

Workforce Report Communication Roadmap (PHASE 1)

The **LeadingAge Wisconsin Membership Engagement Action Plan** consists of two phases: Phase 1 is getting out the message of the workforce crisis; Phase 2 is the legislative “ask.”

This five-step roadmap is intended to guide your efforts in sharing the story of the workforce crisis facing long-term and residential care providers and its impact on your operations. **It is vital you get engaged** in this effort because **nothing will happen** – no increase in funding or money for training – **without your involvement**. While there are no guarantees about the eventual success of our efforts, you can be assured we won’t come close to succeeding if you don’t take an active part in both phases of this effort.

As noted below, **your State Senator and State Representative should be among the first people you contact.** [Click on this link](#) to find your State Senator, State Representative, and their contact information.

LeadingAge Wisconsin has prepared a Power Point presentation (including a 4 minute video) you can use when speaking to groups. You will need Internet access to view the video as part of the presentation. The presentation includes talking points for each slide to help guide the discussion. Download the presentation by [clicking on this link](#). The presentation is also available on the association’s website under the Public Policy tab.

If you plan to give the presentation in a location without Internet access, you will need to save the video to your laptop and link it to slide # 8 in the presentation. [Click here for instructions.](#)

You can order copies of [The Long-Term Care Workforce Crisis: A 2016 Report](#) from the LeadingAge Wisconsin office by calling 800.466.7011.

The Roadmap

Step 1: Identify your organization’s key constituents

Who in your community or among your key stakeholders needs to hear the story of the workforce crisis? Here’s a list of possible contacts:

- “Inside” stakeholders include persons or groups who are directly linked to the mission and work of your organization. While some of these groups already may be aware of your particular workforce crisis, they may not understand this is a statewide problem. Remember, you are planting seeds with this group. Their awareness and understanding about this issue

will be important when Phase 2 begins. Also remember to ask the inside stakeholders if they have personal connections with any of the “outside” stakeholders as those relationships may be helpful in opening doors. This is especially true for making connections with state legislators.

- Governing and/or foundation board(s)
 - Department managers, supervisors, other key staff
 - Resident council(s)
 - Current residents (IL, AL, & SNF) and family members, where appropriate
 - Volunteers
- “Outside” stakeholders:
 - **Your organization’s State Senator & State Representative** – This group holds the key to our efforts. They must hear about the workforce crisis and **should be at the top of your list of contacts.** And remember, sometimes your staff or other inside stakeholders live in a district represented by other legislators.
 - Local public officials (city or county administrator, city council, county board, etc.)
 - Civic groups (Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, etc.)
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Local technical college
 - Local school superintendent
 - Editor or editorial board of a local newspaper. The editor or editorial board is different than the local beat reporter. This is the individual or individuals who develop the editorial position of the newspaper.
 - Local TV news director or editorial director
 - Can you think of anyone else?

If you, a member of your staff, a board member, or a resident/family member has a personal connection with a member of the legislature [tell LeadingAge Wisconsin about this connections by clicking on this link](#). It will take you to a survey where you can record this important information.

Step 2: Develop your talking points or the message you want to convey

The Workforce Report paints a pretty scary picture of the looming workforce crisis. And while the data in the report speaks for itself, the message will be far more powerful if your organization personalizes the workforce crisis. Carefully review the workforce report and use the information as the springboard for talking about specific workforce issues facing your organization. Those might include:

- Your current vacancy rate for RNs, LPNs, CNAs, or other direct care workers
- Challenges finding qualified caregivers and recruitment efforts you’ve made
- Wage disparity with local employers hiring unskilled entry level workers
- Loss of trained personal caregivers to non-healthcare employers

- Impact on admissions because of insufficient staffing levels (you would rather have an empty bed or apartment than not have staff to provide proper care)
- Changes to your wage/benefit structure

Make a point of referring to your staff as caregivers rather than “employees” or “staff”. **Please don’t get *too* involved in a discussion about rates and reimbursement. That will come in Phase 2 of the project.** Your assignment is to increase awareness of the looming workforce crisis. It’s okay to note the clear need for additional Medicaid and Family Care funding to support caregivers. Let stakeholders know we are developing strategies and recommendations which will be shared at a later date.

A final point: Some providers may be reluctant to talk about their organization being in a “workforce crisis” as it may leave your audience with an impression you don’t wish to convey. We understand. Nevertheless, do not let this stop you from sharing your story and what you see as the workforce issues facing long-term and residential care providers. Remember, you are the expert in your field and your opinion matters.

Phase 1 of this advocacy action plan provides members with the opportunity to educate their community leaders about the challenges they are facing; Phase 2 of the plan will focus on the “ask” of the Walker Administration and the Legislature to help you meet those challenges. If we’ve all done our jobs, those we contacted during Phase 1 will be our allies during Phase 2.

Step 3: Decide how you want to share the information

There are several avenues for getting the word out to stakeholders.

- Presentations
- One-on-one conversations
- TV / radio / newspaper interviews and editorial board visits
- Email “blasts” from your organization
- Links on your website

As noted above, LeadingAge Wisconsin has prepared a Power Point presentation that includes a short video. Each slide offers several talking points to support your presentation. You can (and should) personalize the Power Point as needed. The video captures the feelings of residents, family members and staff toward provider organizations and their caregivers. See page one of this document for instructions on downloading the presentation and video.

Do you have a staff member (preferably a CNA or direct care worker), a resident and/or family member who could join you when you speak to groups or individuals? They can share their thoughts about the value of the caregivers and the dedicated service they provide. The people providing or receiving the care speak the loudest.

Email or call John Sauer (jsauer@LeadingAgeWI.org), Tom Ramsey (tramsey@LeadingAgeWI.org), or Jim Williams (jwilliams@LeadingAgeWI.org), 800.466.7011, with questions about the Power Point presentation or to order more copies of the Workforce Report.

Step 4: Making contacts and telling your story

It is vital you reach as many people as possible between now and the end of August. Use the list of inside and outside stakeholders you developed in Step 1 and start making appointments. Share the load – ask other members of your leadership team to help carry the message to your stakeholders.

Once again, please keep in mind your State Senator and State Representative should be among your first contacts.

Step 5: Let LeadingAge Wisconsin know what you've done and what you've heard

Keep us informed about your efforts – especially with your local legislators and other public officials. [Click on this link to record your conversations with stakeholders.](#) This information will help the association staff and LeadingAge Wisconsin board plan for the next phase of our effort.