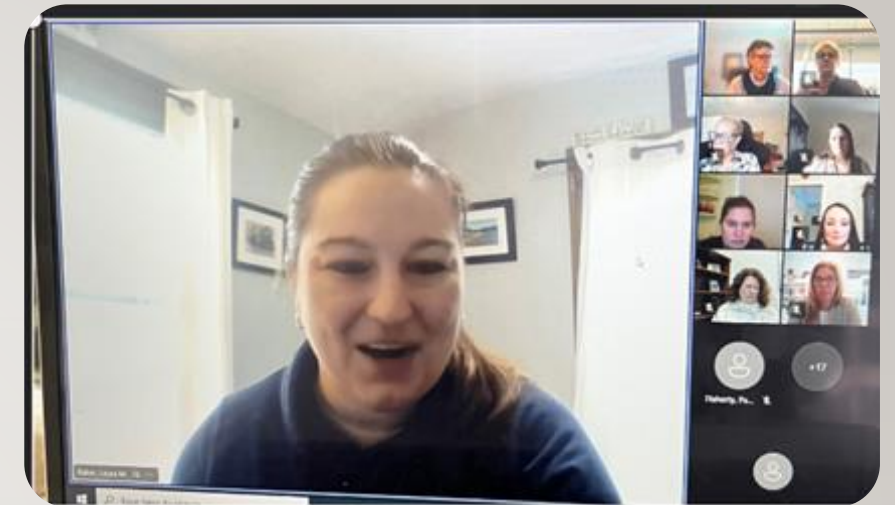


HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB COMMITTEE REPORT COWAG

4/12/22

LAST MEETING FOCUSED ON WOMEN AND WORKFORCE AND IMPACT ON WELLNESS

- Overall labor force participation rate down in 2021 compared to 2019
 - drop for women was much larger than for men.
 - CT still above the national average overall, but below national average for younger women.
- Survey CT Hire:
 - Job quality concerns regarding benefits and predictable schedule.
 - Childcare is a barrier cited and needing childcare support to return to work.
 - 12% overall cited affordable housing as a need to return to work.
 - Age discrimination came up over and over again.
 - Unemployed older women looking for work perceive age discrimination as a barrier.
- Gap between where women were before the pandemic and through 2nd quarter of 2021, much more dramatic drop than we saw for men.



PARENT PERSPECTIVE

- **Christina Augliera**, OEC Parent Cabinet Rep
- Mother of 2 with a BA and found that full time childcare was too expensive.
- Husband is teacher and make too much to qualify for any assistance.
- Switched to shift work to rotate hours with husband but she could not maximize income potential after earning her degree in Psychology.
- Son was diagnosed with autism. Could not find centers who would take a child who was not potty trained and child needed assistance with communication - not able to go back to full time work until 2017.
- When the pandemic hit she had to leave work force to stay home from March - November
- Childcare is a huge barrier especially if you have a child with special needs.
- Having children and not be able to work, it was hard on my mental health. Can't have both personal and professional success; work life balance childcare is a huge barrier.

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES FOR MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

“We are in the most acute crisis in this area than we have been ever before. The competition for salaries has increased enormously. Raised our starting salary 25% and still below others.

We are also seeing data some delay in our diversity equity and inclusion understanding of folks who graduate college with a masters who then immediately have to take a masters exam before they can practice.

We are asking for a timeline to give us some room so folks can still work and see clients and help them with the testing. Other states have done student loan reimbursement for contracting with providers. “

Alice Forrester

Challenges for Diversity of Workforce: We see that 80% of all licensed clinicians in CT are white, 6% are Latino and 14% Black. This makes it difficult to have a diverse workforce.



WORKFORCE CHALLENGES CONTINUED

- **Commissioner Dorantes** - 1st presentation showed people of color are still in the essential. Noted Alice's comments about clinicians and how to get people what they need at the same time as the workforce challenges are hitting the people that are going to be needed to bring us into the next phase of recovery from the pandemic. We are in a significant workforce crisis when it comes to women, and particularly women of color.
- **Dr. Marie Spivey** - We are very frightened by the lack of nurses. Seeing so many nurses who have left mainly because of the pandemic. They are not only aging out but also not getting paid for overtime.
- **Yvette Young**, Vice President for Programs and Advocacy at the Village for Families and Children Seeing the struggle on the acute level residential side. Pool of candidates declined. Residential work is not easy. The more we deplete resources won't meet requirements for safety.

HEALTH CARE ORG PERSPECTIVE: HARTFORD HOSPITAL

- Employ 33,000 across state of CT; Last year we filled 11,000 positions. Large woman employer - 78% of our workforce is female.
- Our nurses can leave Hartford Health Care and make double or triple the amount of compensation to travel to another state for 13 weeks and their housing is paid for.
- Day care was an issue but much of it was last minute daycare issues.
 - Worked with the state on special daycares for health care workers during the pandemic.
- We increased compensation and paid bonuses to acknowledge the toll this pandemic has taken on them and to position us as a competitive employer.

OFFICE OF WORKFORCE STRATEGY

- . There are so many fragmented programs. Coordinating with community colleges and technical high schools, high schools, and 4-year institutions.
 - Building stackable programs and working with employers to show how people can work and continue to earn those credentials to improve their pay and role within an organization.
 - Working with Office of Public Health and League of Nursing to understand the barriers to the stackable credentials. We need to make those pathways easily defined and ensure that the people in those programs understand the pathways available to them.
 - Office of Workforce Strategy is working with OEC to support the improvement of the childcare landscape. We provided Cares Act dollars to help OEC support the small daycare providers who lost business during the pandemic. Also working with the new funding to support this initiative.
- Example: Hartford Hospital: We are working closely with the Gov's Workforce Council and the Office of Workforce Strategies to talk about those career pathways, both health care specific and IT specific.