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MDHHS announces $3.9 million for retention payments for direct care workers with home and community-based services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 19, 2020
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LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Service (MDHHS) is announcing a $3.9 million project funded through the CARES Act that offers retention payments to newly hired direct care workers. MDHHS is partnering with three waiver agencies, Detroit Area Agency on Aging, Area Agency on Aging 1-B and Reliance Community Care Partners, to implement this project.

The goal is to hire and retain at least 2,000 new workers by Dec. 30, 2020. Newly hired direct care workers are defined as individuals who have not worked as a direct care worker in home and community-based services for at least 60 days before the date of hire. Workers could receive up to $1,600 if they complete training and 300 hours of work by Dec. 30.

“As Michigan continues to be devastated by this unprecedented pandemic, home care agencies struggle to recruit and retain direct care workers to provide MI Choice home and community-based services to individuals who are elderly or have a disability,” said Kate Massey, senior deputy director of MDHHS’ Medical Services Administration. “Without these critical services, these individuals are at risk for being admitted to a nursing facility. It is vital that Michigan takes every effort to encourage interested workers to consider employment in this field.”

This project is purposefully charged with providing monetary incentives to entice individuals to become direct care workers and experience the personal fulfilment that comes with assisting individuals with their everyday tasks such as bathing, dressing, eating and shopping. The budget also allows for hazard payments to current employees who refer someone to become a direct care worker.

Workers who do not remain employed for at least six months may be asked to repay their retention payments.

Hiring more direct care workers not only strengthens the workforce, it also leads to a reduction in the MI Choice waiting list and an increase in MI Choice enrollment. MI Choice provides Medicaid-covered services like those provided by nursing homes but allows eligible adults to stay in their own home or another residential setting.

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We have said all along that the vaccine would help us return to a sense of normalcy and today we announce that day is here. #MIDoseofHope https://twitter.com/GovWhitmer/status/1405598054284148741

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Stay Smart. Stay Safe. @MichiganHHS reports today, June 17, 2021, 172 new COVID-19 cases & 20* deaths. For * details bit.ly/2KcnkrO. Michigan's total cases are now 893,002 & 19,598 deaths. Find the latest data & #COVID19 news at

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