



Workforce Recruitment Toolkit

**The American Health Care Association
The National Center for Assisted Living
1201 L St, NW
Washington, DC 20005**

Rick Miller
CHAIR
Avamere Health Services Inc.
Wilsonville, OR

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VICE CHAIR
Van Dyk Health Care
Ridgewood, NJ

Angelo S. Rotella
IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR
Friendly Home
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Norcross, GA

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Louisville, KY

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Sarasota, FL

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Mt Vernon, OH

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El Cajon, CA

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New Rochelle, NY

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Salem, OR

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NOT FOR PROFIT MEMBER
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NCAL MEMBER
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Bloomington, MN

James Carlson
ASHCAE MEMBER
Oregon Health Care Association
Portland, OR

Gail Rader
ASSOCIATE BUSINESS MEMBER
Care Perspectives
Phillipsburg, NJ

Bruce Yarwood
PRESIDENT & CEO

May 26, 2009

Dear AHCA/NCAL Member:

In an effort to improve the long term care profession's public image and increase the size and scope of the work pool during the economic downturn, AHCA/NCAL has created a national public relations Workforce Recruitment Campaign. The purpose of the campaign is two-fold: (1) to increase the scope and capacity of the long term care workforce by putting it in the public eye that the long term care profession has jobs available for all levels of skill and education during these hard economic times; and (2) demonstrating to Congressional and State leaders, along with local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), that the long term care profession is taking a pro-active approach to recruiting and retaining a stable workforce.

AHCA/NCAL has created this comprehensive Workforce Recruitment Toolkit, for use by individuals and corporations to enhance the long term care workforce on a state and local level. The impact of these materials can affect not only public opinion, but also bolster the number of job applicants coming into the long term care profession.

Our message during these trying economic times is that the long term care profession has an abundance of job opportunities available for all levels of skill and education. We hope our audience – unemployed workers, retired long term care workers, Congressional and State Leaders and the press – may discover today how Americans who need work can find a rewarding and stable career providing care for our nation's frail, elderly and disabled.

Sincerely,



Bruce Yarwood
President & CEO
American Health Care Association



David Kylo
Executive Director
National Center for Assisted Living

Workforce Retention Toolkit User Guide

AHCA/NCAL understands the importance of a stable and well-trained workforce. We hope you find this toolkit a useful and informative guide to recruiting those workers who will provide care and services for the millions of individuals in our nation's nursing homes and assisted living communities. This guide will help you work with your local community – legislators, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), colleges and the media – to increase the scope and capacity of the long term care workforce by making a positive impression, communicate ideas and information, educate individuals and correct misconceptions. This user guide will instruct you on how to implement this toolkit in your own facility or organization.

- Press releases are used to alert the local media of significant events, issues, services, programs awards, and other events. Send the release to your local news editors and reporters, especially those who have previously covered nursing facility issues, three days before the desired coverage. A draft press release that features our workforce message is included in this kit.
- Opinion Editorials provide greater control over the content of your message. Send Op-Eds to the editorial department of your local newspaper, and be sure to include all relevant contact information for the author of the piece.
- The print advertisement in this toolkit can be changed and edited to reflect the specific message of your facility or organization. For information and for fees associated with customization, please contact Ellen Almond of Schmidt PA at (703) 548-0019 or ealmond@schmidtpa.com.
- The “How To” Guide for Facility Tours can be applied to a variety of audiences, including legislators, WIBs, local universities and community colleges, and the media.
- Often, you only have a short window of time to alert someone to the opportunity of choosing a career in long term care. We have developed a handout that succinctly conveys our message that can be used for unemployment offices and job fairs. You can edit the handout to accurately reflect your organizations specific contact information.
- The supplied talking points aid you when speaking to legislators, local WIB and the media regarding long term care. When speaking to any audience is critical to prepare an informational kit that serves as a reference tool. Include information about your nursing home or assisted living community, the services you offer and the associated fees, its role in the larger, local community. Ensure that you have all the relevant data included in the kit including current number and types of job openings, the level of training required for each position, the wage and benefit data, and opportunities for professional advancement. If available include information regarding tuition reimbursement and other opportunities for professional growth.
- The Considering a Career in Long Term Care brochure provides greatly detailed information regarding career opportunities in nursing homes and assisted living communities, and can be used as either a hand out or a reference tool. The printed brochure can also be purchased at the AHCA/NCAL bookstore www.ahcapublications.org.

The toolkit also includes relevant and applicable research materials that support the need for an increased workforce in the long term care profession, including the projected vacancies, a summary of our comprehensive vacancy and turnover report (the full report can be found at www.ahcancal.org). Descriptions of various careers available in long term care from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-2009 Edition can be found at www.bls.gov/OCO/.



Workforce Recruitment Toolkit

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Media Materials:

1. Press Release
2. Opinion Editorial
3. Print advertisement – Tagline: “We have the jobs of tomorrow. Apply Today”
4. “How To” Guide for Facility Tours
5. Handout for Unemployment Offices/Job Fairs
6. Workforce Talking Points
7. “Considering a Career in Long Term Care” Brochure

Available Research:

8. Projected Changes of Established and Vacant Nursing Positions in Nursing Facilities -2008-2020
9. Summary of AHCA’s 2007 Vacancy and Turnover Report (full report found at www.ahcancal.org).
10. Bureau of Labor and Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook:
www.bls.gov/OCO.

To Be Developed:

1. Testimonials of real LTC workers – to be used in press releases, PSAs, and ads.
2. Radio Public Service Announcement - Quarterly National Distribution
3. Workforce Legislation

For Immediate Release:
[Date]

Contact: [Contact Name]
[Contact Phone Number]

Long Term Care Leaders Announce Job Availability Is At A Record High
Caring For Nation's Elderly & Disabled Is A Rewarding, Challenging Career

[City, State] – In the wake of today's challenging economic times that are met with high job losses and large unemployment rates, [State Association/Company] has announced an influx of job opportunities in their skilled nursing facilities, assisted living communities and facilities for the developmentally disabled to care for millions of frail, elderly and disabled Americans.

“The long term care workforce provides life-sustaining care to frail, elderly and disabled patients and residents in over 16,000 nursing facilities and 39,000 assisted living communities nationwide,” stated [President & CEO of State Association/Company]. “For many longtime caregiving staff, it's their love of taking care of patients and residents – especially the elderly – that is the most rewarding part of work in the long term care environment.

A recent workforce study from the American Health Care Association (AHCA) shows that close to 110,000 jobs are currently available for long term care givers. More than half or nearly 60,300 open positions are for Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) for which an individual can be trained, often in a few weeks. More than 19,400 registered nurses and 24,200 licensed practical nurses are needed to fill the remaining job vacancies in long term care facilities nationwide.

[President & CEO] highlighted the benefits of the variety of work that is available in the long term care profession. The focus, [he/she] emphasized, is on treating the whole person and not just a medical condition, and so working with long term care patients and residents who have multiple, chronic conditions can be both clinically challenging and rewarding.

“Working in a long term care facility provides endless opportunities, and the chance for greater autonomy than in other care settings,” [President & CEO] explained. “Today, at a time when more and more Americans are unable to find work, nursing homes and assisted living communities can offer the unemployed a secure and rewarding career. Caregivers and other workers in the long term care community truly improve the lives of millions of elderly and disabled residents daily.”

Job growth in the long term care profession is expected to continue to increase as the elderly population of the U.S. continues to expand. From 2000 to 2010, job growth is expected to have increased by 26 percent in America's nursing homes and 67 percent in assisted living communities.

“[State Association/Company] is committed to fostering a stable and well-prepared workforce, because consumers deserve the highest quality long term care and services, and caregivers deserve positive and supportive work environments,” stated [President & CEO]. “As the profession responsible for the care of our nation's most vulnerable citizens, we hope to increase that workforce and we invite all who are interested to peruse a rewarding, challenging career providing quality care to our nation's most vulnerable population.”

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Secure a Rewarding, Challenging Career While Caring for America's Elderly

Every day, a new American wakes up to a job loss with a dwindling market for opportunities while another American wakes up in a skilled nursing facility, assisted living community or facility for the developmentally disabled, needing dedicated, quality care. Today, at a time when more and more Americans are unable to find work, nursing homes, assisted living communities and facilities for the developmentally disabled can offer the unemployed a secure and rewarding career. The influx of job opportunities in our nation's skilled nursing facilities is growing, and many more individuals are needed to care for millions of frail, elderly and disabled Americans.

In a profession that provides life-sustaining care to frail, elderly and disabled patients and residents in over 16,000 nursing facilities and 39,000 assisted living communities nationwide, nearly 110,000 jobs are currently available. Job growth in the profession is only expected to continue, as the elderly population of the United States continues to expand. From 2000 to 2010, job growth is expected to have increased by 26 percent in America's nursing homes and 67 percent in assisted living communities.

The opportunity for a challenging, rewarding career is available and available right now. More than half or nearly 60,300 open positions are for Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) for which an individual can be trained, often in a few weeks. More than 19,400 registered nurses and 24,200 licensed practical nurses are needed to fill the remaining job vacancies.

Working in a long term care facility provides endless opportunities, and the chance for greater autonomy than in other care settings. The focus is on treating the whole person, not just a medical condition, and so working with long term care patients and residents who have multiple, chronic conditions can be both clinically challenging and rewarding.

Caregivers and other workers in the long term care community truly improve the lives of millions of elderly and disabled residents daily, in positive and supportive work environments. All who are interested can peruse a rewarding, challenging career providing quality care to our nation's most vulnerable population.

_____ is the _____ of _____ in _____.

We have the jobs of tomorrow. Apply today.

America's long term care facilities employ nearly 3 million people across the nation – and there are more jobs available. Today, at a time when more and more Americans are unable to find work, nursing homes and assisted living communities can offer the unemployed a secure and rewarding career. Caregivers and other workers in the long term care community truly improve the lives of millions of elderly and disabled residents daily.

The long term care community has a key role in our nation's economy as a leading employer in many areas. By working together with government to maintain adequate funding, we can provide the employment opportunities many Americans are searching for.

**TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE VISIT
WWW.AHCANCAL.ORG/CAREERS**

CAREGIVERS NEEDED:
Local long term care facility seeks nurses, therapists, and nursing assistants to help patients and residents with daily activities. Excellent training programs available and opportunities for job growth. Apply today to start a rewarding career.

SALES MANAGER
Progressive Cable TV network is seeking individual to assume responsibility for development of subscription program. High sales potential with opportunities for growth. Box 2025, Career Monthly

MARKETING PRODUCT SPECIALIST
Established national marketing company seeks an expert Marketing Professional. To apply, telephone Recruiting Division at 213-555-7469

MARKETING MANAGER
Seeking strategic thinker with MBA. Highly visible position. Reply to: Box 07, Career Monthly

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
Executive position in one of the nation's top real estate development corporations. Supervise all ad-related activities as well as oversee all research functions. Salary benefits are commensurate with experience. Box 7726, Career Monthly

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American Health Care Association

Long Term Care: An Investment in Our Future



Guide to Facility Tours

Facility tours are excellent tools that enable you to show members of the community the details of your facility – how it operates, the daily lives of your residents and most importantly, the dedication of your caregivers and staff. Facility tours can be useful in engaging the attention of a number of key individuals - local and state legislators, your Governor, members of your Workforce Investment Board (WIB), local and community colleges, and members of the media. These tours can show how your facility operates and the issues that affect our profession, and most importantly, allow individuals to see how their contribution impacts the lives of patients and caregivers alike. As a result, facility tours have proven to be one of the long term care profession's best tools to engage those we want to better appreciate the care we provide every day. Hosting a facility tour allows you to discuss and showcase complex issues – such as the workforce crisis –to ensure that the message is accurate and clear.

Facility tours humanize our issues. The personal interaction demonstrates the dedication and commitment of the caregivers who serve the frail, elderly and disabled patients and residents we serve. They direct legislators, WIB members, and students away from the world of graphs and charts and show them how real people are impacted. A well-publicized tour also can positively enhance your visibility with the public and local news media, as well as with your potential resident's family base. A well-planned tour leaves a better understanding of you, your residents, their family members as well as your employees.

WHY NOW

During this time of increasing unemployment and economic downturn and aging demographics, the long term care profession is working to increase the scope and capacity of the long term care workforce. Facility tours are an excellent way to demonstrate to elected officials, WIBs, and the press that we are taking a pro-active approach to recruiting and retaining a stable workforce. Facility tours also allow potential employees – recent college graduates or those interested in entering the long term care field – with an engaging look into how they can make a difference in the lives of the patients and residents they would care for each day.

The experience of a facility tour enable policy makers and WIBs to see firsthand the issues that affect our profession. Engaging members of the media, whether it be for their own facility tours or to cover tours taken by elected officials, allows the press to observe nursing facilities and assisted living communities and the role they play in the community, and the environment in which potential job applicants will work.

ORGANIZING AND EXECUTING THE TOUR

When scheduling facility tours, it is key that you are aware of the needs and purpose of each group visiting the facility. It is best to schedule a tour with a Member of Congress when they are in their home district, or when the Congress or State Legislature is in recess. An invitation to a Member of Congress, State Legislator or Governor is often best coming from the CEO of the company, the facility administrator or Executive Director of your State Affiliate. However, if another individual has a personal contact with the legislator, that person should extend the invitation.

To schedule a facility tour, begin with a formal letter of invitation, then follow up by calling or visiting your legislator's office and obtaining several possible dates when he or she is available. Describe the facility, its operation and the number of employees and residents.



If you are scheduling a facility tour with a member of your local WIB be sure the individual understands the objective for the tour. A formal letter of invitation is appropriate, followed up by a phone call if no response has been given. A facility tour with recent graduates – or potential employees – can be a larger event and invitations may be advertised through the school or through a job posting. When hosting an event of that size, ensure that your schedule is tight, and that you leave room to answer any and all questions that may arise.

Engaging media is key to bringing your message of job availability during the economic downturn to the public. Prior to the event, ask the WIB, Governor or legislator if they are comfortable inviting local media to participate in the tour. If they are, ensure that you send a press advisory to local media announcing the tour and can arrange for a photographer to be on hand for the event.

During the tour, show some of the realities of patient and resident care and the challenges of meeting workforce demands. Emphasize quality improvements during the tour and throughout the visit. Point out as many types of patients and residents as possible and discuss the range of care provided and the varied costs of that care. Talk about the growth of the elderly population in the near future, and the immediate need to secure a stable work force.

FOLLOW UP AFTER THE EVENT

Follow up after the tour is imperative. Send a “thank you” letter the day after the facility tour, while the memory is still fresh in the mind of your visitor. If possible, make your thank you memorable, by adding a personal note about a subject you discussed, a comment he/she made or an interaction he/she had with a patient, resident or caregiver.

Communication with the media after the tour is very important. If the local press has not covered the event, send the editor a brief write-up, including the tour agenda and any good photos of the public official. If the event has not been covered within a week, send a second communication if more photos and press clippings come in. Include an article about the tour, with photos, in your facility newsletter or any other in-house publication, including your bulletin board and website if you have one.

A facility tour is an excellent tool to show that the long term care profession has an abundance of job opportunities available, at a time when more and more Americans are unable to find work. By hosting a facility tour, you have the opportunity to show your community that nursing homes and assisted living facilities offer secure and rewarding careers, and job growth that will only increase in the coming years.

Any questions, comments or requests for assistance can be sent to:

Katherine Lehman
American Health Care Association
1201 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
klehman@ahca.org
(202) 898-2816

Looking For a Rewarding, Stable Career?

Look No Further Than Your Local Nursing Home or Assisted Living Facility

A Job In Long Term Care Means:

Jobs Available NOW

A recent workforce study from the American Health Care Association (AHCA) shows that close to 110,000 jobs are currently available for long term care givers.

Variety of Opportunities

Working in a skilled nursing facility or assisted living residence offers many exciting career paths, including: registered nurses (RN), certified nurse assistants (CNA), licensed practical nurses (LPN), direct caregivers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, social workers, speech therapists and activity professionals.



Clinically Challenging Work

The focus in long term care settings is on treating the whole person and not just a medical condition, working with patients and residents who have multiple, chronic conditions can be both clinically challenging and rewarding.

Continuous Job Growth

Job growth is expected to continue to increase as the elderly population of the U.S. continues to expand. From 2000 to 2010, job growth is expected to have increased by 26 percent in America's nursing homes and 67 percent in assisted living communities.

Close Bonds Between Caregivers & Residents

The love of taking care of people – especially the elderly – is the most rewarding part of work in the long term care environment. Caregivers develop close bonds with patients and residents, and family members.

To find the perfect career in long term care, visit the AHCA/NCAL Long Term Care Career Center at <http://www.ahcancal.org/careers/>.

Workforce Talking Points

About Long Term Care

- Each day, long term care professionals care for millions of frail, elderly and disabled Americans living in nursing facilities, assisted living residences, subacute centers, and homes for persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.
- Job growth is expected to continue to increase as the elderly population of the U.S. continues to expand. From 2000 to 2010, job growth is expected to have increased by 26 percent in America's nursing homes and 67 percent in assisted living communities.
- A recent workforce study from the American Health Care Association (AHCA) shows that close to 110,000 jobs are currently available for long term care givers. More than half or nearly 60,300 open positions are for Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) for which an individual can be trained, often in a few weeks. More than 19,400 registered nurses and 24,200 licensed practical nurses are needed to fill the remaining job vacancies in long term care facilities nationwide.

Why Work in Long Term Care?

- **Clinically Challenging Work, Greater Autonomy**

Many long term care facilities offer post-acute care and rehabilitation for patients who may spend a few weeks recovering from a stroke or following a hip replacement. Because the focus is on treating the whole person and not just a medical condition, working with long term care patients and residents who have multiple, chronic conditions can be both clinically challenging and rewarding.

Many long term care nurses enjoy greater autonomy than in other care settings. Since CNAs provide the majority of the direct patient care, nurses have many more opportunities to gain experience as care supervisors. You won't find doctors conducting rounds as in hospital settings; rather, it's the nursing staff – in consultation with a patient's physician – who see and assess patients' and residents' conditions and help to direct patient care decisions each day.

- **Close Bonds Between Caregivers & Residents**

For many longtime nursing staff, it's their love of taking care of patients – especially the elderly – that is the most rewarding part of work in the long term care environment. Nurses and CNAs often develop close bonds with patients and residents, as well as family members who rely on the care they provide.

Considering a Career in Long Term Care

If you are looking for a way to make a real difference in people's lives, then consider employment and career options in long term care. Nursing facilities, assisted living residences and homes for people with mental retardation or developmental disabilities are seeking qualified candidates who care about the quality of life for our most vulnerable citizens.

If your priority is making a difference in people's lives, then read on and consider joining the long term care profession.

It's All About People

Long term health care is a rapidly growing field, and compassionate employees at all levels are needed to deliver quality care and to help ensure a positive quality of life. More than one million nursing facility patients in the U.S. depend on employees of the nation's 17,000 nursing facilities to meet their needs for round-the-clock nursing care, personal contact and companionship. Almost another million people, who are generally healthier and more independent, live in 32,000 assisted living residences.

It is important to note that nursing facilities may use many different types of names, including "nursing home," "health care center," "rehabilitation center," "health facility," "nursing center" and others. Likewise, assisted living residences are often called "residential care centers."

Today's long term care settings typically provide full-service care for the elderly and disabled. Dedicated staff care for:

- *Persons needing short-term care and rehabilitation while they recover from a medical situation;*
- *Seniors living semi-independently in an assisted living community but needing help with some personal care activities;*
- *Acutely ill patients needing nursing facility care around the clock.*
- *Persons with mental retardation or developmental disabilities.*

The long term care team is made up of a group of caring, compassionate individuals who provide supervision and professional caregiving services. In nursing facilities, the objective is to restore or maintain each patient to his or her highest possible level of functioning. Facilities also work to ensure quality and compassionate care for patients entering the end-of-life stage. In assisted living, the goals are to promote independence, autonomy and choice. Whether the care setting is a nursing facility, assisted living residence or a home for persons with mental retardation or developmental disabilities, dedicated employees are vital to the quality of care each person receives. Caregivers do much more than just provide quality care and assistance to our loved ones and respected elders. They also give them love and support. While this type of work can be hectic, its rewards far outweigh its demands—and you have the satisfaction of knowing you make a difference in people's lives.

You will have a secure future as part of the long term care profession. The fastest growing segment of our population is made up of those over the age of 85. By the year 2030, 33 million people will be seniors, and one in five will be in need of some type of long term care. The number of nursing facilities and assisted living residences will double by 2030 or before.

In all long term health care settings, there is a variety of work required to provide quality of care and quality of life; this will accommodate a wide range of training, experience and interest.

Qualifications

Educational requirements vary depending upon the position. For instance, to enter a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program you need a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma, but if you are entering a field like physical therapy, you need a more advanced degree. Nurses are either Registered Nurses (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN). Overall, the most important qualifications include the desire to help others, and the compassion and understanding that frail elders and the disabled need.

Employment Options

The long term care field offers careers and employment opportunities in a variety of health professions and settings. That is, similar positions generally can be found at nursing facilities, assisted living residences, residential care communities, adult day care centers and homes for persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. Also, different states vary somewhat in their requirements for various positions, so you need to check in your area about what qualifications you will need to be a member of the long term care team.

Following is a brief description of the major areas that may interest you.

Certified Nursing Assistant, Resident Assistant and Other Positions

- The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) provides personal care to residents or patients, such as bathing, dressing, changing linens, transporting and other essential activities. CNAs are trained, tested, certified and work under the supervision of an RN or LPN.
- The Resident Assistants (RA) generally work in assisted living residences and provide direct personal care services to residents but are not certified as CNAs. Depending on the state, this position is also available in some nursing facilities.
- In some states, a Qualified Medical Assistant (a CNA with specialized training), may assist with the administration of medications and treatments.

Nursing Services

Several levels of professionals within the nursing staff provide quality nursing care.

- The RNs plan for patient care by assessing patient needs, and developing and monitoring care plans in conjunction with a physician and facility Care Planning Team. Several levels of Registered Nurses – including Unit Directors, Assistant Directors of Nursing, and Directors of Nursing (DON) – supervise all nursing services. The DON is responsible for monitoring the overall quality of care at the facility as well as the facility's compliance with federal and state regulations.
- Education requirements for Registered Nurses vary according to the type of program. Nursing programs include diploma nurses who are graduates from hospital schools of nursing, Associate degree nurses from two year programs and Bachelor degree nurses from four year programs. Some nurses have advanced degrees and practice as the DON or other leadership positions. All nurses graduating from any type of nursing program are required to successfully pass state board testing to obtain a license to practice.
- A Charge Nurse or Unit Manager is an RN or LPN who is responsible for the supervision of a unit within the nursing home. The Charge Nurse schedules and supervises nursing staff and provides care to facility patients.
- The LPN provides each patient with daily routine medications, necessary medical treatments, change of dressings and other related treatments as prescribed by the attending physician. LPN programs require one year of post-high school education, as well as successfully passing a state-licensing exam.

Therapy Services

Therapy services are a key aspect of today's nursing facilities and are also available in some assisted living residences. Many facilities will contract for these services from a firm specializing in therapy services; some facilities maintain staff therapists. Therapists need education beyond high school. Areas where therapists specialize include:

- **Physical Therapists (PT)** – Provide rehabilitation exercises for persons recovering from injuries, strokes, or suffering from arthritis. PTs offer training in the use of walkers and crutches along with exercises to increase strength.
- **Occupational Therapists (OT)** – Provide rehabilitation training for persons who, after therapy, can be independent with self-care. OTs help patients maximize their ability to perform personal hygiene, food preparation, etc.
- **Speech Therapists** – Provide evaluation and treatment of speech and swallowing disorders with the goal of restoring speech and language abilities.
- **Respiratory Therapists** – Measure the respiratory responsiveness of patients and administer treatments that improve breathing capacity.

Activities Professional

Nursing facilities and assisted living residences typically offer a variety of in-house or external events such as trips to a mall, social events, picnics and arranging religious services. Activity and recreational professionals are specially trained to develop appropriate levels of activities that offer entertainment, educational opportunities, religious expression and provide social interaction along with mental and physical stimulation. These individuals often manage a facility's volunteer program as well.

Social Services

Social workers are critical to the success of the long term care team. They act as the contact between patients, their families and facility staff. They assess patients, interact with the medical staff and, in general, provide for the patients' well-being. Social workers also serve as counselors to both patients and their families, especially during the initial period of adjustment to a long term care setting. In many states, social workers must be licensed and may be required to have advanced degrees.

Dining Staff

There are a variety of career and employment options available in this segment of long term care. The Dining Services Manager oversees the dining staff and performs nutrition-related services to promote patients' general health and well-being through the use of medical nutrition therapy and diagnostic assessment. They are responsible for the identification of patients' dietary needs, and planning and implementation of dietary programs. Dietary aides, cooks, wait staff and other members of the Food Service staff are an important part of the nutritional well-being of the residents and patients.

Administration

There are a variety of administrative, financial and other non-medical employment opportunities available within the long term care environment, including:

- **Nursing Facility Administrator** – The administrator is a licensed professional who manages the day-to-day operations of the facility. Administrators are trained in medical, social, financial and legal aspects of long term care and are an important resource to families and patients. Typically, the administrator has a four-year degree in health administration or is a Registered Nurse with certification in long term care administration. Some states require advanced degrees.

- **Assisted Living Administrator/Director/Manager** – The assisted living administrator manages the daily operations of the residence to ensure the services and care the residents need are provided.
- **Marketing Director** – In assisted living, this person arranges for and manages details related to moving into a facility. The person in this position is also responsible for arranging tours of the residence for prospective residents and may handle external public relations matters.
- **Admissions Director/Coordinator** – In nursing facilities, the admissions staff works with patients and their families to ensure that all requirements for admission to the facility are met.
- **Billing and Payment Coordinators** – The staff in these positions work to verify benefits, answer questions regarding payments (e.g. insurance or Medicare) and organize the billing and collection process.
- **Medical Records and Health Information Personnel** – These professionals are responsible for making sure of the accurate and timely documentation of medical services provided to patients. This may involve tasks from coding of treatment for reimbursement purposes to reviewing care plans to ensure coordination of services.
- **Office Administration/Administrative Assistant** – This staff handles general office responsibilities.

Housekeeping, Laundry, Building and Grounds

- **Housekeeping** – Housekeeping ensures the upkeep of resident and patient rooms.
- **Laundry** – Many facilities maintain their own in-house laundry operation and this task is very important as each resident or patient has their own personal items that must be laundered and returned to them.
- **Maintenance/Building and Grounds** – Maintenance personnel ensure the physical plant is in good condition and non-medical equipment is in working order.

Sources

To receive more information, contact a local facility, or visit the American Health Care Association (AHCA) at www.ahca.org or the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) at www.ncal.org for affiliated organizations in your state.

Special thanks to the following affiliates for contributing to this material: Indiana Health Care Association, Massachusetts Extended Care Federation and the West Virginia Health Care Association.

The **Caregiver Jobs Clearinghouse**: www.carecareers.net

PROJECTED NUMBER OF NURSING STAFF POSITIONS AND VACANCIES IN NURSING FACILITIES: 2008 - 2020

In order to forecast nursing staff shortage in future, AHCA Department of Research has produced a projection of nursing staff positions and vacancies from 2008 to 2020 in nursing facilities. We projected that the total established nursing staff positions in nursing facilities could raise to more than 1,343,000 FTEs in 2020 and total vacant positions will increase to 142,000 FTEs in 2020.

The projection is based on two basic assumptions: overall long-term care (LTC) workforce will increase by two percent annually; and vacancy rates by nursing job categories will be relatively constant for a long time period. Previous studies found that LTC workforce would need to grow by two percent per year from now until 2050 to maintain the current ratio of LTC workers to the elderly population. Previous studies found that LTC workforce would need to grow by two percent per year from now until 2050 to maintain the current ratio of LTC workers to the population age 85 or older (Friedlan, 2004). Some government estimates are slightly higher (Health Resources and Services Administration, 2003). According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), professional LTC direct care workers (registered nurse and licensed practical nurse) increased by 2.3 percent per year during 2003-2006; in the same time period, paraprofessional LTC direct care workers (mainly nursing aides) increased by 1.6 percent annual rate. Total established nursing positions have grown by 1.7 percent annually from 2002 to 2007 according to AHCA 2002 and 2007 vacancy and turnover surveys.

We have used 2007 as the baseline year to forecast number of established nursing staff positions from 2008 to 2020 with two percent annual growth rate for each of all nursing position categories except 'director of nurses'. We also projected number of vacant nursing positions using 2007 vacancy rates for each of five nursing position categories. AHCA 2002 and 2007 nursing staff position vacancy and turnover studies show that nursing staff vacancy rates at national level have remained relatively consistent.

This projection provides a general picture of the future nursing staff needs and shortage in nursing facilities. Some foreseeable and unforeseeable factors in future can affect the accuracy of this projection, though the direction and the magnitude of the effects cannot be predicted with certainty, such as:

- Change of national and state nursing staffing standards
- Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement policies and overall healthcare reform
- Acuity characteristics of nursing facility residents in future
- National and local economies

Continuous effort of conducting survey on nursing staff position and vacancy in nursing facilities could provide timely-updated data to improve the accuracy of this projection.

Reference

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US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), *Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey and the National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates*, 2003, 2005

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2007 AHCA Survey Nursing Staff Vacancy and Turnover In Nursing Facilities

America's nursing facilities have been facing a chronic direct-care workforce shortage for more than a decade. In order to measure the extent of the difficulty that nursing facilities are having in retaining and recruiting nursing staff, the American Health Care Association (AHCA) conducted a nursing position survey to examine employment vacancy and turnover in nursing facilities in 2007.

The results of this survey indicate nearly 110,000 direct-care staff positions were vacant in 2007. Specifically, 1 in 6 staff registered nurse positions were vacant, 1 in 9 licensed practical nurses positions were vacant, and 1 in 10 certified nurses aides positions were vacant. The nursing facilities want to hire staff for these positions, but qualified candidates are not available to hire.

| | <u>Vacancy Rates</u> | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| | <u>2007</u> | | <u>2002</u> | |
| | Vacant Positions | Vacancy Rate | Vacant Positions | Vacancy Rate |
| Director of Nursing | 686 | 4.4% | 797 | 4.8% |
| Administrative Registered Nurses (RNs) | 5,343 | 10.4% | 3,998 | 8.1% |
| Staff Registered Nurses (RNs) | 19,431 | 16.3% | 13,922 | 15.0% |
| Licensed Practical Nurses | 24,152 | 11.1% | 25,118 | 13.2% |
| Certified Nurses Aides | 60,266 | 9.5% | 51,959 | 8.5% |
| Total | 109,877 | 10.5% | 95,794 | 10.0% |

| | <u>Turnover Rates</u> | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| | <u>2007</u> | <u>2002</u> |
| Director of Nursing | 37.8% | 49.7% |
| Administrative Registered Nurses (RNs) | 28.7% | 35.5% |
| Staff Registered Nurses (RNs) | 41.0% | 48.9% |
| Licensed Practical Nurses | 49.9% | 48.9% |
| Certified Nurses Aides | 65.6% | 71.1% |

The high vacancy rates confirm that there is a continuing need for government policy and educational initiatives to promote careers in long term care nursing. High quality nursing facility services depend upon a stable, well-trained workforce. Promoting sound fiscal policies, designed to strengthen America's long term care workforce and facilitate the continuing improvement in quality nursing facility care, is imperative and should be a top national priority.