

Home Support Workers

Human Resource Issues and Opportunities



Canadian Home Care
Association
canadienne de soins
et services à domicile

Nadine Henningsen
Executive Director
Canadian Home Care Association

- Canadians are living longer and Canada's population is aging.
- As people age, they acquire chronic diseases and experience functional decline becoming increasingly vulnerable to adverse outcomes.
- Most Canadians prefer to live independently at home for as long as possible .
- **Home support workers provide the have the greatest contact with the senior and their family and are the key to keeping people at home.**

Recruitment, training,
and retention
of home support workers
is the
number one challenge
in the home care sector
today!!

Compensation

- Low wages
- Lack of wage parity with counterparts in institutional settings and/or other provinces
- Uncertainty of hours

Education and Training

- Course lengths and content
- On-the-job training and mentoring
- Financial assistance for training
- Opportunities for skills upgrading

Quality Assurance

- Maintaining high standards for the delivery of home care
- High standards for worker performance
- Consistent and rigorous entry-to-practice standards
- Awareness of continuity of care for the client

Working conditions

Positive Aspects:

- Relationships with clients - “want to help”
- Work as part of a team

Challenges:

- Scheduling and Workloads
- Job insecurity
- Safety / Travel
- Feeling undervalued

Priorities for Employers

- Scheduling
- Job Security
- Travel reimbursement
- Safety
- Job valuing

Examples of Successes

- ✓ Collaborative Scheduling
- ✓ Self Scheduling
- ✓ Smart Phones / GPS
- ✓ Cluster Care
- ✓ Career Ladders

Priorities for Policy Makers

- Funding
- Chronic Care Focus
- Lack of National Educational Standards
- Undervalued Sector
- Recruitment

Examples of Successes

- ✓ Balance of Care
- ✓ Aging in Place
- ✓ National Educational Standards Project
- ✓ NS Provincial Wide Strategy
- ✓ Guidelines for Scopes of Practice (Ont, BC, Alta, NS)

Priorities for Educators

- Lack of National Standards
- Attracting Individuals to this Educational Path
 - Caring and Sharing
 - Experience and Exposure
 - Finances and Flexibility

Examples of Success

- ✓ National Educational Standards Project
- ✓ Recognition of previous experience (formal and informal)
- ✓ Customized Training
- ✓ Tuition Off-set
- ✓ Placement

Multi-Stakeholder Issues & Solutions

1. Wages
 2. Scheduling
 3. Educational Standards
 4. Scope of practice/role
 5. Profile of home support as a career option
- CHCA is committed to working with stakeholders on solutions and actions