

REACH Intensive Care Coordination, Services, and Providers Subcommittee Meeting

February 18th, 2026



Health and
Human Services

Agenda

- ▶ Strategies to address workforce capacity
- ▶ Discussion
- ▶ Public comment



Strategies to Address Workforce Capacity



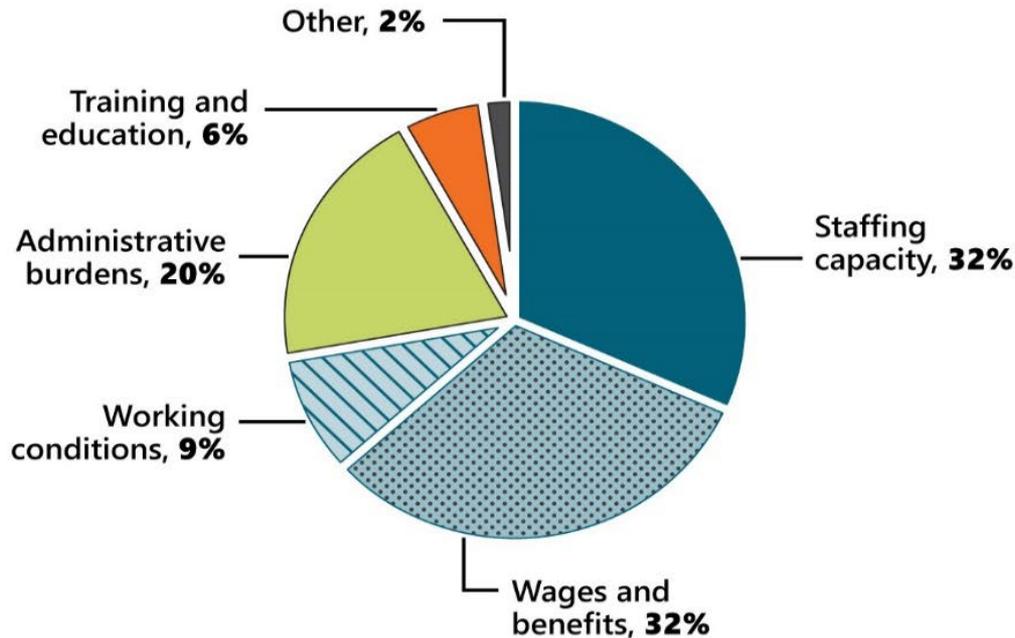
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Background

- ▶ HHS contracted Mathematica to investigate the need for community-based services through the Services and Providers Capacity Assessment (SAPCA)
- ▶ HHS [reviewed findings](#) with Subcommittees and received feedback on challenges and solutions
- ▶ **Our goal:** Align and prioritize potential solutions for provider capacity as we move into implementation

Top challenges to provider capacity, according to provider survey respondents

What are the top challenges to provider capacity?



Percentage of provider participants who highlighted the following staffing issues as a top challenge

- 58%** Low and stagnant reimbursement rates that have not kept pace with inflation
- 49%** Lack of sufficient staff and staff time
- 29%** Staff retention and turnover
- 29%** Low wages with little growth for direct care workers (e.g., lack of routine cost-of-living adjustments/raises)

Source: Mathematica's analysis of 2024 SAPCA Iowa CBS provider survey.

Note: Provider survey respondents were asked to rank the top three challenges they encounter from a list of challenges (n=191). Challenges were grouped by theme and responses were tallied under their respective themes, shown in the pie chart above. The four challenges pulled out on the left are the challenges that were most commonly selected.

Behavioral Health Transformation

- ▶ Iowa is undergoing a behavioral health system transformation to increase access to care
- ▶ The state is still in a transition phase, but expects to implement changes from July 2026-December 2027
- ▶ Through Iowa's behavioral health transformation, providers can expect
 - Consolidated and streamlined contracting and administration
 - A consistent payment system for the reimbursement of services
 - District-Level System Coordination and continuity of care.



Rural Workforce Development

▶ Best and Brightest Rural Workforce Recruitment

- Funds provide one time recruitment and retention incentives, as well as relocation assistance and bonuses
- The state intends to grant funds to [107 bidders](#)

▶ Health Hubs

- Provides funding for service delivery change including workforce development
- Strengthens regional health networks to expand access to services
- The state has not announced awardees yet

Potential Non-Financial Solutions

Challenge #1: Staffing Capacity

- Align service systems to maximize the REACH provider pool
- University partnerships
- Youth peer support recruitment model
- Lower, flexible provider ratios
- Options for some virtual care

Challenge #2: Administrative Burden

- Quick guides on service and billing requirements
- Centralized information hubs on services and assessment
- Streamlined enrollment, credentialing, and contracting processes

Potential Non-Financial Solutions (cont.)

Challenge #3: Training and Education

- On-demand training for serving youth with SED
- Provider mentorship and support groups



Idaho YES Workforce Development

- ▶ Idaho convened a workgroup to provide recommendations on workforce development

- ▶ The workgroup developed 16 recommendations and focused on
 - **Building awareness** by sending information about YES to associations across the state
 - **Partnering with universities** to add YES certificate programs and incentivize internships
 - **Peer support workforce** development and expanded peer roles

[YES Workforce Development Report, 2020](#)



Illinois Pathways Workforce Development

- ▶ Illinois also underwent a behavioral health transformation including district-level system coordination
- ▶ To enhance provider capacity, Illinois focused on
 - **Partnering with universities** to develop a **training hub** ([PATH](#)) for learning collaboratives and technical support
 - **Aligned services** through CCBHCs
- ▶ Illinois has also developed a new [Behavioral Health Workforce Center](#) which strengthens recruitment through
 - **Developing early career awareness** through high school curriculum and summer camp programs
 - **Providing local outreach**
 - **Partnering with universities** to build early admission programs, create pipelines from high schools, and develop scholarship programs and stackable credential programs
 - **Identifying regional needs** for professional development

Discussion

- ▶ What recruitment or staff retention strategies have you seen work in the past?
 - Do any of the other state's strategies seem applicable for Iowa REACH?
- ▶ What concerns would make you hesitant to provide services through REACH?
- ▶ What might make providers interested in providing services through REACH? What can we do to build provider awareness and interest in the program?

Discussion (cont.)

- ▶ We have identified challenges and solutions for REACH workforce capacity. As the state works through implementation decisions, what is the biggest non-financial change that could increase provider willingness to enroll in REACH?



Public Comment



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