



*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

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Achieve with us.

Janet Rico
President

Leo V. Sarkissian
Executive Director

Staff can't fill need for in-home and day services

Thank you for the Oct. 10 editorial, "Raising wages for an overlooked workforce: home health caregivers." Our workforce providing in-home assistance, day services, and small congregate homes has dipped far below what's needed. There was already high turnover before COVID-19, and now the inability to fill hours at in-home or in congregate settings represents a staffing gap of more than 35 percent. Can you imagine such a gap in your life?

We estimate that more than 3,000 people still have not returned to day services, leaving the people we serve isolated and caregivers overwhelmed after 30 months of the coronavirus pandemic. A census of personnel at day programs for those with autism, Down syndrome, and other developmental disabilities is below pre-COVID staffing levels. For example, MassHealth's Dayhab program reports 7,200 staff; pre-COVID numbers approached 10,000. In-person attendance at Department of Developmental Services day supports (as of June 2022) was reported at 78 percent, but that doesn't tell us how many people are back full or part time.

The individuals most affected are the ones who require one-to-one assistance for mobility, eating, bathing, and nursing care or are at risk of hurting themselves or others.

Funding is needed for services, as your editorial notes, and for those who require in-home care, flexibility in the use of the funds.

Leo V. Sarkissian
Executive Director
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This editorial appeared in the Boston Globe on Friday, October 14, 2022 in the column "Funds are key to fill growing gap in home health and nursing care." An online version is accessible here: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/10/14/opinion/funds-are-key-fill-growing-gap-home-health-nursing-care/>

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