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Direct Care Initiatives Announces Scholarship Program

Waterbury, VT – A Vermonter’s quality of life is significantly enhanced by their ability to receive in-home care versus residential care in a facility such as a nursing home. According to the most recent US Census data, the State of Vermont’s median age is the second oldest in the United States. The shortage of direct care nursing staff statewide is a challenge to providing those critical in-home supports. A new initiative is underway to address this critical staff shortage within in-home health.

The Vermont Direct Care Initiative is an intradepartmental collaboration within Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living between the Adult Services Division (Money Follows the Person Program, a federal demonstration project funded through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services) and HireAbility Vermont (formerly VocRehab). The goal is to increase the number of trained Direct Care Workers providing in-home health care, improve recruitment and retention of Direct Service Workers, and promote the healthcare career ladder through scholarships and mentorships.

“This program is a great example of a state and federal partnership that addresses a critical need in supporting the safety and security of some of our most vulnerable citizens. Caregiver support is a vital component for older Vermonters and people with disabilities who wish to remain in their own homes and communities.” said Lynne Cleveland Vitzthum, Project Director for the Money Follows the Person Program.

Scholarship Program

The Scholarship Program is now accepting applications. Each scholarship will be valued at \$5,000 and can be used towards education or training for in-home Direct Care Workers. This could include LNA certificate programs, LNA-LPN-RN career ladder or specific skill development (behavior management, nutrition, Alzheimer’s specialty training, etc.).

Scholarship Qualifications:

- At least 12 months of work as a Direct Care Worker providing in-home care.
- Priority given to those who are currently employed with a Home Health Agency or Homebased Provider and providing in-home care.
- Personal goal to continue education and employment within in-home direct care.

Scholarship Application Checklist:

- Completed Application Form
- Short essay
- Updated Resume

Mentorship Program

Mentorships provide an opportunity for Direct Care Workers to deepen their knowledge, connect with others in the field, and have the support of an experienced Direct Care Worker to reflect and ask questions. The Mentorship Program is still in development stages with an anticipated Spring/Summer 2023 start date.

More information can be found on our website: Vermont Direct Care Initiative | Disabilities Aging and Independent Living.

Program Coordinator Information:

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About the Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living (DAIL):

Our mission is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability - with dignity, respect, and independence.

<http://dail.vermont.gov/>

<https://www.facebook.com/DAILVT>

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