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## **WHCA to Sponsor LPN Apprenticeship Pilot**

*Olympia, WA* - Washington Health Care Association (WHCA) has been awarded the contract to develop and manage a long-term care apprenticeship pilot program for licensed practical nurses (LPNs). The workforce crisis in the healthcare sector has made acquiring and retaining qualified staff in long-term care settings extremely difficult. This program will incentivize workers by allowing certified nursing assistants the opportunity to prepare for LPN certification and licensure while working at a long-term care facility.

“We began the application process in early July,” notes WHCA CEO Carma Matti-Jackson. “When we applied to become the pilot program sponsor, we did so with the understanding that this program provides an amazing opportunity to help create alternate professional pathways for workers. It is perfectly aligned with WHCA’s mission to provide excellent resources for employers who rely on well-qualified nursing staff to provide long-term care services and supports.”

Operating as WHCA Apprentice, LLP, the initial pilot program is isolated to three companies. Brookdale Senior Living, Ensign Services, and Hyatt Family Facilities have all participated in preliminary stakeholder work to develop a proposal for consideration by the Department of Labor and Industries, which governs Washington apprenticeship programs. Other project partners include the Washington State Board of Nursing and the Workforce Training and Education Board.

Under the WHCA proposal, an initial cohort of 10 workers will be prepared to start their coursework with Edmonds College in September 2024.

“Our entire team is truly excited about supporting our hard-working caregivers in advancing their skills, knowledge, and employment opportunities,” says Matti-Jackson. “We can ensure there are alternate pathways to achieving nurse licensure in Washington. Our workers deserve this opportunity. We are committed to continued advocacy work to support and advance this important program, and to continue working with policymakers to address our long-standing workforce crisis. Every provider in Washington should be able to offer this opportunity to talented caregivers who deserve this support.”

### **About Washington Health Care Association (WHCA)**

Washington Health Care Association is a nonprofit professional association for the long-term care community in Washington, and represents 161 skilled nursing, 375 assisted living, and nine enhanced services providers. In partnership with these member facilities and business partners, WHCA promotes and advocates for healthy, affordable, and ethical long-term care at the state and federal levels. For more information, visit [whca.org](http://whca.org).

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