Provider Retention and Turnover Rates

Employers were asked to complete retention and turnover rates before and after the campaign. Formulas for calculating them were provided. There was difficulty in collecting this information because not all providers keep such records. It is also difficult to isolate one factor, such as the image campaign, as effecting turnover rates.

Stakeholder Focus Groups

After the campaign stakeholders came together to discuss their perception of the campaign's impact on recruitment and retention. Prepared questions were discussed and responses documented. This anecdotal data helped to measure the campaign's effectiveness and generate ideas on improving future efforts.

SUPPORTING A CAMPAIGN

Kenosha County was able to support its campaigns with Community Links funding, staff support from its Division of Aging Services, and space and telephone support from the local Job Center. Future plans include:

- In-kind help from members of the local Long Term Care Workforce Alliance
- Using Alliance dues for purchase of incentives, job fair booth fees, and other items
- Applications to small local foundations
- Soliciting sponsors for testimonial ads in local newspaper
- Re-focusing on no cost marketing tools like editorials and group presentations.

RESOURCES

- For information about Kenosha County's campaign contact Barbara Wisnefski, Long Term Care Workforce Project Coordinator, Kenosha County Aging & Disability Resource Center, 262-605-6646 or bwisnefski@co.kenosha.wi.us
- The Trempealau County Long Term Care Consortium has also implemented an impressive image and marketing campaign to assist providers with recruitment of direct care workers. Contact Pete Eide at 608-582-2211 or peteide@juno.com
- For information about Wisconsin's Community Links Workforce Project check out the web site at http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/aging/Genage/workforce.htm.

Alliance
WISCONSIN LONG TERM CARE WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

2850 Dairy Drive, Suite 200
Madison, WI 53718
608.224.6304
fax: 608.224.6306

email:
kellermanb@mailbag.com

The Wisconsin Long Term Care Workforce Alliance is a coalition of public and private organizations that recognize the critical role of direct caregivers in meeting the long term care needs of older persons and persons with disabilities.

While the Alliance works on statewide issues, its members also believe in the strength of Wisconsin's communities. We strongly encourage and support local efforts to address long term care workforce issues.

This manual presents the experiences of one Wisconsin community in trying to improve local public awareness of the important role of frontline workers in long term care.

March 2004 Issue

Improving Public Awareness of Work in Long Term Care

A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES

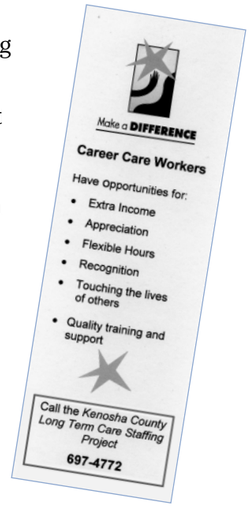
ONE COUNTY'S CAMPAIGN

When members of the Wisconsin Long Term Care Workforce Alliance heard about Kenosha County's public awareness campaign, they wanted to see similar initiatives throughout the state. The Alliance subsequently developed a plan and is looking for funds to help interested Wisconsin communities conduct local public awareness campaigns.

This guide and its companion "Creating Local Coalitions to Address Long Term Care Workforce Issues," provide communities with information that can help improve local awareness of the contributions made by long term care workers. In this issue, we describe Kenosha County's experience, initiated through a state Community Links grant, as one example of what a local stakeholder coalition can do to improve public awareness of the important role that direct care workers perform in the lives of older persons and persons with disabilities.

Why a public awareness campaign?

Turnover among staff in long-term care is the result of complex, interacting factors including low wages, difficult working conditions, lack of career advancement, negative public perceptions about the industry, and insufficient recognition and support from employers.

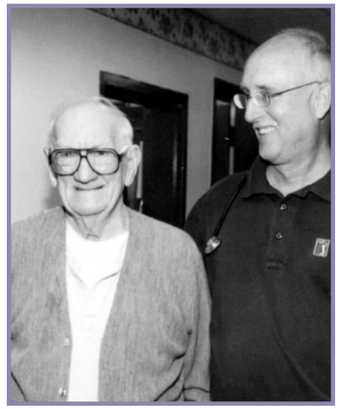


Kenosha County stakeholders felt that negative public opinion about work in long term care was one of the most potent barriers to fuller employment in the industry. They saw a marked discrepancy between workers' feelings about their profession and how they perceive it is viewed by the public.

Ironically, while most current long term care workers recognize the many rewards of their work, the public often emphasizes the physical demands or expresses a negative view of work with older persons. Some see long term care work as menial and unrewarding. Thus, existing workers do not feel respected or supported and often choose to hide their profession from others or leave their jobs. These negative views also prevent many potential applicants from considering jobs in long term care.

Kenosha County wanted to create a community environment in which care workers could proudly say, "Come do what I do."

We want workers to proudly say, "Come do what I do."



Incentives and Rewards

With money from a small local foundation, worker incentives were purchased at lower bulk pricing for providers. All the incentives display the logo and the modified slogan, "You Make A Difference." Items included lapel pins, tote bags, coffee cups, key chains and water bottles.

"You Make a Difference" note cards were sold at cost to providers to recognize their workers. The employees used these note cards as a written recognition of quality work, appreciation and general encouragement.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Stakeholders want to know whether a campaign is successful. Who were the people that responded to marketing strategies? Did the campaign reach intended audiences? Were expected outcomes achieved? What strategies worked best? What aspects of the campaign does the community want to sustain and how? There are several ways to help answer these questions.

Data Base of Information on Calls

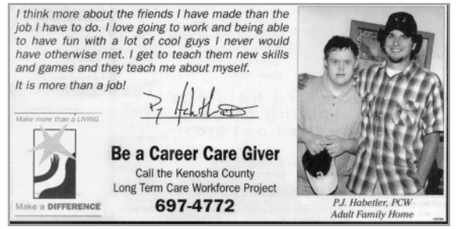
A database was developed to gather data on:

- Caller phone numbers and addresses for follow-up
- How callers learned about the campaign and what prompted them to call.
- Basic demographic information as well as work experience, education level, need for assistance, type of work that interest them
- Number of callers
  - Which callers received follow-up information and assistance
  - Which callers pursued training
  - Whether callers found employment and what type of employment
- Difficulties encountered in obtaining training and/or employment.
- Re-focusing on no cost marketing tools like editorials and group presentations.

Worker Satisfaction Surveys

A worker attitude survey was developed to help determine if the campaign changed the attitude of workers towards their work and the perception of workers of how the community valued their work. Employers were asked to distribute and collect these surveys before and after the campaign. Documentation of the collected data was compared by each employer and as a whole. This data helps to determine the effect the campaign had on the current workforce.

Newspaper Advertisements


I think more about the friends I have made than the job I have to do. I love going to work and being able to have fun with a lot of cool guys I never would have otherwise met. I get to teach them new skills and games and they teach me about myself.

It is more than a job!

Make more than a LIVING

Make a DIFFERENCE

Be a Career Care Giver

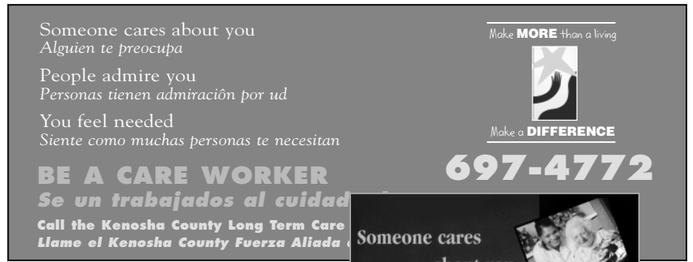
Call the Kenosha County Long Term Care Workforce Project

697-4772

P.J. Habetler, PCW
Adult Family Home

For three months, testimonial ads were placed in the Sunday edition of the local daily newspaper with 30,000 subscribers. These ads featured prominent citizens who expressed community appreciation of direct care workers, and career caregivers who voiced positive attitudes about their work. Providers felt that the ads helped with retention. Direct caregivers and other long term care employees reported feeling appreciated and recognized because of these ads.

Busboards



A cost effective marketing tool was the placement of interior bus posters in forty-three buses for two months to reach people who use public transit.

Posters

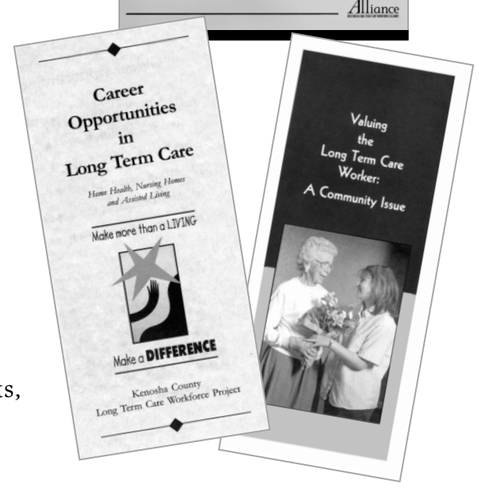
Two sizes of posters (8.5" x 11" and 11" x 14") were designed and printed and delivered to schools, libraries and churches and long term care facilities to promote the campaign.

Community Outreach

Face-to-face contact is a strong marketing tool. The Coordinator and Care Worker Advocate made presentations or participated in the following activities:

- High School Certified Nursing Assistant class
- Career Day presentations to middle schools
- Community organizations and interest groups
- Kenosha County Job Center Employer Relations Board
- Job fairs and expositions on health careers

Brochures / Bookmarks



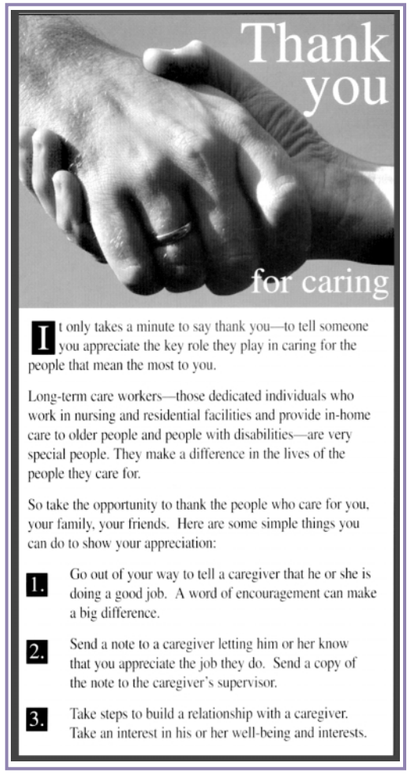
Brochures and bookmarks were designed for job seekers, students and the community. These hand-outs portrayed a more diverse population of caregivers and consumers. These were distributed to hotline callers, community college students, middle school students, and the general public.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Advisory Committee

The image of the long term care worker is more than an employer problem. It is a community problem. This belief led the Division of Aging Services to organize an advisory committee to suggest strategies for enhancing the image of work in long term care. Members included representatives from: home health, senior employment, nursing homes, the technical college, the school district apprenticeship program, civic minded community residents, a gerontology consultant, and later a social marketing consultant. This group met several times, generating key decisions about:

1. The campaign goals, theme and target audience
2. The types of marketing materials on which to focus limited dollars
3. Design and text of materials developed by the social marketing consultant
4. The community groups that should be targeted for presentations
5. Protocol for follow-up with callers who respond to the campaign hotline
6. Available mailing lists and newsletters that would reach the target audiences


Thank you for caring

It only takes a minute to say thank you—to tell someone you appreciate the key role they play in caring for the people that mean the most to you.

Long-term care workers—those dedicated individuals who work in nursing and residential facilities and provide in-home care to older people and people with disabilities—are very special people. They make a difference in the lives of the people they care for.

So take the opportunity to thank the people who care for you, your family, your friends. Here are some simple things you can do to show your appreciation:

1. Go out of your way to tell a caregiver that he or she is doing a good job. A word of encouragement can make a big difference.
2. Send a note to a caregiver letting him or her know that you appreciate the job they do. Send a copy of the note to the caregiver's supervisor.
3. Take steps to build a relationship with a caregiver. Take an interest in his or her well-being and interests.

Strategy

The committee felt, that by bringing public perceptions in line with the value long term care workers themselves place on their profession, recruitment levels would rise. In addition, the self-esteem of existing employees would improve, resulting in higher retention and lower turnover.

Campaign Goals

The goals established for the campaign were to:

1. Increase the flow of new applicants to direct-service positions in long term care
2. Raise self-esteem and thereby lower turnover rates of existing direct care workers
3. Positively affect the public perception of work in long term health care

Campaign Theme

The theme adopted for the campaign was "Make More Than A Living: Make A Difference". It allowed for many adaptations like "Making a Difference" or "I make a difference" which were later used on gifts given to direct care workers.

Target Groups

In addition to the general public, a different group of people was targeted in each year of the campaign as potential candidates for positions in long term care. They included:

- Homemakers who have children old enough to be self-sufficient and who are looking for paid employment, using their caregiving skills
- Recent high school graduates or students looking for part time work who may be interested in health care careers
- Newly retired or older adults looking to supplement their income or do something to help others
- Minority individuals and recent immigrants
- Nursing and nursing assistant students to consider careers in long term care

Methods

A social marketing consultant was employed to help the committee with logo development and selection of marketing and outreach methods. The campaign had several components:

1. Postcards mailed to targeted populations
2. Targeted advertising using testimonial ads in a local newspaper
3. Presentations and mailings to community organizations and churches
4. A dedicated phone number to call for information about work, volunteer and training opportunities
5. A media campaign using editorials, letters to the editor, and news coverage of recognition events
6. Directory of local long term care employers

Support Staff

These persons were key to accomplishing campaign objectives:

1. Community Outreach Specialist –
As staff of the Aging & Disability Resource Center, the experience of this individual was invaluable. She was the primary liaison to the subcontractors and printers, assisting in development of marketing materials for media and community purposes.

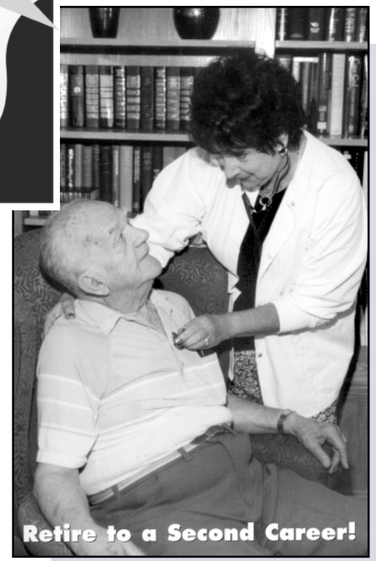
2. Long Term Care Workforce Project Coordinator –
Working with the Aging & Disability Resource Center and the Job Center, this individual served as the intermediary to the Kenosha County Long Term Care Workforce Alliance. The scope of this position includes supervision of the Care Worker Advocate, scheduling and facilitating outreach presentations, assisting with data collection and coordinating the public awareness campaign, community-wide training, and worker recognition activities.

3. Care Worker Advocate –
This individual, hired specifically for the campaign, answered the hotline, provided information, assistance and advocacy for callers, assisted with local job fairs and middle school career days, and kept a database on callers.

MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Theme / Logo Development

The theme, "Make more than a living, Make a difference," which had been used in Massachusetts, was chosen for the campaign A logo was developed by the marketing consultant depicting, in warm blue and yellow colors, an abstract hand that appears to gently touch someone and simultaneously reach out to a star.

Postcard Mailings

Three postcards were mailed at two-week intervals to a list of 5,300 persons. The list was purchased to demographically represent the target populations. Each card had a different photograph of a long-term care worker with a consumer. The back of each card described a benefit of work in long term care. Most of the campaign's hotline calls came as a result of the post cards.