

May 29, 2019

Long Term Care Wage Board

HB 2490

My background

- Geriatrics and palliative care physician
 - Professor of Geriatrics at University of California San Francisco
 - OHSU Geriatrics and Samaritan Health Services Internal Medicine Residency
- Over 12 years experience in home-based care (includes care in long term care facilities)
 - National work groups to collect data on and identify quality measures for home-based care
- Governor-appointed member of Oregon's Residential Ombudsman and Public Guardian Advisory Board
 - One of ROPGAB's 3 priorities this year is to address challenges with the caregiver workforce

Critical value of LTC Wage Board

LTC Wage Board is a first step to address deficiencies in the long term care industry which negatively effect caregivers and the vulnerable Oregonians they care for

- Underappreciated caregivers
- Understaffed facilities
- Unstable staffing models
- Poor compensation
- Inadequately trained caregivers and med aides
- Under-regulated industry

Higher level of care in today's LTC

Today's LTC facilities care for residents who would have been nursing facility patients in past years

- Mobility impaired, high fall risks
- Cognitively impaired, high prevalence of dementia and mental health disorders (especially depression and anxiety)
- Sensory impaired (blind, deaf, dual)
- Bedfast or total care residents
- Para-medical care needs (urinary catheters, feeding tubes, wounds)
- Complex medication regimens (insulin, blood thinners, controlled substances, polypharmacy)

No education and training standard

- Early childhood development vs variation in gerontology with just 'normal aging'
- Community college, in-house training, personal experience
- Example: mobility impairments and devices
- Example: different types of dysphagia
- Example: caregiver to med aide
- Example: memory care caregivers

Caregiving as a profession

- Education standards, certificate levels
- Competitive, liveable, wage
- Health care benefits, sick leave, family leave, retirement benefits
- Safe working conditions
- Redefine caregiving as a career to aspire to (similar to nursing or teaching)
- Professional development opportunities
- Hold facilities (and their shareholders) accountable not only to the quality of care they provide residents, but to safe working conditions and career development of their employees

Beyond HB 2490

- Oregon should be a leader in long term care
- If the true measure of our society is how we treat our most vulnerable members, then we need to actively improve the conditions in which our dependent family members live, and improve the expectations of and support for the countless individuals working in long term care to whom we entrust our loved ones' well-being
- Long term care in Oregon is broken
- We need to fix it