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Industry Association Develops Competency-Based Curricula for the Long-term Care, Support and Services Workforce

- Transforming the role of direct support professionals from caretakers to advocates
- Addressing the training needs of direct support professionals and their frontline supervisors
- Creating an Informed Decision Making curriculum for direct support professionals

Introduction

The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), one of the original champions of the U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration's Long-term Care, Support and Services Competency Model, has a vision. Their vision is a world where people with intellectual and other disabilities live community-based lives of their choosing, supported by a highly qualified Direct Support workforce with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to support them in achieving their life goals.¹

As a means to that end, NADSP has developed an interactive training program for direct support professionals. It focuses on the values, skills and knowledge that these individuals need based on NADSP's Direct Support Professional Competency Areas and Code of Ethics, which relate to the principles articulated in the Department of Labor's competency model.

The Workforce Need

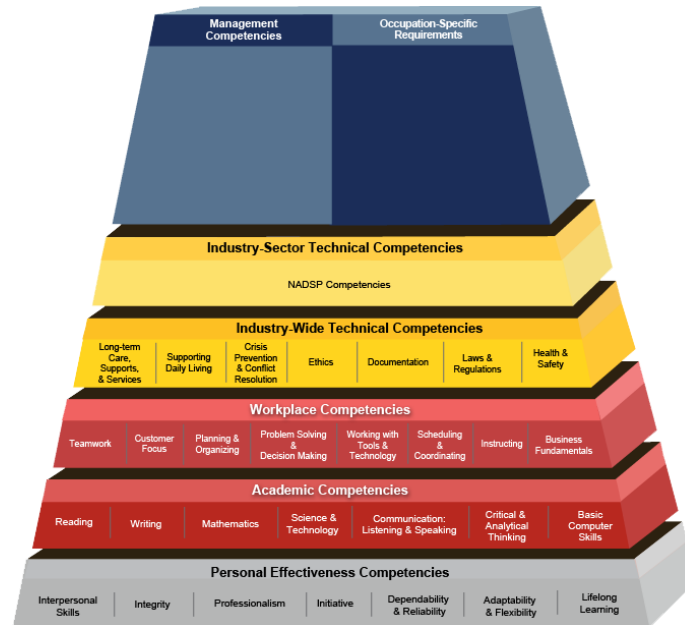
As the baby boom population ages and the elderly population grows, the demand for Direct Support (home care) workers increases proportionately. Employment of Home Health Aides and Personal Care Aides is projected to grow 38.1% and 25.9% respectively from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the 6.5% average for all occupations. From 2014-2024, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment of Home Health Aides will increase by 348,400 and employment of Personal Care Aides will increase by 458,100.²

Approach

"We're on a mission-driven odyssey," says John Raffaele, Director, Educational Services, NADSP. "Over the last 15 years, we have trained over 40,000 direct support professionals in 43 states in a diverse array of venues including provider organizations, state agencies and major conferences. The training program is grounded in our 15 research-driven competencies as well as the nine principles in our Code of Ethics, both updated in April 2016, both of which are derived from and expand upon the Long-term Care, Support and Services Competency Model."

¹ NADSP Guiding Principles, <https://www.nadsp.org/about/guiding-principles.html>

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections, https://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_103.htm



“NADSP has gained momentum and respect through interactive live contact,” says Mr. Raffaele. “However, we understand that webinars can reach so many more people at their convenience. In recognition of this fact, we developed a robust series of seminars by the end of 2015 which were widely utilized in 2016, and plan to develop two dozen more for a worldwide audience in 2017. Several of our webinars are posted on the Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation (RCWT) website, which were funded by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities.” The mission of the RCWT is a synchronized effort to develop the capacity of the New York direct support professional workforce through regional collaborations and with guidance from standards that are nationally validated for community supports for people with disabilities.³

“As additional requirements emerge, we are prepared to assist and implement,” says Mr. Raffaele. For example, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Service’s Home and Community Based Settings (HCBS) 2014 Rule requires providers to maximize the opportunities for program participants to have access to the benefits of community living to receive services in the most integrated setting. It will bring about the law’s intention for Medicaid home and community-based services to provide alternatives to services provided in institutions.⁴

“In response to the need for the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities to comply with the HCBS rule, NADSP developed the Informed Decision Making curriculum,” says Mr. Raffaele. “This competency-based, ethics-driven curriculum provides the direct support community with guidance on achieving compliance. It focuses on key regulatory requirements such as offering

³ Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation: <http://www.workforcetransformation.org/FAQ-s.html>

Webinars: <http://www.workforcetransformation.org/Webinars.html>

⁴ CMS.gov <https://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2014-Fact-sheets-items/2014-01-10-2.html>

clients more choice through exploration of options and outcomes; providing more opportunities for risk by empowering clients to make their own informed decisions; and enabling less custodial support. NADSP has piloted the curriculum across New York State, engaging 60 different audiences totaling 20,000 personnel at all levels of the direct support community including providers, front line supervisors and executives.”

Next Steps

“We want to spread the Informed Decision Making curriculum throughout the U.S.,” says Mr. Raffaele. “In addition, we want to encourage provider organizations across the nation to use a uniform competency-based approach to evaluate direct support professionals. New York is the only state that requires all of its 110,000 direct support professionals to be evaluated by the same state-generated tools, whether they work for the state or in private non-profit entities.”

NADSP is also working with the University of Minnesota’s Research & Training Center on Community Living, Institute on Community Integration to develop a competency-based curriculum focused on preparing frontline direct support supervisors for their responsibilities.

Related Links

National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals

<https://www.nadsp.org>

NADSP Code of Ethics

http://www.nationaladvocacycampaign.org/sites/default/files/news/code_of_ethics_brochure_final_5-1-16.pdf

NADSP Direct Support Professional Competency Areas

http://www.nationaladvocacycampaign.org/sites/default/files/news/national_direct_support_professional_competency_areas_brochure_final.pdf

Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation

<http://www.workforcetransformation.org>