

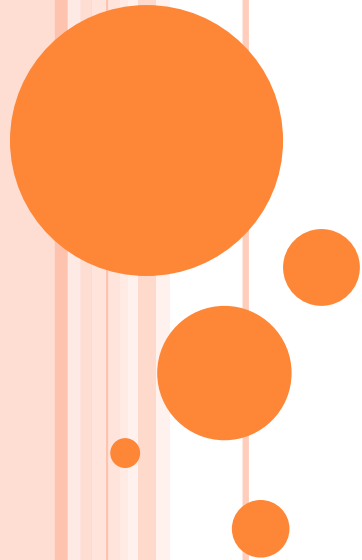
NEW MEXICO CAREGIVERS COALITION

2026 AGENDA FOR CAREGIVERS

NOVEMBER 6, 2025



NEW MEXICO
CAREGIVERS
COALITION





**NEW MEXICO
CAREGIVERS
COALITION**

WHAT IS NM CAREGIVERS COALITION?

NMCC advocates for direct care workers' education, training, benefits, wages and professional development so they may better serve people who are elderly and those with disabilities



TOWN HALLS LED TO OUR FORMATION

- Developmental Disabilities Council provided seed funding to identify voice of caregiver
- Town halls or Listening Sessions held across state to hear from them about challenges and solutions
- Intentional decision that the caregiver is the organizational voice
- Our organizational LENS is workforce development



New Mexico Caregivers Coalition develops trainings that recognize the personal and professional contributions of caregivers. Then we deliver trainings—to paid professionals and unpaid family members

Sample trainings:

- infection prevention
- safe transfer and mobility
- communications skills
- ethical and legally responsibilities
- financial literacy
- navigating Medicare
- history of home- and community-based services and workers' rights

Training provided tuition-free to caregivers. See

<https://www.nmdcc.org/training-for-caregivers/>



Click to learn more



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COALITION



Public Assistance Benefits Test

Now there's an easy way to determine online how state and federal benefits may change if a caregiver decides to continue their education or look for a better opportunity.

Click to learn more



A Winning Hand
of valuable tools
provided by



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COALITION



Partnered with Federal Reserve Bank to determine how state and federal benefits change if worker continues his/her education or looks for better job.

Portal developed by the Federal Reserve of Atlanta to assist job-seekers, HR and state policymakers.

Simulates educational attainment and career pathways, demonstrating what happens to one's public assistance benefits as a result.

Developed for New Mexico Caregivers Coalition FOR ALL New Mexicans, using state workforce and benefits data.

Go to: <https://www.nmdcc.org/public-assistance-benefits-test/>



Any student, worker or retiree wanting to work as respite caregiver can enroll in online, self-paced program results in Certificate of Completion — tuition-free to the caregiver.

Developed by ARCH National Respite Network, course builds knowledge and skills required for becoming a New Mexico RESPITE caregiver.

7-hour course focuses heavily on care for service to persons with developmental disabilities.

Go to: <https://newmexico-respitecarewi.talentlms.com/index>



Caregiver Certification

Students, potential caregivers and volunteers seeking work as caregivers can now take an online, self-paced program that results in a Certificate of Completion – all at no cost to the user.

Click to learn more

A Winning Hand of valuable tools provided by

NEW MEXICO CAREGIVERS COALITION



GREATEST IMPACT ON CAREGIVERS WORKING IN PUBLICLY-FUNDED SYSTEMS

Personal Care Services (PCS) Direct Care workers

help care recipients who are Medicaid beneficiaries, largely the aging and physically disabled populations, remain in own homes instead of institutions such as nursing homes. Workers largely provide services under Agency-Based Community Benefit (ABCB), are employed by PCS-funded provider agencies who contracted with Managed-Care Organizations which are, in turn, contracted with State (HB 94 (2023), HB 55 (2025), SB 103 (2025) which did not pass)

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)

work in Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver system to support individuals in home, ensure safe environment, foster personal choice in acquiring social, behavioral, interpersonal skills. Workers work for DD Waiver providers contracted with State (SB 85, SB 203/HB 395)





HB 395 “DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE STABILIZATION” BILL

- Required New Mexico Department of Health Dev Disabilities Supports Division to collect workforce data annually (volume, stability and compensation)
- Required DDS to report that data publicly for greater transparency
- Required DDS to conduct Rate Studies biennially (every two years), valuing DSP at 150% of state minimum wage



HISTORICAL PERSONAL CARE SERVICES (PCS) PROVIDER REIMBURSEMENT RATES

1999	\$18.00
2002	\$16.00
2003	\$15.50
2004	\$13.50
2007	\$13.50
2008	\$13.16
2009	\$12.88
2012	\$12.88
2013	\$12.88
2014	\$12.88
2015	\$13.40
2016	\$13.27
2017	\$13.27
2018	\$13.27
2019	\$13.40

Source: New Mexico Association for Home and Hospice Care, Presentation to Legislative Health and Human Services Committee 2024.



IMPORTANCE OF MEDICAID HCBS & WAGES OF DIRECT CARE WORKERS



Medicaid is the largest payer of long-term care and Home and Community-Based services (HCBS), enabling its beneficiaries across New Mexico to remain in their homes, integrated within their communities, and to avoid institutionalization.



*The federal government has acknowledged that high job turnover and shortages of home care workers are due largely to **low wages in the industry.***

In Turquoise Care: 25,602 New Mexicans rely on Agency Based Community Benefit for Personal Care services and 1,867 on Self-Directed Benefit—Community Benefit for Personal Care Services is largest program of Medicaid HCBS in NM.

MERCER BENCHMARKS STUDY

- In 2024, the New Mexico Health Care Authority engaged a third-party vendor, Mercer, in a “benchmarking” study to compare New Mexico’s PCS rates to neighboring states and to propose a minimum fee for MCOs to pay PCS providers.
- New Mexico Caregiver Coalition actively provided stakeholder input to study to effectively address the care crisis and the shortage of direct care workers.
- We argued for **a wage floor for the direct care workers serving this program, guaranteeing at least 150% the minimum wage, in order to:**
 - (1) achieve wage parity with the I/DD programs that will stabilize the workforce as it serves beneficiaries across all Medicaid HCBS programs;
 - (2) avoid relying on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data that results from existing low Medicaid reimbursement rates and does not properly rectify the ongoing workforce shortage;
 - (3) review PCS rates in the neighboring region to New Mexico for Benchmarking; Arizona: \$26.28/hr, Utah: \$27.64/hr, Colorado: \$26.32/hr.
 - (4) ensure rates are high enough for providers to be able to use 80% of funds on compensation for direct care workers as will be required by the CMS Ensuring Access to Medicaid rule finalized in April 2024.



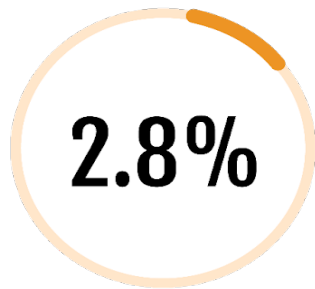
MERCER STUDY FINDINGS

- Ninety-seven (97) percent of all service utilization in 2023 was attributable to the Agency-Based Community Benefit (ABCB) Personal Care Services.
- Mercer selected median wage of \$18/hr to address existing workforce challenges by:
 - (1) supporting competitive wages to recruit and retain PCS workers,
 - (2) ensuring parity between similarly-funded Medicaid programs and services, and
 - (3) keeping pace with the increasing costs of doing business.
- Mercer estimated that New Mexico would need to appropriate an estimated **\$47.4 million to \$90 million**, in order to increase overall funding of Personal Care Services to raise wages to targets,
- With existing federal matching (71.66% FMAP), establish between \$168.5 and \$317.9 million dollars total to ensure rate increase.

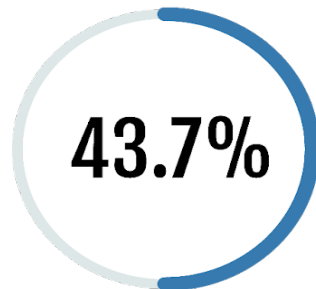


DIRECT CARE WORKER CRISIS DEMANDS IMMEDIATE ACTION

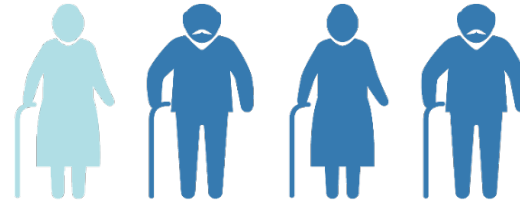
NEW MEXICO POPULATION INCREASES FROM 2010-2020



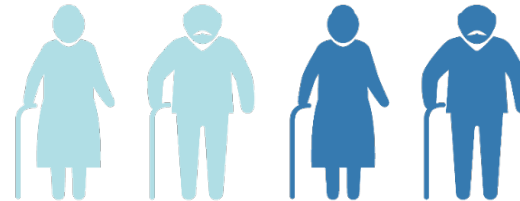
Overall population



Ages 65 and up

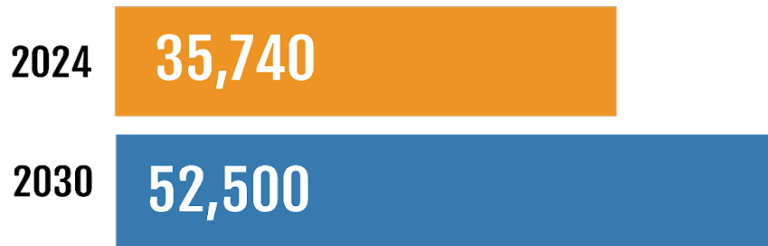


Nearly 50% of American 75 and older have a disability



1 in 4 of American 65-74 have a disability

HOME HEALTH AIDES AND PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANT JOBS IN NEW MEXICO



With the rapidly aging population in New Mexico, the State cannot keep delaying increases to these services because the crisis continues to grow. The recently issued minimum fee schedule \$20.40/hour (\$5.10/15 min) did not increase overall funding.



IMPACT OF RECENT FEDERAL CUTS

- Federal Changes: H.R. 1, An Act to Provide for Reconciliation Pursuant to Title II of H. Con. Res. 14 (also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act) (2025), which was signed into law by President Trump the House on July 4, 2025, and will reduce federal Medicaid spending over a decade by an estimated \$911 billion.
- State Response: New Mexico Special Session Bills HB 1 – made critical appropriations to backfill funds lost due to recent Congressional funding and included funding for services to support people in meeting new work reporting requirements in SNAP and Medicaid and funding to the Health Care Authority to hire additional staff and upgrade systems to handle the added administrative workload created by HR 1. Recognize importance of systems for direct care workers who rely on Medicaid expansion are able to retain health insurance.
- Protecting & Continued Investment in HCBS: A nursing home placement costs the State over \$9,039/month, while on average, Personal Care Services cost the State \$3,582/month. Investing in Personal Care could ultimately save the State money because it is significantly less expensive to provide care at home than in an institution.

THE NEED FOR WAGE FLOOR FOR DIRECT CARE WORKERS

- The ultimate goal to stabilize effectively stabilize the workforce would require bringing workers' wages to at least 150% of the NM minimum wage (\$18/hr).
- Intermediary increases are necessary to get there: Renew request **to raise the Minimum Fee Schedule to \$23.50/hr** with a guaranteed “wage pass through” – to ensure **70% of funding goes towards compensation for direct care workers (\$16.45)**.
- The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid “Ensuring Access to Medicaid” Rule that will require at least 80% of funding to Personal Care Services providers be used for compensation of direct care workers by 2030, and it's important to start building towards that goal as soon as possible.

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<https://twitter.com/NMCaregivers>

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