



# Challenges in Home Health Staffing

Gina Balkus, CEO

Home Care Association of NH

August 23, 2016

Governor's Commission on Healthcare Workforce Shortages

# New Hampshire's Home Care Agencies Provide a Wide Range of Services

- **Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitative Care** to people recovering from an illness or injury, or who have a chronic disease.
- **Complex Care** to people with critical and continuing medical needs.
- **Hospice Care** to people who are near the end of life.
- **Long Term Services and Supports** to people who need assistance to live independently in their homes or who are at risk.
  - Medical care
  - Personal Care: bathing, grooming, medication reminders, homemaking services
- **Private Duty Care** to people who need non-medical assistance or companionship to live independently in their homes.



# A Quick Look at Home Care in NH

- HCANH = 38 member agencies
  - 4,400 employees
  - 1,081,006 Care Visits
  - 46,586 Clients Served
  - 18,567,314 Miles Logged
- Home Care Agencies Employ
    - RNs and LPNs
    - Physical Therapists
    - Occupational Therapists
    - Speech/Language Pathologists
    - Social Workers
    - Licensed Nursing Assistants
    - Personal Care Service Providers
    - Homemakers

# Who Pays for Home Care?

- Over 80% of home care services are covered by Medicare or Medicaid.
- Fees are set by the federal or state government and, in many instances, do cover the cost of care.
- Inadequate reimbursement impacts salaries and wages.

- **Medicare**
  - Intermittent skilled care
  - Hospice care
- **Medicaid**
  - Intermittent skilled care
  - Critical Care (aka “Medicaid Private Duty Nursing”)
  - Hospice care
  - Long Term Care – Choices for Independence (CFI); Adult In-Home Care
- **VA**
  - Range of services based on geography
- **Commercial Health Insurance**
  - Intermittent skilled care
- **Self-Pay & Long Term Care Insurance**
  - “Private Duty” Assistance/Companionship

# Home Care Hourly Wage Ranges

February 2016

- RN (BSN) \$25.69 - \$32.20
- LPN \$18.68 - \$24.27
- PT \$31.78 - \$40.45
- OT \$31.75 - \$40.30
- ST \$33.20 - \$42.71
- LNA \$11.41 - \$16.07
- PCSP \$ 9.59 - \$12.02



# Staffing Challenges

- Home Care clinicians must have:
  - the confidence and competence to work independently
  - exceptional clinical skills
  - strong computer and documentation skills
  - a willingness to travel long distances to unpredictable settings in all weather conditions
- Highly regulated industry
- Unpredictable census fluctuations; need for “per diem” staff
- Aging workforce

# Home Health Vacancy Rates

July 11 – 17, 2016 -- Responses from 25 agencies

## • Staffed Positions

- RNs 9% vacancy – 73 vacant positions (1825 missed visits/week)
- LPNs 10% vacancy
- PTs 12% vacancy – 25 vacant positions
- OTs 8% vacancy
- STs 42% vacancy – 6 vacant positions
- LNAs 7% vacancy
- PCSPs 10% vacancy

# Home Health Staff Needed

July 11 – 17, 2016

## • Per Diem Positions

- RNs – 63 FTEs needed – 49% more than current staffing
- PTs – 26 FTEs needed – 59% more
- OTs -- 17 FTEs needed – 65% more
- LNAs – 159 FTEs needed – 22% more
- PCSPs – 104 FTs needed -- 21%



# Home Health Staff Turnover Rates

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

- All employees – 13%
- RNs – 20%
- LNAs – 18%
- Home health agencies are constantly recruiting
- RNs are attracted by higher pay, better benefits, settings with greater clinical support
- LNAs and PCSPs will often change jobs for small increases in wages
- Retention strategies: better training, longer orientation period, effective preceptor programs

# Workforce Challenges for New Hampshire

- The aging population will require more home-based services.
- Without an adequate workforce, care may not be delivered in a timely manner, or at the level of services desired.
- Some fragile people may require longer stays in hospitals and SNFs due to insufficient home health capacity.
- Family caregivers may have negative impacts on their own jobs.
- As agencies strive to pay competitive wages, the cost of care increases. Government reimbursement needs to keep pace.
- Academic institutions need to better prepare students for home and community-based settings.

# Questions?

- [gbalkus@homecarenh.org](mailto:gbalkus@homecarenh.org)

