



# Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging

Workforce Committee Meeting Minutes – March 9, 2020

**Participants:** Tony Tapia (Co-Chair), Teresa Falagradý (Co-Chair), Christian Itin, Karin Stewart, John Zabawa, Andrea Kuwik, Ed Leary, Laura Kinder, Christian Itin, Karen Brown, Natasha Bryant, Robyn Stone, and Jarett Hughes

## Action Items:

- Jarett Hughes to share TCARE, CO-HELPS, and CHI information with Natasha Bryant and Robyn Stone

## Key Takeaways:

- Natasha Bryant and Robyn Stone joined the workforce committee to provide an overview of their work through the Leading Age LTSS Center and coordinated efforts with Hayley Gleason and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)
  - o Leading Age LTSS Center is an applied research group at UMass-Boston and also in Washington DC. This specific conversation revolved around the direct care workforce and efforts to recruit and retain home health aides and other direct care workers
  - o A primary focus is to reduce turnover rates among direct care workers.
  - o Currently, working with HCPF on a data analysis of direct care workers including demographic information, supply/demand, and overlap with family caregivers (i.e. dual caregiving responsibilities)
    - Looking into promising practices for advancing training opportunities as they are widely variable across states – no federal regulations or guidelines
    - Eleven states have established guidelines for training
      - Washington state has the most rigorous training requirements
      - Massachusetts, Maine, and New York have portability for trainings among home health aides and certified nursing assistants
  - o Wrap around social supports for direct care workers are important – partnering with Head Start to provide childcare support is a good example of supporting staff's social needs
  - o In general, unionized direct care workers are better off compared to non-unionized workers. New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, and California are heavily unionized
    - Better wages and benefits and higher retention rate of employees
    - Quality of workplace goes beyond wages – need to create healthy, supportive workplaces
  - o Data shows that not-for-profit agencies have lower turnover rates and improved health outcomes for care recipients
  - o Not much information was available as to whether English as a second language is included as a support services for direct care workers
  - o Report is planned to be finished end of June
  - o It was noted that increased safety measures, and safety training, reduced worker's compensation claims – this was a focal point at Seniors' Resource Center