department for consideration, as they still have not finalized their plan. Mr. Anderson also reminded members that the last DSP retention payment has been issued. Providers have until December 15th to spend those funds. A number of rate increases in the budget this year take effect on January 1, 2024. A requirement of the rate increases is to allocate the increase towards staff wages.

Ms. Hart then turned to the OHCA workforce roadmap. First, she described a new program partnership opportunity for Central Ohio providers and Columbus State Community College called OHCA Employer Partners in Education. Participating providers would have a sponsored cohort of incoming freshman who would work in their facility while obtaining their LPN license as STNAs. The employer would agree to reimburse their tuition. Employer partners would also be able to have their staff apply for the LPN and RN classes and reimburse for their education through upskilling. We are awaiting confirmation on participation before proceeding. Interested providers should contact Ms. Hart by the end of November.

Next, Ms. Hart discussed Schoolinks, the online platform for employers to post jobs, work-based learning and summer internships to students at Columbus Metropolitan School District and other school districts in Ohio. OHCA will host a webinar tomorrow morning to review the platform. She pointed to the Ohio Work Based Learning Employers Guide in the online folder and suggested that workforce committee members review for possible recruitment of high school students into culinary, housekeeping, PCA and other roles. Ms. Hart noted that through the Pathways module in Cleveland and EdBridge, OHCA had connected HHA and DD members in these opportunities, but no RCF or SNF providers to date. Lastly, Ms. Hart asked if committee members had any success with the TechCred applications for any of our credentials.

Ms. Hart then provided an update on the effort for OHCA to sponsor an LNHA apprenticeship. We are finalizing our application and hope to submit the application by the end of the month. OHCA also applied for a grant from Equus to supplement the reimbursement for each apprentice by $800 per participant, if selected. OHCA is also considering an apprenticeship for STNA to Medication Aide, and a pre-apprenticeship involving Personal Care Aides in RCFs to the STNA apprenticeship program. She noted that interested providers should reach out to participate in development of this program.

Ms. Hart asked the committee if they had any other items. Joshua Wallace thanked Mandy Smith for her assistance with the CAN Online implementation, and reported a 100% pass rate for upskilling their existing staff to STNAs.

Hearing no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting: December 11, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

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| **First Name** | **Last Name** | **11/13/2023** |
| Amy | Caroll | x |
| Ashley | Buga | x |
| Brandi | Johnson | X |
| Brian | Kinzer | X |
| Eileen | Kilbane | X |
| Eric | Hutchins | X |
| Erin | Hart | X |
| Heidi | McCoy | X |
| Jamie | Brose | X |
| Jeremy | Monroe | X |
| Jill | Herron | X |
| John | Dombrowski | X |
| Josh | Anderson | X |
| Joshua | Wallace | X |
| Kelsey | Knisley | X |
| Ken | Fetterman | X |
| Kristi | Stockslager | X |
| Mandy | Smith | X |
| Matthew | Pool | X |
| Melissa | Courtock | X |
| Pete | Van Runkle | X |
| Peter | Lienert | X |
| Rob | Pivonka | X |
| Shawn | Fourman | X |
| Steve | Miller | X |
| Victoria | Barkin | X |