

**Iowa Better Jobs Better Care Coalition
Nursing Home Administrator Survey
Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations**

Introduction

The Iowa Better Jobs Better Care (BJBC) Coalition was provided a 3-1/2 year, \$1.4 million grant by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Atlantic Philanthropies to address the dire and growing shortage of Direct Care Professionals – certified nursing assistants (CNAs), home health aides, and personal attendants – who provide hands-on care in nursing homes, home care agencies, hospices, hospitals, and other settings.

In 2004, the BJBC Coalition conducted a mail survey of Iowa nursing home administrators that was a follow-up to two prior studies by the Iowa CareGivers Association: the 1999 Iowa CNA Recruitment and Retention Study and the 2000 Iowa CNA Supervisor Study.

These are the key findings and recommendations of the 2004 BJBC Nursing Home Administrator Survey Report. To view the complete report, go to the Iowa CareGivers Association website at www.iowacaregivers.org.

ISSUE	KEY FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Staff giving administrators the information they need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most administrators indicate that staff giving them the information they need to handle situations effectively is very important. Approximately one-fourth of administrators indicate this does not currently happen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigate with administrators the 1) type of information administrators want to receive from staff, 2) from which staff they want to receive it, and 3) the accessibility that staff have to the administrator. • Utilize the information obtained to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modify current nursing home administrator curricula and create new educational offerings that include the information about administrator-staff communication. ○ Solicit ideas from nursing home administrators about additional applications for the new information, particularly about how administrators can become more accessible to staff, including CNAs.
Professional conduct of CNAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than half of administrators indicate that fewer than 90% of CNAs in their facility conduct themselves as professionals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider adding qualities of the ideal professional CNA to CNA job descriptions and then assuring that hiring practices reflect employment of CNAs with these qualities. • Identify ways to assure that CNAs get the education, training, and

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 16 of the Nursing Home Administrator report lists the qualities administrators believe the ideal professional CNA possesses. Most of the ideal professional qualities identified by administrators are personal qualities rather than skills. 	<p>workplace support they need to develop ideal professional CNA qualities both in the workplace and in the broader community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand current and develop new ways of educating CNAs about 1) how they are perceived by administrators and 2) qualities they need to exhibit to be perceived as professional.
Residents/patients treating CNAs with respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately two-thirds of administrators agree that residents/patients treat the CNAs in their facility's workforce with respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement ways to educate residents and their families about the value of the work provided by CNAs and how to treat CNAs with respect. (This education of residents and their families will, in turn, positively influence perceptions in the broader community of the work done by CNAs.) Inform nursing home administrators of this conclusion and find ways to encourage them to model positive interaction with CNAs with the understanding that this modeled behavior will be reflected in the behavior of residents and families toward CNAs and in the behavior of staff toward one another. Encourage nursing home administrators to promote educational offerings for CNAs that will enhance CNAs' ability to communicate more effectively with residents/patients and their families.
Administrators' perception of the quality of CNA training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only about one-third of administrators agree that the CNAs in their facility had high quality training prior to coming to work in their facility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine 1) what "high quality training" means to administrators, 2) what specific CNA skills and competencies are perceived as lacking, 3) how quality is assessed, e.g. does the administrator assess it directly or do supervisors assess it and pass on their impressions to the administrator, and 4) how consumer input is obtained. Once the above information has been obtained, focus time and financial resources on assuring that CNAs receive what nursing home administrators define as high quality training.
Administrators' relationship with their employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most administrators indicate that the person/board/corporation to which they report treating them with respect is very important, and nearly one-fifth of administrators find this respect is lacking on their current job. Most administrators indicate that the person/board/corporation to which 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather more in-depth information from administrators about these issues and the perceptions behind them. Encourage administrators to conduct a self-assessment to determine if their values are congruent with the values of the organization for which they work. If administrators' values are not congruent with the organization and administrators are not getting what they need to do their job well, encourage administrators to advocate for what they need to

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	<p>they report following through on problems is very important, yet more than one-fourth find this follow-through is lacking on their current job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than half of administrators indicate they were given an orientation when they started their current job on how to perform their specific job duties, while nearly two-thirds indicate this orientation is very important. 	<p>do their job well, just as CNAs are being encouraged to advocate for what they need to be professional and do their jobs well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also, it would likely be beneficial for administrators to assist CNAs and other staff to conduct a values assessment and to encourage staff to advocate for what they need to do their job well. • Determine if nursing home administrators see a need for a professional nursing home administrator association that can address the above issues • Determine if there are educational sessions specifically offered for long term care board members at provider association conferences. If so, consider developing and presenting the board/corporation-related findings at these sessions and relating the findings to information about the scope of responsibility of long term care boards. • Encourage nursing home boards to spend some educational time at a board meeting discussing the board/corporation-related findings.
Administrator perceived lack of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived lack of time is an issue for administrators regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Making certain CNAs get the education/training they need to do the job better ○ Working with CNAs as a team ○ Helping staff organize their work as a team ○ Assuring CNAs contribute their ideas to care plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further explore nursing home administrators' perceived lack of time regarding these issues. • Determine how nursing home administrators form these perceptions, e.g. is it their own perception or does it come from other staff, for example, the Director of Nursing. • Using a "best practice" approach, identify nursing homes that are excelling at the four factors identified above. • Identify ways to incorporate these activities into the daily nursing home routine so that they do not take extra time.
Making it possible for CNAs to care for the same residents/patients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both perceived low importance and perceived lack of time are issues for administrators regarding making it possible for CNAs to care for the same residents/patients each day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigate with administrators the importance and time factors regarding this issue. • Gather consumer input on the perceived value of consistent staffing. • Develop interventions based on the information obtained as above.
Issues that affect CNAs, supervisors, and administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the BJBC Synthesis Report for issues identified in this Nursing Home Administrator Study for that also affect CNAs and CNA supervisors. 	