

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EmployIndy partners with IHCA/INCAL to develop registered apprenticeship program

Association partnering on new efforts to address direct care worker shortage in skilled nursing care and assisted living.

EmployIndy is proud to partner with the Indiana Health Care Association/Indiana Center for Assisted Living (IHCA/INCAL) to establish a registered apprenticeship program to be implemented in skilled nursing and assisted living centers across Marion County. The program, funded by a grant through the U.S. Department of Labor, creates a pathway for employers to design an apprenticeship specific to their staffing needs that combines on-the-job learning with technical education.

National and Indiana-specific data paint an alarming picture of a declining workforce supply and a steadily increasing demand for long term care services. According to the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), one in every five Hoosiers will be an older adult by 2020. A recent survey by healthcare providers in Central Indiana listed Registered Nurse (RN), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) as the hardest positions to fill.

Apprenticeships have been common in industries such as construction and other trades for decades. The growth and demand from healthcare employers has resulted in obtaining and retaining skilled workers as a key workforce development effort around Marion County. According to ApprenticeshipUSA, there is a 91 percent retention rate for apprentices completing programs.

Apprentices are guided through the program by an experienced mentor and receive progressive wage increases. "Apprenticeships offer an opportunity for young people to work, learn, and connect with others who have seen success in a field of work," says Angela Carr Klitzsch, EmployIndy President & CEO. "This shows the apprentice a path for career progress and professional development." EmployIndy is working with these healthcare providers to assist them in leveraging financial reimbursements for wages and training costs associated with hiring individuals into a registered apprenticeship program.

"We are very excited to be working with EmployIndy to roll out this new registered apprenticeship program to our members," said Zach Cattell, IHCA/INCAL President. "As we strive to identify new ways to help our members navigate the looming workforce crisis, we need to look at methods that have proven successful for other industries."

Operators of three facilities in and around Marion County have already committed to establishing apprenticeship programs in those centers, and several others have expressed interest in the apprenticeship model. The goal is to get new CNAs certified who can eventually skill up to become Qualified Medication Aides (QMAs) and even work further to become an RN.

“It’s a very proactive approach that I think will be helpful,” said Shannon Ammerman, the administrator at Traditions of Solana, “The apprentices will hit the ground running and have a point person that can help them and us work through any challenges that arise.” The assisted living community on the northside of Indianapolis is preparing to launch an apprenticeship program for certified nurse aides (CNAs) and dietary aides in early 2018.

IHCA/INCAL is also launching a new online CNA Training Program with education development partner, Academic Platforms. By offering an online option as an alternative to the traditional classroom component of the CNA certification, care centers that already provide the hands-on education onsite will be able to train their own nursing assistants from start to finish.

These two new workforce efforts are part of a larger initiative that the association began in 2016 with the creation of carefortheaging.org, the first website to offer comprehensive information on skilled nursing and assisted living careers in Indiana. [Carefortheaging.org](http://carefortheaging.org) provides information on a range of careers available at skilled nursing and assisted living facilities throughout Indiana, including education requirements, salaries and paths for career advancement. The site also links individuals seeking educational opportunities, internships or job placements with facilities looking to fill those roles.

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About IHCA/INCAL

IHCA/INCAL is the state’s largest trade association and advocacy group representing for-profit and not-for-profit nursing homes, as well as assisted living communities and Independent Living. The association provides education, information, and advocacy for health care providers, consumers, and the workforce on behalf of its more than 350 member facilities.

Contact: Emily Berger | 317.616.9036 | eberger@ihca.org

About EmployIndy

EmployIndy guides the local workforce ecosystem and makes strategic investments to remove barriers to quality employment for underserved and underrepresented residents. As the workforce development board for Marion County, guided by 21 business, civic, education, and non-profit community leaders, EmployIndy invests \$19 million in public, private and philanthropic funds for both youth and adults annually.

Contact: Joe Backe | 317.713.7601 | jbacke@employindy.org

