

Impart Alliance Expanding and Supporting the Direct Care Workforce

Funding Available

Request for Proposals



April 4, 2024



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of
Osteopathic Medicine

Funding Available!

We are seeking innovative ideas to meet the challenge of the Direct Care Worker (DCW) shortage.

MSU Impart Alliance (<https://impartalliance.msu.edu>) recently received a \$25M grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to build on prior work and establish a Direct Care Career Center that will dramatically advance direct care workers (DCWs) in Michigan. This grant, funded by the CMS/Legislature approved, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Home & Community-Based (HCBS) Spending Plan, focuses specifically on use of non-wage strategies that expand and support DCWs in HCBS. We are implementing a wide range of strategies, one of which is to invite DCW employers to become partners in this unprecedented opportunity by receiving a “mini grant” to develop and pilot innovative, novel ways in which to address the severe shortage of DCWs in Michigan.

Interested?

Read on for important dates, eligibility, and application instructions.

Important Dates

Date	Event	Location
April 5, 2024	RFP (Request for Proposals) Announced. Application available	Qualtrics Application Link
April 5 – April 19	Open questions period for applicants	Submit questions to impart@msu.edu along with your name and contact information and you will receive a response within three business days
April 19, 2024	Application DUE DATE	
April 26, 2024	Funding announcement	Applicant provides approval to proceed with submission to MSU proposal process
May 15	Project Start Date	

Who is Eligible? Organizations that employ DCWs who provide support and services to older adults and/or persons living with disabilities in any HCBS setting are strongly encouraged to apply. Organizations that do not hire DCWs, organizations barred from receiving federal funds, and institutional settings are not eligible for funding.

Grant Amounts: Grants of any amount up to 350K can be requested. Average awards will range from \$50K – \$150K.

Grant Period End Date: September 30, 2024, which aligns with the end date of the MDHHS award to MSU. Additional funding is likely but not guaranteed. Should MSU receive additional funding, the project deadline for MSU will be extended to March 31, 2025. Grantees whose project requires the extended timeline can submit a proposal reflecting a work plan and budget for Phase 1 ending 09/30/24 and a separate work plan and budget for continuation funds ending 3/31/25, and that includes language acknowledging that executing Phase 2 is contingent upon funding and IMPART Alliance approval.

How is DCW defined?

Direct Care Workers (DCWs) is a general term referring to individuals who:

- Provide essential services through behavioral health, community mental health, and long-term care systems to support older adults and individuals with long-term disabilities or post-acute care needs in a range of settings including private homes, group homes, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and community living supports settings.
- Have many titles including, but not limited to, certified nursing assistants, home health aides, Home Help providers, hospice aides, personal care assistants, direct support professionals, job coaches, self-directed home care workers, and home care companions. The term does *not* include licensed health care specialists such as Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, and other specialties such as Medical Technicians, Respiratory Therapists, Community Health Workers, etc.
- Are distinguished by core tasks that generally include assisting with hands-on personal care, activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, rehabilitation, vocational assistance, and community living supports.
- Are typically paid through Medicaid, private insurance, Older Americans Act funds, Medicare, directly by individuals, or other funding sources.

How is Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Defined?

This grant project is specifically for supporting DCWs who work in HCBS settings, which includes private homes, group homes, assisted living facilities, and community living supports settings. Institutional settings are not eligible for funding.

Program Description

Preface: MSU IMPART Alliance's sole mission is to help Michigan establish an infrastructure that can effectively respond to a critical shortage of DCWs through training and advocacy. It is rooted in decades of federal and state funding for community-based participatory research and program development, in collaboration with state government and hundreds of partners statewide.

The Challenge: Michigan, like all states, has a drastic, costly shortage of paid DCWs who provide up to 80% of supports and services to older adults and persons living with disabilities, beyond what families can provide. They are in a pivotal position to make or break outcomes. If qualified, they can avert costly, adverse life-changing events. The shortage threatens the viability of long-term and HCBS, the health and lives of people needing assistance, and ultimately, all Michigan citizens. Employers are facing serious difficulty in finding, hiring, and retaining high-quality DCWs, and the shortage is expected to become worse as the Baby Boom generation ages. It is estimated that we need 36,000 more DCWs than we currently have. The average turnover rate in some segments of this workforce exceeds 80% annually, which destroys continuity of care and is astronomically costly. This is not just a problem for acute and long-term care. It affects all of us, the economy, economic development, health systems, non-healthcare businesses, and more.

Reasons for the Shortage: Key reasons include low wages, a lack of benefits, and the absence of guaranteed hours, training, and respect, all of which leads to economic insecurity for DCWs and costly turnover rates.

Key Points about the \$25M MDHHS ARPA/HCBS Spending Plan Grant: It focuses on DCWs in HCBS, use of non-wage strategies, and ends March 31, 2025. Organizations that do not hire DCWs, organizations barred from receiving federal funds, and institutional settings are not eligible for funding.

Application Guidelines

- **Focus Areas:** Proposed projects must include one of the following four focus areas:
 - Widening the Pipeline (develop and test new ways to recruit within non-traditional populations such as tribal communities, immigrants, veterans, high school seniors, individuals in remote locations, etc.)
 - Removing Barriers to DCW Success (develop and test ways in which to identify and remove barriers such as creating access to tuition assistance, emergency funds, transportation vouchers, and/or working with local business communities to establish resource networks and other sustainable models for ongoing support)
 - Remote Technology: Exploring, developing, and testing ways to enhance DCW digital literacy so that they can successfully engage in virtual training and innovative technologies.
 - Training (expanding ways in which to deliver DCW training so that it is both accessible and affordable)

- **Target Populations:** Priority will be given to proposed projects that develop DCW careers among non-traditional or marginalized populations such as the following:
 - Immigrants
 - Veterans
 - Tribal communities
 - Persons with disabilities
 - High school seniors
 - Individuals in rural or remote areas

Grantee Obligations:

Grantees will be required to submit monthly reports with narrative detailing their progress toward expected outcomes, and financial expenditures, within 10 days after the end of each period. A final report will be due no later than 45 days after the grant period ends. Grantees will be provided timelines and templates once selected. Grantees will also agree to participate in follow-up evaluations with IMPART Alliance to determine impact and sustainability.

Selection of Grantees: An internal team will review applications and score each using a standardized scoring rubric focused on the following categories: innovation, addressing grant focus areas/target populations, the workplan, evaluation plan, community voice, and budget. Special consideration will be given to proposals that can be completed within the grant period and that have potential for substantial impact.

Dissemination of Funds: Once selected, a grantee will enter into an agreement with MSU.

Application Directions

1. Applications MUST be completed in Qualtrics. The link for the application can be found [HERE](#).
2. Answer all questions.
3. It is highly recommended that interested applicants complete their responses in another document first and have all supporting documents (organizational chart, budget) available prior to entering responses into the Qualtrics Application. Once the link is opened, there is the possibility you may not be able to save answers and return to the application link later.
4. At the end of the application is a link to attach additional documentation or responses if you wish to do so.
5. While most responses will be 200 words, please note the maximum word count for any one response is 1000 words.
6. Applicants will be notified of award decisions by April 26, 2024.

Applicants can submit questions between April 5 and April 19 at impart@msu.edu. Include your name and contact information and you will receive a response within three business days.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to participate in expanding and supporting Michigan's direct care workforce!