# Introduction

Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (ALTSA), designs, administers, develops and provides services to support individuals with disabilities ages 18 and older and seniors choice, quality and safety in settings of their choosing. We have 5 divisions, approximately 2,500 staff and license and/or contract with providers of long-term services and supports.

ALTSA promotes, plans, develops, and provides long-term care services responsive to the needs of older people and individuals with disabilities. Each division helps seniors, people with disabilities, and their families to access long-term care services that maximize independence, dignity, quality of life, and their ability to remain in their own homes and communities.

# Purpose

Direct Care Workers provide essential health care services supporting individuals with disabilities and older adults to receive services in their setting of choice, yet they often feel unheard and undervalued. The purpose of the Direct Care Workforce Collaborative is to give a voice to people providing direct care services across the state. This forum will allow caregivers from all settings to engage in conversations about the benefits and challenges of providing direct care and to provide feedback about proposals that will impact caregivers. Participation in this group will help inform recruitment and retention efforts, improve work-culture, and give direct care workers the opportunity to engage in shaping the policies and practices that impact them and those for whom they provide services.

# Responsibilities

The specific responsibilities of the Direct Care Workforce Collaborative include providing feedback and partnering to develop recommendations and policies regarding:

* Caregiver recruitment strategies
* Caregiver retention strategies
* Caregiver training
* Career and professional development
* Data gathering and analysis
* Regulations
* Caregiver supports
* Programs and services for clients that impact caregivers
* Cutting edge programs and new technologies
* Identifying opportunities to improve job quality of caregivers
* Promoting community involvement in rebranding of direct care workers

# Membership

The Direct Care Workforce Collaborative shall consist of up to 20 members representing a diverse cross-section of geography, gender, and work settings. Members must include Home Care Aides and Certified Nursing Assistants who work in the following settings:

* At least three (3) In-home- Individual Providers employed by the Consumer Directed Employer (one family caregiver and one unrelated caregiver)
* At least two (2) In-home-Home Care Agency
* At least one (1) Adult Family Home,
* At least one (1) Assisted living facility
* At least one (1) Skilled Nursing facility
* At least one (1) Enhanced Services Facility
* And must include at least two (2) Tribal Member caregivers, one (1) from the East and one (1) from the West side of the State that work in any caregiver setting.

Other members include HCS staff for facilitation and the HCS Director. Vacancies are filled as the Committee requires.

# Equity, Diversity, Access, & Inclusion

ALTSA values the diverse caregiver experience. We are committed to equity, diversity, access, and inclusion in the creation and operation of DCWC. ALTSA staff will give DCWC members accommodations and supports to attend each meeting. To ensure equity, members will be compensated for their lived experience and time.

# Meetings

Six facilitated meetings will be scheduled each year. The meetings will be held in February, April, June, August, October and possibly in December as schedules allow. HCS staff will work with members regarding supports that may be necessary to facilitate participation. All meetings will be facilitated via Microsoft Teams with a call-in option. An agenda and any documents or background materials for each meeting will be sent to members at least 10 days in advance. Minutes will be drafted and will be sent out to all members for review and approval.

# Member Roles and Responsibilities

Members will allocate approximately 1 to 2 hours, 6 times per year doing any of the following:

* Prepare for and attend meetings
* Review materials shared, ask questions, and provide feedback
* Provide input based on personal experience and ideas to improve services.
* Work with staff to find creative ways to understand the needs of other members
* Focus on solutions that benefit a wide range of members

# HCS Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Staff will provide members with the following:

* Information on HCS, ALTSA, Direct Care Workforce Collaborative team roles and responsibilities
* Notice of meetings at least one month prior to the meeting
* Agendas and meeting materials at least two weeks prior to the meeting by email or mail
* Assistance to support member involvement, such as accessible materials, interpreter services, transportation, and compensation for participation in the collaborative.

# Code of Conduct

Direct Care Workforce Collaborative is asked to respect the following Code of Conduct

* Maintain the confidentiality of personal information shared in the meeting;
* Treat each other with dignity and respect
* Avoid being aggressive when you disagree with a decision or statement
* Work collaboratively with others to further DSHS’s mission and goals
* Do not make statements or assumptions based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, or any other personal characteristics and
* Disclose potential conflicts of interest, real or perceived, before participating in discussions

# More Information

For more information or to refer a potential member contact: Nicole Dronen, Strategic Engagement Manager, at Nicole.dronen@dshs.wa.gov.