

A System in Crisis

Oregon community providers who support individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) are in the midst of an unprecedented direct care workforce staffing crisis.

We need immediate and long term solutions to sustain services for individuals with disabilities, their families, as well as the people who support their Quality of Life.



Fast Facts:

14,000 Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) provide essential care, services and support for **over 6,000** Oregonians with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

DSP positions top the list of the projected fastest-growing occupations in the country, making the current reality a **crisis**.

6,459 employees working in Oregon residential agencies who serve individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities require **\$20M in public aid*** to help provide for themselves and their families.

In addition to round-the-clock care and companionship, **DSPs dispense, track and regulate medications, provide intimate personal care and manage behavior issues as they arise.**

*As reported by the 2013 Oregon Workforce Report issued by the University of Oregon Labor Education and Research Center.

Support a workforce that delivers on quality

Community providers' inability to recruit and retain qualified staff is constricting their capacity to provide supports to meet the growing demand for services.

Who's at Risk?

Individuals who cannot access supports due to insufficient system capacity languish on waiting lists, end up in jail, on the street or in emergency rooms. Community providers pay millions of dollars in overtime costs to cover current support needs. Exhaustion leads to increased risk of caregiver injury and the potential risk of abuse and neglect in the system.

It's about **Health, Safety, Sustainability** and **Quality of Life**.

Researchers have estimated if turnover remains at 50% nationally, nearly **one million new caregivers** will have to be hired in 2020. These individuals who possess the unique skills and heart for the work deserve validation in the form of a professional career path and a living wage.

Support SB238

The Oregon Resource Association drafted SB238 to address the workforce crisis with a long term strategy requiring DHS to pay agencies 150% of minimum wage (*see spreadsheet for funding target on reverse*). Wages are key but resources to fund a professional career path requires DHS to provide online training to DSPs to support professional development and reduce turnover.

[Need more facts? Turn over →](#)





This is Ric:

Ric needs help every day with personal care. Due to staffing shortages, Ric has new, unfamiliar, people routinely helping with his very intimate needs. Like any one of us, Ric just wants to have someone he knows well to help him, but in these dire times, is just isn't possible.

For Rick, this issue is about **Health and Safety**.



This is Deanna:

Deanna's supportive positive care for independence with the individual she supports has vastly improved and maintained a healthy, person-centered atmosphere. The person Deanna supports has found new independence in community integration, and has independently had the energy and pride to engage and participate in their own household chores and cleaning. Deanna feels that this is her life's work, but wonders how long she will be able to afford to work in this field.

For Deanna, this issue is about **Sustainability**.



This is Chante:

Chante always helps plan the best birthday parties. One gentleman who lost his mother the previous year was having his first birthday without her. Chante made it her goal to plan a party with his family and fellow roommates. The simple joy on his face was evident and she said, "Now this makes my heart happy, doing something for them and no one else."

For Chante, this issue is about **Quality of Life**.



Providers stretched too thin

Oregon service providers have absorbed escalating staff costs and provided wage increases as they could when there were no rate increases, to address escalating recruitment challenges. The 4% rate increase effective January 1, 2016 does not move Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) beyond poverty wages. This causes retention and recruitment issues, skyrocketing costs for continual new staff training, escalated risk to current staff and the individuals they support, and an ever increasing list of individuals in need of support relegated to waiting lists or worse. A tangible solution is urgently needed.



150% of DSP Wage Comparison – Funding Target for SB238

Direct Support Professional wages at 150% of Oregon's minimum wage

Region	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Min.	DSP										
Standard	\$10.25	\$15.38	\$10.75	\$16.13	\$11.25	\$16.88	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$12.75	\$19.13	\$13.50	\$20.25
Metro	\$11.25	\$16.88	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$12.50	\$18.75	\$13.25	\$19.88	\$14.00	\$21.00	\$14.75	\$22.13
Non-Urban	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$10.50	\$15.75	\$11.00	\$16.50	\$11.50	\$17.25	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$12.50	\$18.75

Questions?

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State of Emergency: A Workforce Abandoned, People at Risk is an initiative of the Oregon Resource Association membership. For more information about ORA or the initiative, visit oregonresource.org