



Prepare to Care

Iowa's Direct Care and Support Curriculum

Direct care positions providing hands-on supports and care to people with health conditions, illnesses, or disabilities are among the fastest-growing and highest-demand jobs in Iowa. A new training program is now available across Iowa that provides career pathways and flexible careers for individuals choosing this work.

QUALITY, CONSISTENT, EFFECTIVE TRAINING AVAILABLE STATEWIDE

Prepare to Care – Iowa's Direct Care and Support Curriculum is a comprehensive, cross-discipline training package that prepares people to work in a variety of direct care settings. The curriculum includes a Core training course, which provides basic foundational knowledge and an introduction to the profession, and five advanced training courses.

Advanced certificates as a Community Living Professional, Personal Support Professional, or Health Support Professional are achieved by taking a written exam at any Iowa community college after completion of required courses.

Developed and piloted by the Iowa Department of Public Health through the Direct Care Advisory Council, Prepare to Care is a standard curriculum, taught by trained instructors, that provides a state-approved advanced training certificate to those who complete required course work and pass the exam.

Who are Direct Care Professionals?

Direct Care Professional (DCP) is an umbrella name for the 78,000-strong workforce in Iowa. Direct care professionals are defined as individuals who provide supportive services and care to people experiencing health conditions, illnesses, or disabilities and receive compensation for such services.

Training is Available Through Community Colleges Statewide

Iowa's community colleges continue their tradition of meeting health occupations training needs by offering the Prepare to Care training. For more information, contact the Health Occupations Education Department at your community college. Contact information can be found at www.iowapreparetocare.com.

Who should be interested in this training?

- » **Direct Care Professionals working in any setting or program** – DCPs, whether new or experienced, find value in this training. While training is often offered through an employer, pursuing a career pathway through training from the community college is another option.
- » **Employers of DCPs** – Much of the training for DCPs across settings and programs is offered through employers. Prepare to Care can also be delivered at the community college for an employer or be delivered in partnership among employers and the college.

“The writers of the curriculum, the reviewers, everyone has done such a fabulous job that it's made learning how to deliver the curriculum extremely easy. The student feedback has been great and the students have really enjoyed the class, and learned a lot. There's proven results that show that that is the case.”

– Jaime Haub, Prepare to Care Instructor, Des Moines Area Community College

Opportunity is Knocking! Let's Open the Door Together!

Community colleges welcome discussions with DCPs and employers about how to best deliver Prepare to Care training to support this critical and fast-growing workforce. We are seeking students, employer partners, and individuals who want to become trained instructors for Prepare to Care at our college. We can also help identify tuition assistance or other program resources that may help defray the cost of training for DCPs. Contact us to start the discussion!

Key Findings

In a pilot study, employers experienced up to a 59% reduction in turnover rates after implementing the Prepare to Care training.

Compared to a control group, Prepare to Care students were more likely to feel they had opportunities for advancement in their agencies and less likely to report heavy workloads.

More than 90% of students say they are satisfied with the training.

Prepare to Care – Choices & Careers in Direct Care

The Prepare to Care curriculum was developed by employers, direct care professionals, and educators to address the knowledge base needed to serve people in the broad array of programs and settings. Its quality and effectiveness were proven through pilot projects and formal evaluation.

Prepare to Care training makes it easy for employers to identify skills and competencies, and thus the course modules, needed for DCPs in their organization. The curriculum and training structure also make it easy for direct care professionals to pursue a career path of their choice. The curriculum consists of the introductory Core training plus the five advanced training modules.

- » **Core** – Basic foundational knowledge and introduction to the profession. Estimated course length: 6 hours
- » **Home & Community Living** – Services to enhance or maintain independence, access community supports and services, and achieve personal goals. Estimated course length: 13 hours
- » **Instrumental Activities of Daily Living** – Services to assist an individual with daily living tasks to function independently in a home or community setting. Estimated course length: 11 hours
- » **Personal Support** – Services to support individuals as they perform personal activities of daily living. Estimated course length: 9 hours
- » **Personal Activities of Daily Living** – Services to assist an individual in meeting their basic needs. Estimated course length: 48 hours
- » **Health Monitoring & Maintenance** – Services that support and maintain an individual's health and provide functional support of certain conditions. Estimated course length: 27 hours

“Our feedback from our providers that attended was that it was our best training yet, so to me that was a testimony of the quality of the curriculum, those teaching toolboxes that help people who may not necessarily have a background in training, as well as just the step-by-step processes for how to keep it moving and engaging for the attendees at the training.”

– Amy Wallman Madden,
Prepare to Care Instructor and Employer

Based on the combination of Core with other modules, an individual becomes eligible for a state-approved Advanced Training Certificate, awarded upon successful completion of an exam. Exams are proctored and offered at all Iowa community colleges.

Advanced Training Certificates

Community Living Professional = **CORE** + **HCL** + **IADL** + **PS** + exam

Personal Support Professional = **CORE** + **IADL** + **PS** + **PADL** + exam

Health Support Professional = **CORE** + **PADL** + **HMM** + exam

“The training is invaluable. I feel like sometimes you get into a rut, and it's the same for everybody. But as you continue and you take the training, there are lots of ideas that maybe you hadn't thought of that come out in the training. It just helps you to think about individualizing care more and helping them grow as people.”

– Karen Barkley,
Direct Care Professional

Access Prepare to Care Training in Three Ways

- » The Core training is available online at <http://directcare.training-source.org/>.
- » Contact your local community college's health occupations department and ask if they offer the Prepare to Care training.
- » Prepare to Care must be taught by trained, approved instructors. If you are interested in becoming an instructor, visit www.iowapreparetocare.com to review the criteria and apply.

Learn more about Prepare to Care at www.iowapreparetocare.com or contact directcare@idph.iowa.gov.

Prepare to Care was developed as part of the Direct Care Workforce Initiative, a legislatively directed project of the Iowa Department of Public Health to standardize training and increase stability of the direct care workforce.