

ANCOR Releases Results of 2009 DSP Wage Study

A clear disparity exists in wages and retention rates between privately-operate and state-operated providers of the Medicaid-funded support services for people with disabilities, according to the results of a national survey. The *2009 Direct Support Professionals Wage Study*, which was conducted in partnership between ANCOR and the Mosaic Collaborative for Disabilities Public Policy and Practice, also shows the negative effect of these wage and retention gaps on the private provider direct support workforce.

The survey results compared wages among DSPs employed by private providers with those who work for state-operated programs. The average 2009 wage for Direct Support Professionals working in private community-based agencies is \$10.14/hour compared to \$15.53/hour in state operated facilities – a 51% disparity. The net effect of this disparity is a 154.7% higher turnover rate for community DSPs and resulting deleterious emotional and psychic affects on the people with disabilities served.

“The link between low wages and high turnover is marked and the wage disparity among private and public DSPs is unjustified,” said Renee Pietrangelo, CEO of ANCOR. “As demand for the Medicaid services provided by DSPs increases, low wages will continue to prevent private-operated providers from attracting and retaining a qualified workforce. People with disabilities receiving support services in their communities need and deserve continuity in their support system.”

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 1 million new DSPs will be needed by 2016. Of those, 38 percent (388,538) will be for personal and home care aide positions, which is the category where DSP positions are most often included. “Without an increase in funding to support increased wages for DSPs working in the community, this workforce will continue to experience high turnover, which directly impacts the quality of supports and services,” says Kowalski. “Add in the exponentially growing number of aging Americans who will also need support services provided by DSPs, and America is witnessing a healthcare crisis of significant proportion.”

To learn more, visit www.ancor.org.

Save the Date – DSP Recognition Week is September 12-18, 2010

In May, the ANCOR Board unanimously adopted a resolution marking the week of September 12 as *Direct Support Professional Recognition Week*. ANCOR has also launched an effort seeking a U.S. Senate Resolution to establish this week concurrently as a national event – and, we are asking all 50 state governors to do the same!

The intent and purpose of *Direct Support Professional Recognition Week* is to honor DSPs for their commitment and devotion to supporting individuals and building community-inclusion for those with developmental and intellectual disabilities

ANCOR is readying resources to assist members in showcasing the work of DSPs during this recognition week in their own communities. Over the summer, ANCOR members and Public Relations Council will receive template materials, ideas and successes

collected from last year's celebration and some fresh new recommendations to ensure a successful week in 2010.

Stay tuned for more information on DSP Recognition Week activities coming your way this summer!