

Oregon Works!: Promoting Change Through Person-Directed Care

The Oregon Works! project of *Better Jobs Better Care* aimed to improve recruitment and retention of direct-care workers at eight participating long-term-care sites, called Leadership Sites, which included four nursing homes, two assisted-living facilities, a residential care facility and a home care agency. The union representing the state's independent home-care workers also participated.

The lead agency was the Oregon Technical Assistance Corporation, which led a coalition of stakeholders with a prior history of working together on long-term care initiatives.

PRACTICE INTERVENTIONS

- Supervisors and direct-care workers at the Leadership Sites received training in the LEAP model of person-directed care. LEAP (Learn, Empower, Achieve, Produce) is a comprehensive workforce development program created in 1999 to empower staff, increase retention and promote staff-resident relationships through a model of person-directed care. This approach puts clients at the center of decision-making and engages direct-care workers and other providers as their advocates.
- An evaluation by the Oregon Health and Science University/Hartford Center for Geriatric Nurse Excellence reported mixed results from focus groups with supervisors, workers and family members and a survey of direct-care workers:
 - At five of the eight sites, supervisors and direct-care workers reported an
 improvement in their working relationships. At most sites, workers felt they had a
 greater voice in resident/client care at the end of the project.
 - On the direct-care worker survey, scores dropped in all five dimensions of person-directed care (personhood, knowing the person, relationships, comfort and autonomy/choice) across all the sites. The evaluator suggested that the declines may reflect a growing awareness among staff about what person-centered care means and a more critical attitude about the extent to which they provided it.

POLICY INITIATIVES

• Coalition partners developed and implemented a person-centered care policy statement designed to help set standards for long-term-care practices in Oregon.

The Governor's Task Force on the Future of Long-Term Care planned to include person-centered care language in future work.

 A competency-based occupational profile was developed for entry-level directcare workers in community-based settings. This profile was designed to promote common standards and training for direct-care workers, facilitate career advancement and ensure that future employers recognized their prior training when they changed jobs.