

Provider Snapshot Data for Oregon Coalition of Small Provider Orgs

Total Number Of Provider Agencies Represented by Coalition: 36

Total Number of Agencies in Survey Data Statistics: 11

Out of 11 agencies responses:

Total number of DSP's employed: 182

Total number of Clients Served: 780

Total percentage of Agencies providing 1:1 Attendant Care: 91%

Total percentage of Agencies providing other support services (Group, Employment, etc.): 73%

Total number of clients that require:

Housing Supports: 160

Medication/Health Management Supports: 142

Behavioral Support Plans (Formal Plan for Supports): 36

DSP Turnover Rate: 48%

Survey Question: How has under-funding of DSP wages affected your agency?

11 responses

It makes it extremely hard to employ decent people who have a passion for this work and who care for the people we support. People don't stay long and leave for a job that pays more or has more benefits that are offered.

One DSP has left to start his own agency for better wages. Another DSP is planning on doing the same thing which results in a loss of customers and their affiliation with our agency and the social benefits that they get with my agency. Most DSP's are having a hard time with housing and rent because the costs have raised significantly since 2007. Many of them would love to purchase a home and work towards the goal of retiring some day. At the current rates, that is nearly impossible. Some would like to have children some day and provide for them which is very difficult without being on some government assistance and Medicare programs. The funding needs to be addressed ASAP in order to retain good quilting employees and to pay them a wage that reflects the challenging and important work that they do.

I have lost qualified staff because they are not able to support their basic needs of housing, health care, food and transportation. They have left employment with me because I have not been able to provide health care at the same time as a living wage of only \$15-18/hr. I have no ability to provide a higher wage bracket or even an office. I have limited 1:1 care to only customers already in the agency because the 1:1 rate of \$27.28/hr doesn't even cover the base cost of the provider wage and associated taxes. We have ceased serving respite care customers as well, because the rate does not cover providers at even minimum wage. These are just two examples of the damage done by POP 126 being denied. I urge you to draft an amendment to include POP 126 in HB 5026. Thank you for your consideration.

We are not able to offer a competitive or even appropriate hourly wage given the current state reimbursement and the costs of running a social service agency with liability costs etc. Finding qualified DSP's willing to accept the low wage are next to impossible to recruit. Thus, in order to fill customer need we are forced to hire DSP's with little to no experience, resulting in a lower quality of support over all for customers. The raising of minimum wage is set to put my agency out of business by 2021. Something must be done. Agencies do amazing and fantastic work related to individuals with I/DD realizing independence and a high quality of life that includes a real connection to their community, non-paid natural supports, and real friends.

Made it difficult to keep employees

We primarily serve clients who need 1:1 attendant care (OR 526) and group community based activities (OR 542). However, the \$27.28 per hour rate for attendant care is currently unsustainable. We will need to stop offering those 1:1 supports and move toward better funded services to remain in business, or we will be forced to close our doors. This will unfortunately leave 200 individuals who need 1:1 services without.

Lack of pay and benefits are our highest complaints and reasons for staff leaving.

It has affected it tremendously. I pay as high of a wage as I possibly can, offer PTO, Retirement, and Medical benefits but at the end of the day it's the wages that affect our employees, and they move on to other employment. We hire someone, and someone quits our Agency because they find higher paying employment. We have not grown in size for nearly a year now. I just got an email from another employee stating thank you for the opportunity but he has an interview because he needs a job that pays higher. I'm going to send the email to you. I live in a Rural area and it is hard to find a good match, and then to lose them because I just can't pay them any more affects my clients. My Agency is a scheduled based Agency so we have the same DSP work with the same client week after week on the particular day of the week in order to provide the best services as possible. So the clients do get connected with the DSP's and when they leave they do have behavioral issues and most just don't understand why they left. We have a backlog of client referrals that we can't fill because we can't take on more clients than we have DSP's.

Please help us to help our employees in order for them to make a living wage and in return help our clients to have stable, well trained, competent, and long lasting DSPs.

We lost nearly half of our staff last year due to low wages and little opportunity to earn a higher wage. The turn-over cost us a significant amount of time and money, not to mention the impact on participant trust and remaining staff morale. We increased DSP wages to \$15 an hour and now provide health benefits to all staff in order to remain competitive with the increasing cost of living, which is not sustainable at the current rates. We are entering our first fiscal year in the nearly 12 years we've existed with a deficit. If we are unable to make up the difference through grant funding and individual giving, we will likely have to scale back our work.

It is extremely difficult to hire on new staff, and keep current staff on-board, as I am not able to pay much of a livable wage, nor am I able to offer medical/health benefits. It is also a financial strain to cover 40 hours of sick pay per year/per employee. If ADL rates do not increase, I will be looking at eliminating 1:1 service with our customers, and solely providing group supports. This will be a great loss for our customers who require one on one attendant care. Right now, we provide one on one care for 100% of our customers. To lose this service, would be devastating for our customers. Oregon has long been a leading pioneer in standing up for the rights of those in the DD community. We can not stop now, we have come too far! We must pay a livable wage to our Providers, so that they can continue to help our customers reach their goals of living happy, independent lives, while being a part of their communities!

My agency no longer takes 1:1 clients and we work to keep staff filled with groups. We still have 5 DSPs who do 1:1 only but all new staff are working in groups about 4 days a week. Without the wage increase, I will be ending any medical support services with our clients and removing most of their 1:1 housing time.