

WHA Council on Workforce Development Focuses on Recruitment and Retention

Hospital and health system leaders are faced with a myriad of workforce challenges, including trying to grow their workforce fast enough to keep up with rising demand. The Sept. 23, 2022 WHA Council on Workforce Development agenda focused on learning and discussion of recruitment and retention strategies, such as childcare support, salary and benefits and creating a warm welcome to Wisconsin by breaking down workforce barriers.

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) Division of Early Care and Education Administrator Erin Arango-Escalante joined the meeting to give a brief overview of DCF's work to improve the childcare ecosystem in the state. Arango-Escalante was also able to gain a better understanding of the needs of health care employers and their workforce, and how hospitals and health systems are partnering locally to support access to childcare.

Wages, bonuses and benefits have become increasingly important in recruiting and retaining an increasingly mobile and shrinking workforce. WHA will launch a co-branded salary survey with the Wisconsin Healthcare Human Resources Association (WisHHRA) in January 2023. WHA Senior Vice President Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk provided an update on the work of the WHA Salary Survey Oversight Team to prepare for the first annual salary survey to be launched in January 2023 with results available to participants in April 2023. Zenk noted this salary survey will be offered as a member benefit and asked for the council's feedback on key factors that will ensure participation and value to WHA and WisHHRA members. The council noted the job code list and definitions being developed seemed comprehensive enough without being overwhelming, and that the definitions were clear enough to match to their internal job codes. Council members agreed that a wide range of participants increases the value and provided recommendations for publicizing the survey to WHA and WisHHRA members and supporting participation.

Zenk was joined by WHA Vice President of Federal and State Relations Jon Hoelter for an update on state and federal issues impacting health care leaders and the health care workforce, the legislative environment and the upcoming November elections. Zenk provided an update on WHA's service on the Legislative Council Study Committee on Occupational Licensure and WHA's recommendations to reduce licensure delays. Hoelter provided an in-depth update on WHA's work to address potential loss of Health Professional Shortage Areas designations that will impact reimbursement and eligibility for visa programs and loan forgiveness. Hoelter rounded out the meeting with an update on the upcoming federal and state elections.

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