

CAPITAL AREA HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP (CAHP)
Working Together to Improve Healthcare in the Capital Region

Co-Conveners: Maureen Jenks, Capital Workforce Partners
Tiffany Morrissey, Connecticut Health Council

ACTION PLAN

March 2025

The Capital Area Healthcare Partnership is a regional sector partnership that brings together healthcare providers to collaborate on tackling shared challenges, and to strengthen the economic healthcare industry in the region. This partnership is being driven by healthcare leaders from across acute, post-acute, primary care, long-term care, home health, behavioral health, and other providers. Capital Workforce Partners and the Connecticut Health Council are the co-conveners, working in coordination with other economic development, workforce and education organizations at the region and state levels. The partnership is being modeled off other regional sector partnerships that are active across Connecticut and around the country.

Mission: To increase the stability of the healthcare industry as a critical economic driver and improve outcomes through collaborative strategies.

Operating Principles:

Work collaboratively to:

- Build synergy, not siloes
- Leverage, not duplicate
- Increase communication driving effective action
- Get things done!

CAHP LEADERSHIP TEAM

Goal: To ensure the Partnership is focused on the right priorities and achieving desired outcomes

Allison Breault, *iCare*
Rebecca Couceiro, *Hartford Healthcare*
Athena Dellas, *Wheeler Clinic*

Carol Fitzgerald, *New Horizons, Inc.*
Barry Simon, *Oak*

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Welcome and Introductions

- Sabrina Trocchi, *CEO, Wheeler Health*
- Roundtable introductions, *All*

Announcements

- **New members:** University of Hartford, Always Best Care of Central Connecticut, Liberty Homecare Options
- **CWP Annual Meeting: Friday, June 27th** more information to follow.
- **2025 Healthcare Hiring Events:**
 - **Update on career fair held on January 30th.**
 - Contact Maureen if you have thoughts on how attendees who get hired can be tracked. It is critical to understand the impact of these events.
 - **Next event** is scheduled for June 10th at the Connecticut Science Center
 - This will be for healthcare and healthcare IT roles.
 - Cost is \$150 per organization so that parking costs can be covered.
 - We have openings for thirty businesses (HC and Tech)
- **Good Jobs Challenge**
 - **Contact Maureen if you have openings for:**
 - Jobs in Cybersecurity or entry level IT
 - Revenue Cycle Management
 - CNA
 - Medical Assistants

Healthcare Labor Market Information (See attached)

- Karo Shakhnazarov, *Strategic Development and Research Coordinator, CWP*
- Dr. Tina Loarte-Rodriguez, *Executive Director, CT Center for Nursing Workforce*

Main takeaways:

- **Healthcare Workforce Demand and Retention Challenges** – While healthcare jobs, particularly for RNs, CNAs, and home health aides, continue to grow, retention is a significant issue due to high turnover, low wages, and work-life balance struggles. Addressing these challenges is critical to stabilizing the workforce.
- **Pipeline and Career Pathway Barriers** – Many healthcare workers, especially CNAs and internationally trained professionals, face obstacles in advancing their careers due to licensing barriers, financial constraints, and lack of clear career pathways. Supporting career progression can strengthen the workforce.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Healthcare Employment** – Occupational diversity is crucial for patient trust and improved health outcomes, yet disparities persist. Targeted support for underrepresented groups in nursing and healthcare careers is needed to foster a more representative workforce.

- **State and Government Funding’s Role in Workforce Stability** – With 80% of healthcare services funded by government programs (Medicaid/Medicare), stagnant rates directly impact workforce wages, retention, and hiring. Advocacy for increased funding is necessary to sustain the industry.
- **Policy and Legislative Action for Workforce Solutions** – Addressing childcare, pay equity, and licensing barriers, as well as engaging policymakers, can drive meaningful workforce improvements. Upcoming advocacy events, such as the May 21st Rally at the Capitol, provide key opportunities to push for change.

ACTION TEAM UPDATES

POLICY: Elevate the Voice of Healthcare with Policymakers

Action Team Members

Lisa Clark, *McLean*

Athena Dellas, *Wheeler Clinic*

Carol Fitzgerald, *New Horizons, Inc.*

Dan Keenan, *Trinity Health*

Keturah Kinch, *Wheeler Clinic*

Nichelle Mullins, *Charter Oak Health Center*

Barry Simon, *Oak Hill*

Bruce Stovall, *Oak Hill*

Tracy Wodatch, *Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home*

Michelle Fuhrman, *Office of Workforce Strategy*

Action Team Goal: To unify and strengthen the voice of healthcare providers and advocate for public policies that strengthen the stability of the healthcare industry, improve patient care, as well as the access to, and quality of, healthcare jobs.

Strategies:

The Policy Action Team is working closely with the Office of Workforce Strategy to form a collaborative that will be representative of the policy action teams of all the healthcare regional sector partnerships in the state.

Strategies:

- **Advocacy and Legislative Engagement are Crucial** – Understanding the legislative process and engaging with policymakers is essential to influencing Medicaid rates, workforce policies, and healthcare funding decisions. Bringing legislators to see the real impact firsthand can be powerful.
- **Workforce Challenges and Medicaid Rate Issues** – The stagnant Medicaid reimbursement rates (some unchanged since 2001) are significantly impacting workforce stability and service availability, necessitating legal and policy action to drive change.
- **Strategic Storytelling with Data** – Using healthcare data effectively to demonstrate the impact of funding decisions on workforce and patient care is key to persuading policymakers and the public. Clear messaging and real-life stories strengthen advocacy efforts.

- **Grassroots Mobilization and Coalition Building** – Engaging constituents, community organizations, and healthcare coalitions to advocate for policy changes can create pressure on decision-makers. Developing toolkits and simplifying the message can help mobilize supporters.
- **Exploring Alternative Funding and Policy Strategies** – Learning from other states (e.g., Massachusetts’ provider tax model) and engaging economic development and labor officials can open new avenues for funding and policy adjustments to support workforce needs.

Next Steps:

- There will be a **convening** of all the healthcare RSP’s on **Thursday, April 10th at 10am** (virtual). (Invite forwarded)
- Next **Action Team meeting** is set for Wednesday, April 16th at 10 (virtual)

WORKFORCE: Building the Healthcare Workforce for Tomorrow

Action Team Goal: Educate, engage, and actualize CT youth and adults regarding healthcare opportunities, careers, and career pathways.

Action Team Members (Those in bold are co-chairs)

Deborah Bradley, *The Village for Families and Children*
 Matthew Broderick, *Quinnipiac*
 Vicki Clark, *Blue Hills Civic Association (BHCA)*
 Maddy Clark, *Hartford Healthcare*
Rebecca Couceiro, Hartford Healthcare
 Victoria Fennell, *BHCA*
 Kimberly Forbes, *ECHN*
 Leah Fuhs, *Workforce Solutions Collaborative of Metro Hartford*
 Dr. Tina Loarte-Rodriguez, *CT Center for Nursing Workforce47*
 Danielle Middlebrooks, *BHCA*

Enrique Juncadella, *Workforce Solutions Collaborative of Metro-Hartford*
 Joanne Milord, *Hartford Healthcare*
 Norma Ortega, *Hartford Healthcare*
 Liane Povilonis, *Hartford Healthcare*
 Cristal Riley, *Hartford Healthcare*
 Anne Rolfe, *Mclean*
 Tricia Rowold, *Camp Courant*
 Janelle Rutledge, *Hartford Healthcare*
 Michelle Safo-Agyeman, *Hartford Healthcare*
 Joseph Seymour, *Manifest Maximum, LLC*
 Donna Smith, *DOL*
Nancy Taylor, Charter Oak College
 Daria Thibodeau, *Hartford Healthcare*

The **major focus** of this workgroup is to continue planning for a **second** dynamic, very interactive “Un-conference” on healthcare careers.

Main discussion points:

- **Advancing Unconference Development and Structure** – Progress is being made on the unconference framework, including refining themes, data integration, and prioritizing job outcome maps to ensure a meaningful and structured event.
- **Enhancing Student Engagement and Participation** – Efforts are being made to increase student involvement through poster presentations, amplifying student voices, and identifying high school and college groups to participate.
- **Logistics, Sponsorship, and Continuous Improvement** – Planning includes securing a venue (CSCU or University of Hartford), seeking sponsorships, and gathering feedback from last year’s attendees to refine and enhance this year’s event.

Next Planning Meeting: April 3rd at 10am (Virtual)

DATA: Healthcare Data Action Team

Action Team Goal: leverage healthcare data to drive informed decision-making, optimize resource allocation, and implement targeted interventions aimed at driving strategic workforce planning.

Action Team Members

Athena Dellas, *Wheeler Clinic*

Dr. Tina Loarte-Rodriguez, *CT Center for Nursing Workforce*

Karo Shakhnazarov, *Capital Workforce Partner*

Daria Thibodeau, *Hartford Healthcare*

This is a newly developed Action Team.

First meeting: April 11th at 1p (virtual)