
LeadingAge[™]
Kansas
Workforce
TOOLKIT

Unlock Success:

Where Recruitment Meets Retention - The Perfect Partnership

1 Target Audiences & Marketing

This section covers target groups, partnerships for recruitment and retention, and effective marketing strategies for showcasing your organization's diverse opportunities.

2 Wages

This section addresses market rates for different positions and advocating at state and federal levels to enhance Medicaid and Medicare rates for better wage offerings.

3 Social Supports

This section discusses support mechanisms like employee assistance programs and peer mentoring to tackle compassion fatigue and discontent.

4 Scheduling

This section covers the various ways to offer unique scheduling options that can provide flexibility for staff while also meeting the needs of residents.

5 Education

This section discusses badge credentialing programs and college partnerships for staff recruitment and upskilling.

6 Apprenticeship Models

This section covers the Office of Apprenticeships in Kansas, recommended intermediaries, and the diverse positions suitable for apprenticeship models.

7 Childcare

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This section explores leveraging vacant independent living or apartment settings on campus for recruitment and retention.

Unlock Success: Where Recruitment Meets Retention

As the aging population grows, the demand for high-quality care and services for older adults intensifies. This has placed aging services providers under increasing pressure to build and sustain a skilled, compassionate, and dedicated workforce. However, recruitment and retention of staff continue to be major challenges in the field. The need to attract new talent while retaining current employees is crucial for maintaining continuity of care and ensuring a positive environment for both residents and staff. These two efforts—recruitment and retention—are inherently interconnected. Without a strong retention strategy in place, recruitment efforts may become an ongoing cycle of hiring and turnover, ultimately hindering the organization's ability to provide stable and quality services.

While both recruitment and retention strategies are essential, they must be seen as part of a broader, integrated approach that responds to the unique needs of each organization. To make meaningful improvements, aging services providers must look beyond generic solutions and take a more personalized, data-driven approach to workforce planning. An essential step in this process is conducting regular internal evaluations to identify the factors that are influencing employee satisfaction, engagement, and retention. These evaluations can help organizations determine which programs, practices, and workplace culture elements are most effective in attracting and retaining staff.

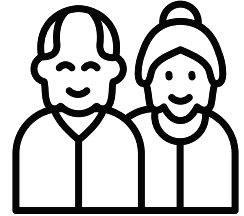
Moreover, by assessing internal factors such as workload, compensation, benefits, training opportunities, and career advancement paths, providers can pinpoint areas for improvement. Tailoring recruitment and retention strategies to the specific needs and strengths of the organization ensures that resources are used efficiently and initiatives are aligned with both organizational goals and employee needs. This approach not only reduces turnover but also improves employee morale and engagement, leading to higher levels of satisfaction among staff and the people they care for.

This toolkit provides aging services providers with a comprehensive framework for assessing and refining their recruitment and retention efforts. By offering practical tools for internal evaluation, the toolkit empowers organizations to make data-driven decisions that will improve their workforce strategies. Whether through enhancing employee support programs, adjusting recruitment channels, or implementing new initiatives to strengthen organizational culture, this resource is designed to help aging services providers optimize their workforce strategies and ensure long-term success.

1 Target Audiences

Retirees and Older Adults

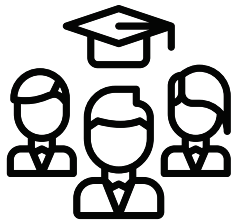
Why They Are a Good Fit: Retirees and older adults often have a wealth of life experience, strong work ethics, and a desire to stay active and engaged in their communities. Many are looking for part-time or flexible work that allows them to contribute meaningfully without the demands of a full-time job.



How to Connect:

Human Resources and Local Chambers: Partner with local chambers of commerce and HR departments to tap into networks of retirees seeking second careers or volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer or Senior Centers: Many senior centers offer volunteer programs that can serve as a pipeline for part-time or full-time positions in nursing homes.



K-12 Students

Why They Are a Good Fit: K-12 students, particularly those in high school, can be a great source of entry-level employees. Many students are interested in gaining work experience in healthcare settings, and positions such as nursing assistants or aides can be an excellent first job.

How to Connect:

Local School Districts: Work with local schools to establish internship, job shadowing, or work-study programs. These can provide students with valuable healthcare experience while helping to meet staffing needs.

Veterans and Military Spouses

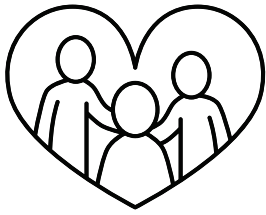
Why They Are a Good Fit: Veterans and military spouses possess strong skills in teamwork, discipline, and adaptability, making them ideal candidates for roles in nursing homes and aging services. Veterans may also be interested in giving back to the community and supporting others who have served.



How to Connect:

Veterans and Military Spouse Organizations: Partner with local veterans' organizations, such as the American Legion or the Kansas Veterans' Affairs Office, to reach veterans and military spouses who are transitioning to civilian careers.

1 Target Audiences



Foster Youth & JAG-K Students

Why They Are a Good Fit: Foster youth and students in the Jobs for America's Graduates-Kansas (JAG-K) program often face unique challenges but also demonstrate resilience, commitment, and a strong desire to succeed. These individuals can benefit from stable employment opportunities that provide a clear career path in the healthcare sector.

How to Connect:

Foster Care, Case Management Providers & JAG-K Program Managers: Work with case managers and JAG-K program leaders to connect with foster youth and JAG-K students interested in healthcare careers. Offer mentorship and job training to help them succeed in the field.

Refugees

Why They Are a Good Fit: Refugees often have a strong desire to rebuild their lives and contribute to their new communities. Many refugees come with diverse skill sets, including caregiving experience from their home countries, and are motivated by the opportunity to work in a meaningful field like healthcare.



How to Connect:

LeadingAge Toolkit: This toolkit provides guidance on how to recruit and support refugees in long-term care settings. It offers strategies for addressing language barriers and providing cultural competence training to ensure a smooth integration into the workforce.

Conclusion

By targeting specific populations such as retirees, K-12 students, veterans, foster youth, and refugees, nursing homes and aging services providers can tap into a diverse and motivated workforce. Each of these groups brings unique strengths to the table, and by offering tailored recruitment strategies and support, employers can build a dedicated and skilled team. For more information, explore the resources provided by local organizations and programs listed above.



1 Marketing

Career Ladders and Lattices

Highlight Career Ladders/Lattices to show the various ways individuals can grow personally and professionally within your organization. See a templated ladder/lattice in the back of this toolkit under Resources. See the templated apprenticeship career pathway from Hamilton Ryker [here](#).



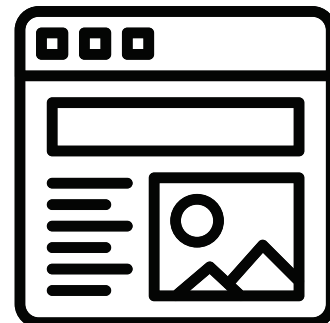
Testimonials



Capture testimonials in video interviews or written only format from senior staff who have dedicated their careers to your organization and highlight the benefits that helped them make that decision. You can capture the culture of your organization through resident and family testimonials as well.

Canva

Canva is free for not for profit organizations. You can utilize templates for posters, social media posts, PowerPoints, videos, and more to help market your open positions! Access the [LeadingAge Kansas Workforce **brochure**](#) and [bookmark](#) templates!



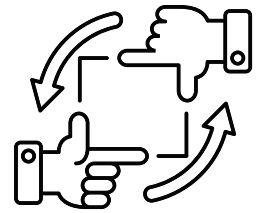
1 Marketing

1. Redefine Senior Living Careers

Showcase the Reality of Senior Living Work

Use video content and social media to highlight:

- Happy moments between associates and management through team-building and community involvement.
- Positive interactions between residents and associates in various roles, not just nursing.



Share testimonials that go beyond "I like working with older adults":

- Emphasize teamwork, career advancement, variety in roles, and opportunities to explore different professions.

Highlight Diverse Career Paths

Promote all job opportunities available in senior living, including:

- Culinary, IT, business, safety, grounds keeping, remodeling, maintenance, commercial driving, foundation work, marketing, accounting, and childcare.

Engage Through Job Fairs

Include residents at job fairs to provide a unique perspective on the work environment.

2. Leverage Volunteering and Internships

Build Volunteer Pipelines

Partner with high schools, colleges, and community groups to create volunteering opportunities that can lead to:

- Dining services, CNA roles, grounds keeping, and seasonal positions.

Offer Internships

Provide both paid and unpaid internships to:

- Introduce candidates to the field.
- Create a pathway to employment post-internship.



3. Promote Educational Assistance

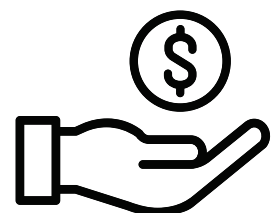
Debt Reduction Programs

Advocate for programs to help pay down college debt, especially in rural areas.

Continuing Education Support

Advertise benefits such as:

- Tuition reimbursement.
- Paid CEUs or in-house CEU opportunities.
- Support for all roles, not just clinical positions.



1 Marketing

4. Emphasize Benefits Over Hospital Work

Work-Life Balance

Highlight family-friendly hours and flexible shifts (e.g., no 12-hour shifts).

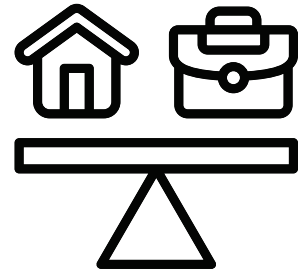
Unique Work Environment

Intimate settings foster relationships with both residents and colleagues.

Creative and less rigid work structures compared to hospitals.

Career Growth

Opportunities for advancement and diverse job duties.



5. Foster a Culture of Community

Build Relationships

Showcase stories of connections between staff and residents. Share examples of teamwork and mutual support among associates.

Advertise Intangible Benefits

Emphasize the rewarding nature of relationships built within the community.



2 Wages



Northwest Kansas

Registered Nurses - \$53,985 - \$72,927
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$39,979 - \$50,474
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$27,418 - \$33,883



Northeast Kansas

Registered Nurses - \$56,546 - \$77,847
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$42,205 - \$54,476
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$27,789 - \$34,980



Southwest Kansas

Registered Nurses - \$52,169 - \$70,046
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$39,711 - \$52,357
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$26,800 - \$33,883



Southeast Kansas

Registered Nurses - \$51,998 - \$70,491
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$37,965 - \$49,905
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$26,836 - \$31,893



North Central Kansas

Registered Nurses - \$58,851 - \$70,959
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$38,971 - \$51,229
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$27,142 - \$32,907



South Central Kansas

Registered Nurses - \$53,220 - \$76,104
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$39,561 - \$54,982
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$27,142 - \$35,011



Kansas City Area

Registered Nurses - \$59,967 - \$87,434
Licensed Practical Nurses - \$46,889 - \$64,901
Certified Nursing Assistants - \$31,381 - \$40,486



Statewide - Registered Nurses

Entry Level - \$55,740 or \$26.80/hour
Median - \$66,460 or \$31.95/hour
Experienced - \$80,000 or \$38.46/hour



Statewide - Licensed Practical Nurses

Entry Level - \$41,430 or \$19.92/hour
Median - \$49,250 or \$23.68/hour
Experienced - \$56,760 or \$27.29/hour



Statewide - Certified Nursing Assistants

Entry Level - \$27,820 or \$13.37/hour
Median - \$31,880 or \$15.33/hour
Experienced - \$36,290 or \$17.45/hour



Find more occupation wages by county, regions, and statewide!

Find more on occupational profiles on the Kansas Labor Information Center (KLIC) through the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) website. You can also find wage information by purchasing a report through [LeadingAge National](#).

2 Understanding Cost Based Reimbursement

How Cost Reimbursement Models Impact Salary Wages

In Kansas, nursing homes and other aging services providers rely heavily on Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements to cover operating costs, including staff wages. However, the reimbursement rates for these programs often do not fully cover the costs of providing care, especially in rural areas or for facilities with a high percentage of Medicaid patients. This can impact the ability of nursing homes to offer competitive wages and benefits to their staff.

Medicare and Medicaid Reimbursement Determination

- Medicare Reimbursement:
 - Medicare primarily covers individuals 65 and older, or those with disabilities, for skilled nursing care. The reimbursement rate for Medicare is determined by a fixed payment system based on the Resource Utilization Groups (RUGs) model, which categorizes patients based on their care needs. The rate can vary depending on the patient's condition and the level of care required.
 - Skilled Nursing Facility Prospective Payment System (SNF PPS): This system reimburses nursing homes based on the patient's clinical condition and care requirements, rather than the actual cost of care. This often leads to discrepancies between the reimbursement rates and the actual cost of providing care, especially for complex or long-term residents.

- 2. Medicaid Reimbursement:
 - Medicaid is the primary payer for low-income individuals, and in Kansas, it covers a significant portion of nursing home residents. Medicaid reimbursement rates are determined through a cost-based formula, where providers submit cost reports to the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS). The reimbursement rates are adjusted annually but are often lower than the actual cost of care, which can create financial strain for nursing homes.
 - Kansas Medicaid Reimbursement: The state uses a cost-based reimbursement system, where facilities are reimbursed based on allowable costs for providing care, including direct care, administrative, and capital costs. However, the rate is capped, which can limit the ability of providers to raise wages without impacting their bottom line.

2 Understanding Cost Based Reimbursement & Wages

Strategies to Stay Competitive

Given the financial challenges posed by Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement rates, nursing homes and aging services providers can implement various strategies to stay competitive in attracting and retaining staff:

1. Wage Increases

- **Annual Wage Adjustments:** Regular wage increases can help nursing homes remain competitive with other employers in the healthcare sector. While reimbursement rates may not always cover the full cost of wage increases, many facilities can look for efficiencies in operations or seek additional funding sources (e.g., private pay patients, grants) to support wage growth.
- **Market-based Pay Adjustments:** Regularly assess local wage trends to ensure that wages are competitive with other healthcare employers in the area. This may involve conducting wage surveys or using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Kansas Department of Labor.

2. Scholarships and Loan Forgiveness

- **Education Assistance:** Offering scholarships or tuition reimbursement for staff pursuing nursing or other healthcare-related degrees can be an attractive benefit. This helps staff advance their careers while alleviating financial burdens associated with education.
- **Loan Forgiveness Programs:** Nursing homes can explore federal and state loan forgiveness programs, such as the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program, which offers loan forgiveness to healthcare workers who work in nonprofit or public healthcare settings for a certain number of years. Many facilities can partner with educational institutions to inform staff about these opportunities.

3. Sign-On Bonuses

- **Upfront Financial Incentives:** Offering sign-on bonuses for new hires is a common strategy to attract staff, especially for hard-to-fill positions like nurses and certified nursing assistants (CNAs). These bonuses can be structured in different ways, such as lump-sum payments or installments over time.
- **Targeted Bonuses for Critical Positions:** Nursing homes may offer higher bonuses for specialized positions, such as RNs or LPNs, or for staff willing to work night shifts or in high-demand areas.

2 Understanding Cost Based Reimbursement & Wages

Strategies to Stay Competitive

4. Retention Incentives

- **Retention Bonuses:** Offering retention bonuses for staff who stay with the facility for a certain period (e.g., after 6 months or 1 year) can help reduce turnover. These bonuses can be paid out in stages to encourage long-term employment.
- **Recognition Programs:** Non-financial retention incentives, such as employee recognition programs, can also improve morale and retention. These may include awards, employee of the month programs, or other forms of recognition that acknowledge staff contributions.

5. Benefits and Work-Life Balance

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Offering flexible work schedules or shift rotations can be a valuable tool for attracting staff, particularly for those with family or personal commitments.
- **Health and Wellness Benefits:** Providing comprehensive health insurance, dental, and vision coverage, as well as mental health support, can make a significant difference in staff retention. In addition, offering wellness programs or gym memberships can help staff maintain a healthy work-life balance.

6. Grants and Alternative Funding

- **State and Federal Grants:** Nursing homes and aging services providers can apply for grants from the state or federal government to help offset operational costs. For example, Kansas providers may be eligible for the Kansas Medicaid Nursing Facility Quality Care Improvement Program, which offers funding to improve care quality and staff training.
- **Private Funding and Philanthropy:** Some facilities may seek private funding or donations to support wage increases or other retention strategies. Partnering with local businesses or philanthropic organizations can help raise funds for employee programs.

3 Social Supports

1. Social Supports

Social support systems can play a crucial role in employee well-being. These programs help staff feel connected, valued, and supported, which is essential for long-term retention.

Strategies:

- **Peer Support Networks:** Create opportunities for staff to connect and share experiences. This can be through informal lunch meetings, virtual groups, or team-building activities.
- **Employee Social Events:** Regular social events, such as potlucks, wellness days, or celebrations, can help build camaraderie and reduce stress.
- **Community Engagement:** Encourage staff participation in community service or charity events, fostering a sense of purpose and connection to the community.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS):** KDADS offers a variety of programs and resources for aging services providers, including workforce development initiatives. Visit [KDADS website](#) for more information.

2. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) provide confidential support to employees dealing with personal issues that may affect their work performance. These programs can be an essential tool for improving employee retention by addressing mental health, stress, and personal challenges.

Strategies:

- **Mental Health Support:** Offer EAP services that provide counseling, crisis intervention, and mental health support. These services help staff cope with work-related stress and personal challenges.
- **Financial Counseling:** EAPs can also offer financial counseling, which may help employees manage financial stress, a common source of burnout.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Programs that focus on improving work-life balance, such as flexible scheduling or access to child or eldercare resources, can reduce employee turnover.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas EAP Services:** Many Kansas-based EAP providers specialize in mental health and wellness services for healthcare workers. Examples include:
 - **ComPsych:** Offers EAP services for a wide range of issues, including stress, mental health, and financial counseling. Visit [ComPsych website](#).
 - **New Directions Behavioral Health:** Offers support for mental health, addiction, and wellness. Visit [New Directions website](#).

3. Mentor Programs

Mentor programs can help new employees adjust to their roles, build skills, and create a sense of community within the workplace. This can reduce early turnover and improve job satisfaction.

Strategies:

- **New Hire Mentorship:** Pair new staff members with experienced employees who can guide them through their first months. This relationship helps new hires feel supported and reduces the stress of transitioning into a new role.
- **Peer Mentorship:** Encourage experienced staff members to mentor their peers. This can help foster a collaborative work culture and ensure that everyone has access to advice and guidance.
- **Leadership Development:** Develop mentorship programs aimed at growing future leaders within the organization. This ensures a pipeline of skilled employees ready to step into leadership roles.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas State Board of Nursing:** The Kansas State Board of Nursing offers continuing education and mentorship opportunities for nurses, which can be integrated into your facility's mentoring programs. Visit [Kansas State Board of Nursing website](#).
- **LeadingAge Kansas:** LKS offers resources and training for long-term care providers, including mentorship programs and leadership development. Learn more about the Center for Leadership.

4 Scheduling

Utilizing Scheduling as a Recruitment and Retention Tool

Scheduling flexibility is a powerful tool that nursing homes and other aging services providers can use to recruit and retain staff. By offering creative and adaptable scheduling options, providers can enhance job satisfaction, reduce burnout, and attract a wider pool of potential employees. Below are several strategies that can be implemented to improve scheduling and work-life balance for staff, which ultimately benefits both employees and the organization.

1. Self-Scheduling

Why It Works: Self-scheduling allows employees to have more control over their work hours. This flexibility can lead to higher job satisfaction, as employees can adjust their schedules to better fit their personal lives. It can also help reduce burnout by preventing staff from feeling overworked or overwhelmed by rigid schedules.

How to Implement:

- Implement scheduling software that allows employees to select their shifts within a set framework.
- Set guidelines for required coverage to ensure that essential shifts are filled while giving employees autonomy over their hours.
- Use self-scheduling to accommodate part-time workers or those with specific scheduling needs (e.g., caregivers or students).

Benefits:

- Increased employee satisfaction and retention due to greater work-life balance.
- Flexibility for employees to accommodate family, school, or other personal commitments.

2. Part-Time and Job Share Opportunities

Why It Works: Part-time and job share positions are ideal for individuals who may not be able to commit to full-time hours, such as parents, retirees, or students. Job sharing, where two employees split the duties of one full-time role, can provide staffing flexibility while still ensuring adequate coverage.

How to Implement:

- Offer part-time roles for positions that traditionally require full-time hours, such as certified nursing assistants (CNAs) or medical records staff.
- Promote job-sharing arrangements, where two employees work on alternating shifts to cover a full-time role, allowing for more rest and less stress.

Benefits:

- Attracts individuals who need flexibility, such as parents or students.
- Helps fill shifts without overburdening full-time staff.
- Reduces burnout by offering staff the option to work fewer hours.

4 Scheduling

3. Remote Work for Non-Clinical Roles

Why It Works: While clinical roles require on-site presence, non-clinical roles, such as administrative staff, human resources, or billing, can often be done remotely. Offering remote work for these positions can be an attractive benefit for employees who seek flexibility or work-from-home opportunities.

How to Implement:

- Identify non-clinical roles that can be performed remotely, such as data entry, payroll processing, or staff training.
- Offer hybrid work models, where employees can work remotely for part of the week and come on-site for meetings or required tasks.
- Use virtual communication tools to maintain connectivity and collaboration among remote and on-site staff.

Benefits:

- Attracts candidates who prefer remote work, such as caregivers, parents, or individuals with mobility challenges.
- Reduces office space needs and overhead costs.
- Increases employee retention by offering a better work-life balance.

4. Weekend-Only or 4-Day Workweeks

Why It Works: Weekend-only or 4-day workweeks are appealing to employees who want to enjoy a longer break during the week or those who prefer working on weekends when the facility may be less busy. These flexible schedules can help attract staff who are looking for non-traditional work hours, such as students or those with second jobs.

How to Implement:

- Offer weekend-only shifts for those who prefer working on Saturdays and Sundays, which could be ideal for part-time workers or those seeking supplemental income.
- Introduce 4-day workweeks by extending shifts slightly (e.g., 10-hour shifts) to ensure the same number of hours are worked, but in fewer days.
- Consider rotating weekend shifts to give employees more predictable time off.

Benefits:

- Increases flexibility for staff who need longer breaks or who prefer working weekends.
- Helps cover shifts during busy times (e.g., weekends) with motivated staff.
- Can be particularly appealing for younger workers or those with family commitments.

4 Scheduling

5. Rotations Among the Continuum of Care in Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs)

Why It Works: For staff working in Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs), rotating among different levels of care—such as independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing—can provide variety and reduce the monotony of working in a single setting. It also offers staff opportunities for career development and a broader understanding of the aging services continuum.

How to Implement:

- Create structured rotations for staff to move between different areas of the community, allowing them to gain experience in various care settings.
- Ensure that rotations are balanced and provide adequate training for staff to work in different areas of care.
- Offer job shadowing or mentoring programs to help staff transition smoothly between roles.

Benefits:

- Reduces monotony and burnout by providing variety in daily tasks and interactions.
- Enhances staff skill development and broadens career opportunities.
- Improves job satisfaction by offering a dynamic work environment.

6. Flexible Scheduling for Family Caregivers

Why It Works: Family caregivers often face challenges in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities. By offering flexible scheduling options, nursing homes can attract and retain individuals who may have caregiving duties at home, such as parents or spouses.

How to Implement:

- Offer flexible hours or the ability to shift schedules based on caregiving needs.
- Implement "family leave" options or the ability to adjust schedules for staff who need time off to care for family members.

Benefits:

- Attracts a larger pool of candidates, particularly women, who are more likely to be family caregivers.
- Improves retention by supporting employees' personal lives and reducing stress.

Conclusion

Nursing homes and aging services providers can significantly enhance recruitment and retention efforts by implementing flexible and creative scheduling options. By offering self-scheduling, part-time roles, job sharing, remote work for non-clinical positions, weekend-only or 4-day workweeks, and rotations in CCRCs, these organizations can create a work environment that supports staff well-being, reduces burnout, and attracts a diverse workforce. These scheduling strategies, when combined with competitive wages and benefits, can help providers stay competitive in a challenging labor market.

5 Education

BADGE AND MICRO-CREDENTIALING

Nursing home providers and other aging services organizations can leverage badge credentialing and micro-credentialing programs, such as the Aging Services Professional Badge offered by Wichita State University, to enhance their workforce's skills, increase employee engagement, and offer non-traditional educational opportunities. These strategies not only improve the quality of care provided but also serve as powerful recruitment and retention tools.

1. What is Badge Credentialing and Micro-Credentialing?

Badge credentialing and micro-credentialing are alternative educational pathways that allow employees to gain specific skills in short, focused learning modules. These credentials can be earned through workshops, online courses, or college-affiliated programs.

- Badges are digital representations of skills, achievements, or competencies that employees can earn by completing targeted learning activities.
- Micro-credentials are similar but typically represent a deeper mastery of a specific skill or set of skills, often requiring more time and effort to complete than badges.

For example, Wichita State University's Aging Services Professional Badge is a micro-credential designed to equip employees with essential soft skills and knowledge related to aging services, such as communication, empathy, and leadership.

2. How Badge Credentialing Enhances Soft Skills for All Employees

Soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution, are critical in aging services. Badge credentialing programs help employees develop these skills in a structured, measurable way. For example, employees can earn badges in:

- **Effective Communication:** Learning how to communicate with elderly residents, families, and coworkers, particularly in emotionally charged or sensitive situations.
- **Cultural Competence:** Understanding diverse backgrounds and providing care that respects individual differences.
- **Leadership and Teamwork:** Developing skills for leading teams, working collaboratively, and managing conflicts in a healthcare setting.
- **Customer Service Excellence:** Training in resident interaction, problem-solving, and delivering compassionate care.

3. Micro-Credentialing for Specialized Skills

Micro-credentials offer specialized training in areas critical to the aging services field. These programs allow employees to gain advanced skills in a short amount of time without committing to a full degree program. For example, micro-credentials could cover:

- **Dementia Care:** Training on managing care for residents with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.
- **Palliative and End-of-Life Care:** Skills for providing comfort and support to residents nearing the end of life.
- **Medication Management:** A deeper understanding of pharmacology and medication administration for nursing staff.

5 Education

BADGE AND MICRO-CREDENTIALING

- Crisis Management and De-escalation: Techniques for managing difficult situations with residents or families.

These credentials can be particularly appealing to staff who want to advance their careers without returning to school full-time.

4. Recruitment Benefits:

Badge credentialing and micro-credentialing programs offer several advantages in attracting new employees to nursing homes and aging services providers:

- Attractive Career Development Opportunities: Offering employees the chance to earn badges or micro-credentials positions the employer as an organization invested in career growth and personal development. This can be a key differentiator when recruiting staff, especially those looking for employers who support continuous learning.
- Appealing to Younger Workers: Younger generations, including Millennials and Gen Z, value ongoing education and skill-building. Badge credentialing allows them to acquire new skills without the financial or time commitments of traditional degree programs.
- Partnerships with Educational Institutions: Nursing homes and aging services providers can collaborate with universities like Wichita State University to create tailored programs that align with the specific needs of their workforce, increasing the appeal of working in the field.

5. Retention Benefits:

Badge credentialing and micro-credentialing can also play a significant role in retaining staff by offering career advancement opportunities and a sense of accomplishment:

- Clear Pathways for Advancement: Offering employees a clear path for skill development through badges and micro-credentials provides motivation for long-term employment. Employees can see how their efforts to improve their skills directly contribute to career advancement and potential wage increases.
- Increased Job Satisfaction: Providing opportunities for employees to grow professionally helps improve job satisfaction, reducing turnover. When employees feel that their employer is investing in their growth, they are more likely to stay.
- Recognition and Rewards: Nursing homes and aging services providers can integrate badge credentials into their reward systems, offering tangible recognition for employees who complete training programs. This could include public recognition, promotions, or even pay increases.

6. Non-Traditional Educational Opportunities to Support Workforce Development

In addition to badge credentialing, non-traditional educational opportunities can further support recruitment and retention:

- Online Learning Platforms: Many providers offer flexible online courses through platforms like Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, or specialized programs in aging services. These courses can be accessed by employees on their own time, making it easier for staff to fit learning into their schedules.

5 Education

BADGE AND MICRO-CREDENTIALING

- **On-the-Job Training and Mentorship Programs:** Pairing employees with experienced mentors who can guide them through learning opportunities and provide real-time feedback enhances both professional development and job satisfaction.
- **Workplace-Based Learning:** Nursing homes can integrate training into daily operations, allowing employees to learn while working. For example, offering workshops or training during shift changes can reduce time away from work and help staff develop new skills in real-world settings.
- **Continuing Education Partnerships:** Establishing partnerships with local colleges and universities to offer ongoing educational opportunities, such as certifications in specialized areas (e.g., geriatric care, social work), can provide staff with valuable credentials while staying employed.

7. How to Implement Badge Credentialing and Micro-Credentialing in Your Organization

- **Partner with Local Colleges and Universities:** Collaborate with educational institutions like Wichita State University to offer badge credentialing programs tailored to the specific needs of your workforce.
- **Create a Learning Culture:** Promote a culture of continuous learning and development within your organization. Encourage staff to participate in educational opportunities by offering incentives, such as pay increases, bonuses, or time off for completing programs.
- **Track Progress and Reward Achievements:** Use digital platforms to track employees' progress in earning badges or micro-credentials. Celebrate their achievements publicly to reinforce the value of learning and professional growth.
- **Offer Financial Support:** Provide financial assistance or reimbursement for employees who pursue credentialing programs, including those that lead to badges or micro-credentials.

Conclusion

Badge credentialing and micro-credentialing programs, such as the Aging Services Professional Badge offered by Wichita State University, are powerful tools for enhancing soft skills, increasing job satisfaction, and providing non-traditional educational opportunities in nursing homes and aging services settings. By offering these flexible learning pathways, organizations can attract new employees, improve retention, and ultimately create a more skilled and motivated workforce.

6 Apprenticeships

Registered Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are an effective strategy for nursing homes and aging services providers in Kansas to address workforce shortages, enhance staff skills, and create long-term career pathways. By offering structured apprenticeship programs, providers can attract new workers, provide on-the-job training, and help staff advance in their careers, ultimately supporting both recruitment and retention efforts in the state.

1. What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a formal training program that combines hands-on work experience with classroom instruction. For nursing homes and aging services providers in Kansas, apprenticeships can be tailored to various positions, including Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Registered Nurses (RNs), and other key roles. Apprenticeships in Kansas can be developed in partnership with local educational institutions, such as community colleges and vocational schools, to ensure that training meets the needs of both employers and employees.

2. Benefits of Apprenticeships for Recruitment in Kansas

- **Attracting New Workers:**
 - **Paid Training:** Apprenticeships offer paid on-the-job training, which is an attractive benefit for individuals in Kansas who want to gain experience and earn a paycheck simultaneously. This is particularly beneficial for those entering the workforce or transitioning from other industries.
 - **Career Pathways:** Apprenticeships provide a clear pathway for career advancement. For example, a CNA apprenticeship could be the first step toward becoming an LPN or RN, offering employees a roadmap for career growth within the organization.
 - **Targeting Underrepresented Groups:** Apprenticeships are a great way to attract individuals from underrepresented groups in Kansas, such as high school graduates, veterans, and individuals transitioning from other fields. These groups may be more likely to join the workforce if they have access to structured, hands-on learning that leads to career advancement.
- **Building Strong Relationships with Educational Institutions:**
 - Nursing homes and aging services providers in Kansas can partner with local community colleges, such as Kansas City Kansas Community College or Washburn University, and vocational schools to create apprenticeship programs that align with educational curricula. This can help attract students who are already pursuing healthcare careers but need practical experience to complete their training.

6 Apprenticeships

3. Benefits of Apprenticeships for Retention in Kansas

- Skill Development and Career Advancement:
 - Apprenticeships help employees develop the specific skills needed for their role, which leads to higher competency and confidence in their work. Employees who feel competent in their roles are more likely to stay with the organization.
 - Offering opportunities for employees to advance within the organization (e.g., from CNA to LPN or LPN to RN) through apprenticeship programs increases retention by showing employees that there are opportunities for growth and promotion.
- Employee Engagement and Satisfaction:
 - Apprenticeship programs often involve mentoring, where experienced staff guide and support new apprentices. This mentoring relationship can increase employee satisfaction, as staff feel supported and valued in their roles.
 - Offering structured career progression through apprenticeships helps employees see the long-term potential of working in the aging services field, reducing turnover and increasing commitment to the organization.
- Reduced Recruitment Costs:
 - By training employees through apprenticeships, nursing homes and aging services providers can reduce recruitment costs over time. Apprentices who are trained within the organization are more likely to stay and become long-term employees, reducing the need for constant hiring and training of new staff.

4. How to Implement Apprenticeship Programs for CNA, LPN, RN, and Other Positions in Kansas

For CNAs (Certified Nursing Assistants):

- Partnership with Kansas Educational Institutions: Establish partnerships with Kansas community colleges or vocational schools to offer CNA apprenticeship programs. This could involve a combination of classroom learning and on-the-job training in the nursing home setting. Institutions like Kansas City Kansas Community College or Butler Community College offer healthcare programs that could be integrated into apprenticeship models.
- On-the-Job Training: Apprentices learn by working directly with experienced CNAs, gaining hands-on experience in patient care, safety protocols, and other essential skills. This is especially valuable in Kansas, where rural areas often face CNA shortages.
- Mentorship: Experienced CNAs can mentor apprentices, providing guidance and support as they learn the ropes of the job.

For LPNs (Licensed Practical Nurses):

- LPN Apprenticeship Pathways: Nursing homes in Kansas can create apprenticeship programs that allow CNAs to advance to LPNs through a combination of classroom education and practical, on-the-job experience. This provides a clear career

6 Apprenticeships

progression for employees and helps fill the LPN staffing gap in Kansas, where demand for LPNs is high.

- **Integration with Kansas Nursing Schools:** Partner with nursing schools such as Washburn University or Fort Hays State University to offer apprenticeship programs that allow LPNs to gain clinical experience while working in the facility, ultimately leading to certification and licensure.

For RNs (Registered Nurses):

- **RN Residency Programs:** Some nursing homes and aging services providers in Kansas may offer RN residency programs as an apprenticeship model, providing newly graduated RNs with mentorship and hands-on training to transition from school to practice.
- **Bridge Programs:** Offer bridge apprenticeship programs that allow LPNs to advance to RNs through additional education and training. These programs help nursing homes develop a pipeline of skilled RNs who are already familiar with the organization's culture and needs.

For Other Positions (e.g., Social Workers, Dietary Staff, Administrative Roles):

- **Customized Apprenticeship Programs:** Nursing homes in Kansas can develop apprenticeship programs for other critical roles, such as social workers, dietary staff, and administrative positions. These programs can include a combination of formal education and hands-on experience, tailored to the needs of the organization.
- **Cross-Training:** Offer cross-training opportunities for employees in various roles, allowing them to learn about different aspects of the facility's operations. This can increase employee engagement and provide a more flexible workforce.

5. Financial Incentives and Support for Apprenticeships in Kansas

- **Apprenticeship Grants and Funding:** Kansas offers funding and tax incentives for employers who create apprenticeship programs through initiatives like the Kansas Department of Commerce's Apprenticeship Program. Nursing homes and aging services providers can explore these opportunities to offset the costs of training and mentoring apprentices.
- **Wage Increases for Apprentices:** Offering competitive wages for apprentices, with incremental increases as they progress through the program, can be an effective way to retain them. For example, apprentices could receive pay raises as they gain more skills or certifications, creating a financial incentive to stay with the organization.

Certification and Credentialing: Provide financial support for apprentices to earn certifications or credentials as part of the apprenticeship program. For example, covering the cost of CNA, LPN, or RN certification exams can be a valuable retention tool.

6 Apprenticeships

6. Promoting Apprenticeships as a Recruitment and Retention Strategy in Kansas

- **Highlight Apprenticeships in Job Advertisements:** Nursing homes and aging services providers in Kansas should prominently feature apprenticeship opportunities in job advertisements to attract candidates interested in career advancement and skill development.
- **Offer Apprenticeship Completion Recognition:** Celebrate the completion of apprenticeship programs with certificates, public recognition, or even graduation ceremonies. This helps employees feel valued and reinforces the importance of their career development.
- **Incorporate Apprenticeships into Employee Benefits:** Promote apprenticeships as part of the overall benefits package, emphasizing how they contribute to long-term career growth and job security.

HOW TO OPEN A CHILDCARE FACILITY

Step 1: Determine the Type of Care

[Family Child Care Home](#)

[Child Care Center](#)

[Preschool](#)

[School Age Program](#)

[Drop-In Program](#)

[Day Care Referral Agency](#)

Step 2: Schedule Orientation

Attend a required orientation before applying for a license.

[Find local contacts.](#)

Step 3: Submit Your Application

[Create an Account](#)

[Submit an Online Application](#)

Note: Application and background check fees are currently covered under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Step 4: Complete Background Checks

[Learn more about background checks.](#)

Step 5: Onsite Survey

An onsite survey will be conducted prior to opening.



PRIOR TO OPENING

Regulations to Consider

- [Child Care Facility Requirements](#)
- [Infant and Toddler Care Guidelines](#)
- [Safe Sleep Recommendations](#)

Forms and Applications

- [New Facility Application](#)
- [Application Checklist](#)
- [Request for Licensing Amendment](#)

Emergency Preparedness

- [Emergency Preparedness Guide](#)

STAFF AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Staff Qualifications

- [Program Director Requirements](#)
- [Lead Teacher Requirements](#)

Health and Safety

- [Fire Safety Requirements](#)
- [Immunization Requirements](#)
- [Behavior and Guidance Guidelines](#)

ONGOING COMPLIANCE

Annual and Renewal Processes

- [Annual Mechanical Safety Check](#)
- [Renewal Application](#)
- [Site Approval and Consultation](#)

Reporting and Notifications

- [Closure Notification Form](#)
- [Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities](#)
- [Kansas Early Childhood Director Credentials](#)
- [Kansas Enrichment Network](#)

For more detailed information, visit the [Kansas Department of Health and Environment Child Care Licensing page](#).

CHILDCARE SUBSIDIES

Nursing homes and other aging services providers in Kansas can leverage childcare subsidies as a powerful recruitment and retention tool for their workforce. Here's how:

1. Educate Staff About Childcare Subsidies

- **Understand Eligibility:** Many childcare subsidies in Kansas are income-based and may apply to nursing home staff, especially entry-level employees. Providers should familiarize themselves with programs like the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) Child Care Assistance program.
 - [Kansas Child Care Assistance](#)
- **Promote Awareness:** Include information about childcare subsidies in employee onboarding materials, newsletters, and HR communications.

2. Partner with Local Childcare Providers

- **Establish Relationships:** Collaborate with local childcare centers to reserve spots for employees' children or negotiate discounted rates for staff.
- **On-Site or Nearby Childcare:** Consider partnering with a nearby childcare facility or establishing an on-site childcare program to provide convenient access for employees.

3. Provide Supplemental Support

- **Employer Contributions:** Supplement childcare costs by offering direct stipends or covering a portion of employees' childcare expenses.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs):** Enable employees to set aside pre-tax dollars for childcare costs through a Dependent Care FSA, reducing their financial burden.

4. Highlight Childcare Benefits in Recruitment

- **Market the Perk:** Use childcare subsidies and support as a key selling point in job postings and recruitment materials to attract talent.
- **Retention Focus:** Emphasize that childcare support is part of the organization's commitment to work-life balance and employee well-being.

5. Utilize the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

- **Leverage Funding:** ARPA funds may cover application and background check fees for childcare providers. Aging services employers could facilitate employees' access to these subsidies and ensure they understand the benefits.
 - [American Rescue Plan Act Childcare Benefits](#)

6. Provide Flexibility for Parents

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Offer shifts that align with childcare availability, including split shifts or part-time options.
- **Emergency Backup Care:** Establish partnerships for emergency or backup childcare options to support employees during unexpected situations.

7. Advocate for Policies Supporting Childcare Subsidies

- **Engage in Advocacy:** Work with state policymakers to expand childcare assistance programs and ensure eligibility criteria align with the needs of healthcare workers.
- **Collaborate with Trade Associations:** Use associations like LeadingAge Kansas or the Kansas Health Care Association to advocate for expanded childcare support for the aging services workforce.

By implementing these strategies, nursing homes and aging services providers can reduce financial stress for employees, enhance job satisfaction, and improve both recruitment and retention efforts.

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Intergenerational programming, which integrates childcare and elder care, can be a unique and impactful recruitment and retention tool for nursing homes and other aging services providers in Kansas. Here's how these programs can be leveraged:

1. Develop On-Site Intergenerational Programs

- **Shared Facilities:** Create or partner with on-site childcare facilities that also engage with residents in the nursing home or assisted living community.
- **Activities for All Ages:** Implement structured activities such as storytelling, arts and crafts, gardening, and music sessions where children and residents interact.
 - **Benefit for Staff:** Employees appreciate the convenience of on-site childcare while witnessing the positive emotional and social impact on residents.

2. Market Intergenerational Programs as a Unique Perk

- **Highlight in Recruitment Materials:** Promote intergenerational programs as a standout benefit in job postings and interviews.
- **Appeal to Family-Oriented Candidates:** Emphasize the opportunity for employees to bring their children into a supportive, enriching environment.

3. Foster Employee Engagement Through Family Involvement

- **Family Days:** Host family-focused events where employees, their children, and residents come together for celebrations or special occasions.
- **Employee Participation:** Allow staff to actively engage in intergenerational activities during breaks or non-working hours, creating a sense of community and connection.

4. Provide Financial Incentives for Participation

- **Subsidized Childcare:** Offer reduced childcare fees for employees who participate in intergenerational programming.
- **Work-Life Integration:** Demonstrate a commitment to employees' families by aligning work and childcare needs.

5. Leverage Positive Outcomes for Branding

- **Showcase Impact:** Share stories and testimonials of successful intergenerational interactions in marketing materials, social media, and recruitment campaigns.
- **Community Recognition:** Position the organization as a pioneer in innovative care models, enhancing its reputation and attractiveness to potential hires.

6. Strengthen Employee Retention Through Emotional Benefits

- **Resident and Child Relationships:** Highlight the joy and fulfillment that staff experience seeing their children form meaningful bonds with residents.
- **Improved Morale:** Employees often feel a deeper connection to their workplace when they see the positive effects of intergenerational programs.

7. Build Partnerships and Secure Funding

- **Collaborate with Local Organizations:** Partner with childcare providers, community centers, or educational institutions to support program implementation.

- **Seek Grants and Support:** Apply for funding through initiatives like the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or other local/state programs aimed at enhancing childcare and elder care services.

8. Advocate for Policy Support

- **Policy Alignment:** Work with state and local policymakers to promote intergenerational programming as a solution to both childcare and elder care challenges.
- **Trade Association Involvement:** Engage with organizations like LeadingAge Kansas to push for funding and regulatory support for such programs.

Examples of Intergenerational Programming Benefits

- **For Residents:** Improved mental health, reduced loneliness, and enhanced cognitive engagement.
- **For Children:** Increased empathy, social skills, and a broader understanding of aging.
- **For Employees:** Reduced stress related to childcare logistics and increased workplace satisfaction.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

Aging services providers in Kansas can use after-school and summer programs for older youth as a valuable recruitment and retention tool. These programs address childcare needs for older children, reduce stress for working parents, and enhance workplace satisfaction. Here's how providers can implement and leverage these programs:

1. Partner with Local Schools and Organizations

- **Collaboration with Schools:** Partner with local schools, community centers, or organizations like the YMCA to offer after-school and summer programs tailored to employees' needs.
- **Shared Resources:** Utilize existing spaces or facilities within the aging services provider's premises for hosting youth programs.

2. Create On-Site Youth Programs

- **Convenient Location:** Develop on-site programs where older youth can engage in educational, recreational, or volunteer activities while their parents work.
- **Intergenerational Opportunities:** Include activities where youth interact with residents, such as tech tutoring, art projects, or storytelling sessions, fostering meaningful connections.

3. Subsidize or Fully Cover Program Costs

- **Financial Assistance:** Offer free or subsidized access to after-school and summer programs as part of the employee benefits package.
- **Flexible Payment Options:** Provide payroll deductions for any associated program costs to make participation easier for employees.

4. Offer Enrichment Activities for Older Youth

- **Skill Development:** Include STEM workshops, leadership training, or college prep sessions to add value for employees' families.
- **Job Shadowing:** Provide opportunities for older youth to learn about careers in healthcare or aging services, potentially fostering interest in the field.

5. Highlight as a Recruitment Incentive

- **Market the Program:** Use after-school and summer programs as a unique benefit in recruitment materials, emphasizing the organization's commitment to family-friendly policies.

- Appeal to Parents: Target working parents who value structured, safe, and enriching environments for their children.

6. Enhance Retention Through Family Support

- Reduced Stress: By addressing childcare concerns for older youth, employees experience less stress and improved focus at work.
- Work-Life Balance: Demonstrate that the organization values employees' families and supports their needs.

7. Engage Older Youth in Volunteer or Paid Roles

- Summer Internships: Offer older youth opportunities to work in the facility, assisting with activities or administrative tasks, which can also provide valuable experience.
- Resident Engagement: Facilitate youth-led activities, such as reading clubs or tech assistance, that enhance residents' quality of life.

8. Secure Funding and Partnerships

- Grants and Sponsorships: Apply for grants or partner with local businesses to fund youth programs, reducing costs for the organization.
- Community Collaboration: Work with organizations like Boys & Girls Clubs or local libraries to expand program offerings.

9. Build a Family-Friendly Culture

- Incorporate Feedback: Regularly gather employee input to tailor programs to their children's interests and needs.
- Recognize Participation: Celebrate the contributions of employees and their families in newsletters, social media, or staff events.

10. Advocate for State Support

- Policy Advocacy: Work with state legislators and trade associations to promote funding for after-school and summer programs that benefit healthcare workers.
- Expand ARPA Benefits: Advocate for the use of ARPA funds or similar initiatives to subsidize youth program costs for aging services staff.

Key Benefits

- For Employees: Reduced childcare stress, improved work-life balance, and enhanced job satisfaction.
- For Older Youth: Enrichment opportunities, skill development, and potential career pathways in healthcare.
- For Providers: Increased staff retention, improved recruitment appeal, and a stronger sense of community.

Subsidized Housing

Affordable housing is a significant factor in the recruitment and retention of staff in nursing homes and other aging services settings. Offering housing solutions or collaborating with local housing initiatives can provide employees with stability and reduce financial stress, making it easier to attract and retain quality workers. Below are some housing strategies and resources that Kansas-based providers can leverage.

1. Affordable Housing Options

Affordable housing options can significantly reduce the burden of high living costs for healthcare workers, improving job satisfaction and retention.

Strategies:

Partnerships with Local Housing Authorities: Collaborate with local housing authorities to provide affordable housing options for employees, including access to low-income housing programs.

On-Site Housing: If feasible, consider providing on-site housing for staff, especially in rural areas where housing may be limited.

Rent Assistance Programs: Offer rent subsidies or assist with securing affordable rental housing options in the local area to help staff manage living expenses.

Kansas Resources:

Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC): KHRC provides affordable housing programs across Kansas, including funding for low-income housing and rental assistance. Providers can explore partnerships or direct staff to KHRC programs. Visit [KHRC website](#).

Kansas Housing Assistance Program (KHAP): This program offers rental assistance to eligible individuals. Staff members could potentially qualify for support, making it easier for them to live and work in Kansas. Visit [KHAP website](#).

2. Subsidized Housing Programs

Subsidized housing programs can reduce the financial burden on employees by offering lower rent based on income.

Strategies:

Section 8 Housing Vouchers: Help staff access Section 8 housing vouchers, which provide rental assistance to low-income individuals and families. This program is widely available and can be a valuable resource for your employees.

Local Subsidized Housing Projects: Collaborate with local subsidized housing developers to offer affordable housing options for staff, especially in areas with limited housing supply.

8 Housing (Transportation)

Kansas Resources:

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): HUD administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Kansas residents can apply for vouchers through local public housing authorities. Visit [HUD website](#) for more information.
- Local Housing Authorities: Kansas cities such as Wichita, Topeka, and Kansas City have their own housing authorities that administer subsidized housing programs. Check local housing authority websites for more details:
 - Wichita Housing Authority: Visit [Wichita Housing Authority](#).
 - Topeka Housing Authority: Visit [Topeka Housing Authority](#).
 - Kansas City, KS Housing Authority: Visit [KCK Housing Authority](#).

Transportation

Transportation challenges can be a significant barrier to recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in rural and underserved areas where public transportation options may be limited. Offering transportation support can help reduce the financial and logistical burdens on employees, making it easier for them to access work and improving overall job satisfaction. Below are transportation strategies and resources that nursing homes and aging services providers in Kansas can leverage to attract and retain staff.

1. Employer-Provided Transportation

Providing direct transportation options for staff can be a highly effective way to overcome transportation barriers, especially in rural areas.

Strategies:

- Shuttle Services: Offer a shuttle service for employees, particularly for those who live in nearby towns or rural areas without access to public transportation. This can be a scheduled service that picks up employees at central locations and brings them to the facility.
- Carpool Programs: Organize and incentivize carpooling by connecting employees who live in the same area. You can offer incentives such as gas stipends or parking discounts for carpool participants.
- Vanpooling: For larger groups of employees traveling from similar locations, consider providing a vanpool service. This can be a cost-effective solution for rural providers with multiple staff members commuting long distances.

Kansas Resources:

- Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT): KDOT offers various transportation initiatives that may support rural transportation needs. Visit [KDOT website](#) for more information about funding and programs.

8 Housing (Transportation)

2. Public Transportation Partnerships

In urban and suburban areas, public transportation options can be a valuable resource for staff. Establishing partnerships with local transit agencies can make commuting more affordable and accessible for employees.

Strategies:

- **Transit Pass Subsidies:** Provide subsidized or free public transit passes for employees, making it easier for them to commute without the financial burden of full fare costs.
- **Partnership with Local Transit Authorities:** Work with local transit agencies to ensure routes align with shift schedules. If necessary, negotiate special routes or extended hours to accommodate staff working non-standard hours.
- **Discounted Fare Programs:** Collaborate with public transit providers to offer discounted fares for employees. Many transit authorities offer group discounts or employer-sponsored programs.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA):** KCATA serves the Kansas City metropolitan area and provides bus and streetcar services. Employers in the area can partner with KCATA to offer discounted or subsidized passes. Visit [KCATA website](#) for more details.
- **Wichita Transit:** Provides bus services in the Wichita area. Employers can explore options for subsidized transit passes or route adjustments. Visit [Wichita Transit website](#) for more information.

3. Transportation Stipends and Reimbursement

Providing transportation stipends or reimbursement for commuting costs can ease the financial burden on employees, especially in areas where public transportation is limited or unavailable.

Strategies:

- **Commuter Stipends:** Offer a monthly stipend or reimbursement for commuting expenses, including gas, tolls, and parking fees. This can be particularly helpful in rural areas where employees may need to drive long distances.
- **Mileage Reimbursement:** For employees who use their personal vehicles to commute, provide mileage reimbursement at the IRS-approved rate. This can help offset the costs of driving and encourage staff to stay with the organization.
- **Parking Assistance:** Offer free or discounted parking for employees, especially in urban or suburban areas where parking costs can be high.

8 Housing (Transportation)

4. Flexible Scheduling to Accommodate Transportation Needs

In rural and underserved areas, long commute times can be a barrier to retention. Offering flexible scheduling can help employees manage their transportation challenges.

Strategies:

- **Staggered Shifts:** Offer staggered shift start times to accommodate different commuting schedules. For example, employees who live further away may appreciate having the option to start and finish their shifts at different times to avoid peak traffic.
- **Compressed Work Weeks:** Implement compressed workweek schedules (e.g., four 10-hour days) to reduce the number of commuting days per week, making it easier for employees to manage transportation.
- **Telecommuting Options:** For non-clinical staff, offer telecommuting options where possible to reduce the need for daily commuting.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Works:** Kansas Works offers workforce development programs that may include flexible work initiatives and transportation resources. Visit [Kansas Works website](#) for more information.

5. Car Loan and Purchase Assistance

In rural areas, many employees may rely on personal vehicles for commuting. Offering car loan assistance or helping staff purchase vehicles can ensure reliable transportation to work.

Strategies:

- **Car Purchase Assistance:** Partner with local dealerships or financial institutions to offer employees discounts or favorable financing options for purchasing reliable vehicles.
- **Car Loan Programs:** Offer low-interest car loans or down payment assistance for staff who need help securing transportation for their commutes.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Financial Institutions:** Local banks and credit unions in Kansas may offer special auto loan programs for employees. Consider partnering with financial institutions to provide affordable loan options. Visit [Kansas Credit Union Association](#) for more information.

6. Ride-Hailing and Taxi Services

In areas without public transportation, providers can partner with ride-hailing services to offer employees convenient and cost-effective transportation options.

Strategies:

- **Subsidized Ride-Hailing:** Partner with ride-hailing services like Uber or Lyft to provide subsidized or discounted rides for employees, particularly for those working late shifts or in areas without reliable public transit.
- **Taxi Service Partnerships:** In areas where ride-hailing services may not be available, consider partnering with local taxi services to offer discounted rides for employees.

Kansas Resources:

- **Uber and Lyft:** These ride-hailing services are available in select Kansas cities and may offer discounted rides through employer partnerships. Visit [Uber](#) or [Lyft](#) for more details.

Geographical Areas: Rural vs. Urban Recruitment & Retention

Recruiting and retaining staff in rural nursing homes and aging services settings presents unique challenges due to geographic isolation, limited access to resources, and competition from urban centers. However, rural providers can leverage specific initiatives tailored to their communities and workforce needs. Below are key strategies rural providers can implement to attract and retain staff, alongside comparisons to urban and suburban approaches.

1. Rural-Specific Recruitment Incentives

Rural areas often face difficulties in attracting talent due to location and lower population density. Offering targeted recruitment incentives can help overcome these barriers.

Strategies:

- **Loan Forgiveness Programs:** Partner with state or federal programs offering student loan repayment or forgiveness for healthcare professionals who work in underserved rural areas. This is especially effective for nurses, therapists, and other healthcare staff.
- **Relocation Assistance:** Offer financial support for new hires who are relocating to rural areas, including moving stipends or temporary housing options.
- **Sign-On Bonuses:** Provide competitive sign-on bonuses for new hires, particularly for hard-to-fill positions like nurses and certified nursing assistants (CNAs).

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (KHPLRP):** This state program offers loan repayment assistance for healthcare professionals who work in rural areas of Kansas. Visit [KHPLRP website](#) for more information.
- **National Health Service Corps (NHSC):** Offers loan repayment for healthcare professionals in rural and underserved areas. Visit [NHSC website](#) for details.

2. Housing and Living Support

Affordable housing and support for living in rural areas can be a significant factor in staff retention. Rural nursing homes can offer creative housing solutions and community integration.

Strategies:

- **Housing Stipends and Subsidies:** Provide rent or mortgage assistance to help staff manage housing costs, especially in areas with limited affordable housing.
- **On-Site Housing:** For areas with limited rental options, consider offering on-site housing for staff or developing partnerships with local landlords to secure affordable rental units.
- **Community Engagement:** Foster a sense of community by connecting new staff with local groups, events, and support networks to ease their transition to rural life.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC):** KHRC provides affordable housing programs and rental assistance. Visit [KHRC website](#) for more information.
- **Rural Housing Service (RHS):** The USDA Rural Development program offers housing assistance for rural areas, including low-interest loans and grants for homeownership. Visit [USDA Rural Development for more details](#), [Kansas State University](#), and [Washburn University](#).

3. Education and Training Programs

In rural areas, access to formal education and training can be limited. Offering educational support can help build a pipeline of skilled workers while increasing retention.

Strategies:

- **Partnerships with Local Colleges:** Partner with local community colleges and vocational schools to provide training and certification programs for nursing assistants, nurses, and other healthcare staff.
- **Continuing Education Support:** Offer tuition reimbursement or scholarships for employees pursuing advanced degrees or certifications, helping them advance in their careers.
- **On-the-Job Training:** Provide robust mentorship and on-the-job training opportunities for new hires to help them develop skills and build confidence.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Board of Regents:** The state offers various scholarships and educational programs that can help staff access training and development. Visit [Kansas Board of Regents](#) for more information.
- **Kansas Community Colleges:** Many Kansas community colleges offer nursing and healthcare training programs. Consider partnerships with local institutions to support workforce development. Visit [Kansas Community Colleges](#).

4. Flexible Work Arrangements and Family Support

In rural areas, staff may face unique family and caregiving responsibilities. Offering flexibility can help staff balance work and personal life, improving job satisfaction and retention.

Strategies:

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Offer flexible shift options, such as part-time, per diem, or rotating shifts, to accommodate staff needs.
- **Childcare Support:** Provide access to childcare services or offer subsidies to help staff manage family responsibilities.
- **Telehealth or Remote Work Options:** For certain roles, such as administrative or support positions, offer remote work or telehealth options to reduce commute times and increase work-life balance.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF):** Offers child care assistance programs for eligible families. Visit [Kansas DCF website](#) for more information.

5. Community-Based Recruitment

Rural areas can benefit from community-based recruitment efforts, tapping into local talent pools and fostering a sense of belonging among staff.

Strategies:

- **Local Job Fairs and Community Outreach:** Host job fairs in local schools, churches, and community centers to engage potential candidates who are already familiar with the area.
- **Incentives for Local Candidates:** Offer recruitment bonuses or special incentives for local residents who are interested in healthcare careers.
- **Internships and Volunteer Programs:** Develop internship or volunteer programs for high school and college students, creating a future pipeline of local healthcare workers.

Kansas Resources:

- **Kansas Workforce Alliance (KWA):** A state initiative that connects employers with local talent through workforce development programs. Visit [KWA website](#) for more details.

6. Collaboration with State and Federal Programs

Rural providers can tap into state and federal programs designed to support healthcare workers in underserved areas.

Strategies:

- **Rural Health Grants and Funding:** Access state and federal grants aimed at improving healthcare services in rural areas. These funds can be used for staff training, retention initiatives, or facility improvements.

8

Housing (Geographical Areas)

- Telemedicine and Telehealth Initiatives: Leverage telehealth programs to reduce the burden on staff and offer remote care options, improving work-life balance and staff satisfaction.

Kansas Resources:

- Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE): KDHE offers various rural health programs, including grants and funding opportunities for healthcare providers. Visit [KDHE website](#) for more information.
- Federal Rural Health Care Programs: The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) provides funding and resources for rural health providers. Visit [HRSA website](#) for more details.

Resources

Nursing home and other aging services providers in Kansas can explore several resources and strategies to help with staff recruitment and retention. Here are some ideas and resources to consider:

1. Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS)

- KDADS offers various programs and initiatives that could be useful for workforce development, including training opportunities, recruitment grants, and partnerships with educational institutions. They may also have specific funding or resources aimed at improving staffing in long-term care settings.
- Website: [KDADS](#)

2. LeadingAge Kansas

- LeadingAge Kansas provides resources, training, and advocacy for long-term care providers in Kansas. They offer workforce development programs, tools for improving employee satisfaction, and best practices for recruitment and retention.
- Website: [LeadingAge Kansas](#)

3. Kansas Workforce Alliance (KWA)

- The KWA works to connect employers with skilled workers. They provide workforce development resources, including training, grants, and job fairs, which could help aging services providers recruit and retain staff.
- Website: [KWA](#)

4. Nursing Home Staffing Grants

- Kansas has a number of state and federal grant programs available for healthcare providers to help with workforce challenges. Researching and applying for these grants could provide funding for recruitment and retention programs.
- Example: The "Kansas Nursing Facility Quality Incentive Program" provides incentives for improving staffing levels and quality care.

5. Partnerships with Local Colleges and Universities

- Many Kansas universities offer nursing and allied health programs. Partnering with these institutions can help create pipelines for nursing home staff by offering internships, clinical placements, and job opportunities for graduates.
- Some notable schools include the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, and Washburn University.

6. Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)

- Consider offering Employee Assistance Programs to support staff with mental health, financial, and personal challenges. This can improve staff retention by providing valuable support to employees.
- Programs like these can also help reduce burnout and improve job satisfaction.

7. Competitive Pay and Benefits

- Researching compensation trends in the region can help ensure that your wages and benefits are competitive. Kansas providers could explore strategies such as offering sign-on bonuses, retention bonuses, or pay-for-performance models to attract and retain staff.
- Websites like the Bureau of Labor Statistics or state labor departments often provide salary data and trends.

Resources

8. Workforce Development and Training Programs

- Offering ongoing training and career advancement opportunities can help retain staff by providing them with a sense of growth and development. Consider offering certifications, leadership training, or specialized programs in geriatrics, dementia care, and palliative care.
- The Kansas Nurse Aide Registry and other training organizations provide resources for certifications and continuing education.

9. Retention Strategies

- Create a positive workplace culture by focusing on employee recognition, work-life balance, and team-building activities. Strategies such as flexible scheduling, employee wellness programs, and peer support networks can improve job satisfaction.
- Research has shown that retention is often tied to feeling valued and supported at work, so creating a supportive environment is key.

10. National Resources and Initiatives

- LeadingAge and The American Health Care Association (AHCA) offer national resources on staffing solutions, including toolkits, research, and best practices.
- The Direct Care Worker Initiative is a national program aimed at improving the recruitment and retention of direct care workers. Kansas providers can tap into these national initiatives for additional guidance and support.

By utilizing a combination of state and national resources, as well as implementing strategies focused on improving job satisfaction, Kansas aging services providers can improve their ability to recruit and retain skilled staff.