

### High Turnover is Destabilizing Important Disability Supports

Recruitment and retention challenges for key staff are leaving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) vulnerable to losing support in the most important aspects of their lives—work, home and health.

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are frontline staff, funded primarily through Medicaid, who help people with I/DD live life like everyone else. They accomplish this through job coaching, supporting daily activities like grocery shopping, and by offering critical care for behavioral needs such as helping someone through an anxiety attack. However, difficulties attracting and retaining DSPs have reached a crisis level.

- **The national DSP turnover rate is at 45%.**
  - In some states, the turnover rate is as high as 80%.
- **55% of DSPs who leave their positions do so within their first year on the job.**
  - Highlighting that frequency, 35% of DSPs who leave their positions do so within their first six months.
- **Low wages and minimal benefits caused by fixed Medicaid rates are significant reasons for this turnover,** though many other factors contribute.

Lacking a stable workforce not only harms individuals with disabilities and their families, but also can lead to increased institutionalization and higher costs to states and the federal government. Support from DSPs helps people with I/DD live independently or with their families or peers, rather than in costlier state-run institutions.

### Solving the Crisis: How Can Congress Help?

ANCOR has put together a list of solutions and ways members of Congress can help alleviate the DSP workforce crisis, including:

- **Signing onto a letter to the Bureau of Labor Statistics** requesting improved data collection on this important workforce.
- **Supporting recruitment pipeline programs** through Workforce Investment Bureaus, high schools, local businesses and other means.
- **Empowering states to fund remote and assistive technologies** by requesting that CMS issue more guidance.
- **Allowing providers to reinvest savings generated by technology,** rather than having savings go back into general funds.
- **Improving states' reporting of the I/DD reimbursement rates** on which DSP salaries depend. Better rate transparency would highlight the need for more rate adjustments.



### For more information:

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