



Workforce Policy Weekly

November 18, 2022

LeadingAge Coronavirus Calls. "I love when Dr. Monica Gandhi appears on your LeadingAge calls!" We hear this whenever Monica joins us, which she will be doing on Monday, November 21 at 3:30 PM ET. Monica Gandhi MD, MPH, Professor of Medicine and Associate Division Chief of the HIV, Infectious Diseases, and Global Medicine at UCSF/ San Francisco General Hospital will talk about what to expect in the fall and will unpack the idea of the "Tripledemic" of Flu, COVID and RSV. She'll talk about her sense that we were "lucky" with the Omicron variants and give us a sightline to endemicity...and of course, answer your questions. No Call on Wednesday November 23. On Monday November 28, Dr. Ali H. Mokdad, Professor of Health Metrics Sciences at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) and Chief Strategy Officer for Population Health at the University of Washington will join us to share new projections for COVID cases going into the fall and winter. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#). You can also find previous call recordings [here](#). Note that to access recordings of the calls you need a LeadingAge password. Any staff member of any LeadingAge member organization can set up a password to access previous calls and other "members only" content.

Action Alert: Urge Your Senators and Representatives to Enact Key Aging Services Workforce Priorities Before Congress Adjourns. On November 15, LeadingAge issued an action alert urging Congress not to adjourn its session without enacting key services and supports for older adults. "In the remaining weeks of 2022, Congress must not leave key supports and services for older adults unfinished. Severe shortages in the aging services workforce and affordable senior housing, coupled with inefficient and burdensome Medicare Advantage (MA) prior authorization processes that often result in inappropriate care denials, mean that older adults do not have access to needed services and supports. Congress can and must take action to address these crises before it adjourns," the alert says. Please urge action on the following proposals that strengthen the aging services workforce:

- Enact the Direct CARE Opportunity Act (S. 2344, H.R. 2999) to provide competitive grants for direct care workforce recruitment, and a wage subsidy.
- Enact the bi-partisan Health Care Workforce Resilience Act (S. 1024, H.R. 2255) to recapture unused employment-based immigrant visas and make them available to 40,000 foreign nurses and doctors.
- Enact the Citizenship for Essential Workers Act (S. 747, H.R. 1909) to create a pathway to citizenship and permanent residency status for aging services workers deemed "essential" during the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Enact a final fiscal year 2023 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill to provide:
 - \$303 million for the Registered Apprenticeship Program;
 - \$10 million for Direct Care Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grants;
 - \$5.7 million for an analysis of the skilled workforce needs of a rapidly aging U.S. population. (HRSA);
 - \$30 million to support activities to prevent burnout and behavioral health conditions among health care providers.

[Read and take action on this alert here](#)

DOL Nursing Expansion Program Funding Opportunity Announcement Amended: The Nursing Career Pathways Track’s Lead Applicants “Affiliation” Requirement Language Removed. On October 11, LeadingAge asked the Department of Labor (DOL) for a clarification on whether the DOL’s Nursing Expansion Grant Program’s Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) requires nonprofit healthcare organizations, who are one of the six eligible lead applicants for the Nursing Career Pathways Track, to be affiliated with hospitals and other medical facilities, for the purposes of the grant program. An affiliation requirement was listed in some places of the FOA. On November 8, DOL issued an [“Amendment to the FOA”](#) which removed the affiliation language, and a revised Section III.A.1. Eligibility Lead Applicants Section of the FOA. Page 22 of the FOA is amended (new language in bold), to state:

- *For the purposes of this FOA, the following six types of entities qualify as eligible lead applicants: Nonprofit healthcare organizations (**this includes community or faith-based organizations, community health centers, and other medical facilities**);*

The FOA also includes clarifying language for the Executive Summary, on eligible lead applicants. All additional program award requirements for the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program are still in place. Eligible lead applicants must establish partnerships with the one of the following required partners: employer partners; education and training providers; workforce development entities; worker organizations; labor-management organization, or labor unions; or State Apprenticeship Agencies. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to collaborate with other optional partners that can support and the work of nurse and nurse education professional training programs. Additionally, they must embed three cross-cutting principles into their program design to ensure meaningful impact on, and benefit to the nursing workforce. The cross-cutting principles are:

1. Strategies for ensuring diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility;
2. Career pathways; and
3. Approaches for Increasing job quality.

DOL has published a “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)” page, which is available online at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities>, under the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program heading. A pre-recorded “Prospective Applicant Webinar” is available online at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/apply/find-opportunities>, under the DOL Nursing Expansion Grant Program heading and available for viewing any time. A LeadingAge article can be found at: <https://leadingage.org/dol-nursing-expansion-grant-program-funding-opportunity-announcement-amended/>

New Employee Retention Credit Explainer. LeadingAge has put together a [one-pager](#) explaining the Employee Retention Credit in consultation, with Attorney Chris Moran from the Venable law firm. This complements the [FAQs](#) and [ERC webinar recording](#) that were previously available. The one-page explainer can help members assess whether the tax credit may be an option for their organization. While the tax credit expired after 2021, eligible members can still take advantage of the credit by filing an amended payroll tax return by April 15, 2024, for the 2020 tax year and April 18, 2025 for the 2021 tax year.

HRSA Updates Nursing Workforce Data Dashboard. HRSA launched a new [nursing workforce dashboard](#). It is based on a long running survey of registered nurses but they’ve reorganized the data into a more usable dashboard format. The dashboard enables users to access 100,000 unique data

points from the survey and visualize the data points which includes demographics, employment, education, earnings, and hours for various categories of nursing (RNs, NPs, and APRNs).

ANCOR Research Finds Direct Care Workforce Crisis Has Detrimental Impact on Access to Community Disability Services. ANCOR's survey, the [State of America's Direct Support Workforce Crisis 2022](#), finds that a significant shortage of direct support professionals (DSPs), the frontline workers supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), has reached catastrophic levels. Over the course of a four-week period beginning in August 2022, ANCOR fielded a survey across its provider network, and found providers are unable to attract and retain DSPs at a rate that, if left unaddressed, has the potential to completely collapse the system of services. ANCOR also highlights the conclusion of one-time federal pandemic relief funding, stagnant Medicaid reimbursement rates, and the inability of providers to offer competitive wages is contributing to the direct support workforce crisis. ANCOR's survey points out the following key findings:

- 83% of providers are turning away new referrals, a 25.8% increase since the beginning of the pandemic.
- 63% of providers are discontinuing programs and services, a staggering 85.3% increase since the beginning of the pandemic.
- 92% of providers are struggling to achieve quality standards, a 33.3% increase since the beginning of the pandemic and a 13.6% increase in the last year alone.
- 71% of case managers are struggling to find available providers, citing difficulty to connect families to long-term services and supports due to lack of available providers.

December Webinar: Creating and Maintaining a Secure Environment. On Wednesday, December 14, LeadingAge will host a webinar exploring ways LeadingAge members can ensure they are taking the proper safety measures to keep staff and residents safe and secure. Join us to learn appropriate controls residential communities should have in place to recognize, assess, and manage security threats. [Learn more and register](#). Note: This webinar is being provided as a follow up to the [June 2022 Active Shooter Preparedness webinar](#).

TED Talk on Psychological Safety at Work. Psychological safety is a key ingredient in healthy teams, and it occurs when a workplace culture holds a safe space for staff to speak up, make mistakes, ask questions, and exist authentically. [Watch this short TED talk from Amy Edmondson](#), Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management at the Harvard Business School, on creating psychological safety at work. She offers three things leaders can do to create this space: Frame the work as a learning problem, not an execution problem, acknowledge your own fallibility, and model curiosity.

Save the Date: Strengthen Aging Services Leadership on Giving Tuesday. Giving Tuesday provides us an opportunity to contribute to causes that matter. One LeadingAge cause that is near and dear to us is developing strong and passionate leaders in our field. [Donate to the Larry Minnix Leadership Development Fund](#) on Giving Tuesday–November 29, 2022.