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Resources for Nursing Home Professionals

State Funding for Employee Training

Changes to the Medi-Cal reimbursement system for long term care, established by the state government in 2004 with Assembly Bill 1629, makes new funds for employee training available to long term care employers. In the July 2006 Medi-Cal Bulletin, the Department of Health Services clarified the range of reimbursable training costs, including costs for training certified nurse's aides (CNAs); in-service training for CNAs and other direct care workers; skills upgrading for CNAs, licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), and registered nurses (RNs); and formal certification programs for CNAs, LVNs, and RNs. The state government also has identified several funds available for grants to employers to cover training costs.

Below is a description of the training costs now reimbursable under the Medi-Cal system, as well as the other state workforce funds available to long term care employers.

Medi-Cal Training Reimbursement Funds

- **Facility-based training of certified nurse's aides.**

Employers can be reimbursed for training program costs, including materials and outside consulting support, under the "caregiver training" reimbursement category. Employers also can be reimbursed for student wages and director of staff development wages during training, under the "labor costs" category.

- **Restorative CNA (RNA) training.** Employers can be reimbursed for training program costs, including materials and outside consulting support, under the "caregiver training" reimbursement category. Employers also can be reimbursed for student wages and costs for travel, per diem, and lodging during training, under the "labor costs" category.

- **Senior CNA (SNA) training.** Employers can be reimbursed for training program costs, including materials and outside consulting support, under the "caregiver training" reimbursement category. Employers also can be reimbursed for student wages and costs for travel, per diem, and lodging during training, under the "labor costs" category.

- **Licensed vocational nurse training.** Employers can be reimbursed for training and program costs, either paid directly by the employer or reimbursed to the employee. These costs are reimbursed under the "labor costs" category, as are employee wages paid during training.

- **Registered nurse training.** Employers can be reimbursed for training program costs, either paid directly by the employer or reimbursed to the employee. These costs are reimbursed under the "labor costs" category, as are employee wages paid during training.

- **Director of nursing certification and director of staff development certification.** For both of these certifications, employers can be reimbursed for tuition and registration costs, as well as employee wages and costs for travel, per diem and lodging during training.

Other Workforce Training Grants

In addition to the Assembly Bill 1629 reimbursement funds, employers can utilize workforce training grants. The health care sector is one of the priorities of California's programs that focus on employment development—the Workforce Investment Board and the Employment Training Panel. These programs have grants for employers to train new workers and upgrade the skills of incumbent workers.

The state's Employment Training Panel is one of the main funders of training programs. In the 2006 budget year, for example, it approved three contracts worth a total of \$1.25 million for California health care employers to train existing certified nurse's aides to become licensed vocational nurses. It also has funded several training programs for registered nurses.

State Funding for Employee Training

The state's community college system is significantly expanding its capacity for training licensed vocational nurses and registered nurses, and is actively pursuing partnerships with the state's health care employers, including long term care providers. Information about community college programs training licensed vocational nurses and registered nurses can be found online. California's 50 local Workforce Investment Boards, which administer much of the state's more than \$500 million in workforce training funds, also are pursuing partnerships with long term care employers.

For more information on specific reimbursements under Assembly Bill 1629, contact Ken Merchant (kmerchant@rcsis.com). For information on workforce training grants available to employers, contact Michael Bernick (michael.bernick@sdma.com).

Web Resources

California Community Colleges Health Occupations—
Regional Health Occupation Resource Centers (RHORC)
www.healthoccupations.org

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office—
Find a College www.cccco.edu/find/find.htm

California Employment Development Department—
Get Training for Businesses www.edd.ca.gov/eddtrainb.htm

California Employment Training Panel www.etp.ca.gov

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