

Taken from the Blueprint for Strengthening Pennsylvania's Direct Care Workforce developed by Pennsylvania's Long-Term Care Council

JOB TITLES

While the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics defines three standard occupational classifications (SOC) of direct care workers – personal care aides, home health aides, and nursing assistants – a variety of names and titles are used to refer to these workers, including, but not limited to, attendants, assisted living aides, home health and home care aides (workers), nurse aides, certified nurse aides, nursing assistants, personal care aides, and program assistants. These workers are often collectively referred to as direct care workers and will be throughout this blueprint. Direct care workers also include those employed under the participant-directed model.

Home health aides provide in-home services and supports, while personal care aides work in the consumer's home as well as other community-based settings/living arrangements such as adult daily living centers, personal care homes, assisted living residences, etc.

Nursing assistants are typically employed in nursing homes in the LTSS system.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Direct care workers provide the vast majority of paid hands-on care, services, and supports to consumers across the LTSS continuum. They assist consumers with a variety of activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, toileting, eating, and other daily living supports, as well as other tasks (e.g., medication administration, blood pressure readings, etc.) depending on the setting.

COMPOSITION

There are over 219,000 DCWs in Pennsylvania across all industries, with most workers employed in the LTSS industry¹. Personal care aides make up the largest segment of these workers, followed by nursing assistants and home health aides. The vast majority (nearly 9 in 10) of DCWs providing LTSS in Pennsylvania are women with a median age of 40.² The following page contains complete demographic information.