

Dept. of Health Services: Evers administration continues efforts to increase health care workforce

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The Department of Health Services (DHS) and Department of Administration (DOA) have recently contracted with a staffing agency to assist in hiring more staff for health care and skilled nursing facilities. This contract is the latest in a list of efforts by Governor Evers and his administration to boost staffing at facilities across the state.

“Our health care and skilled nursing facility staff have been on the front lines of this pandemic since the beginning,” said DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm. “We will continue doing whatever we can to reduce the burden on them. Helping to ensure that our health care system has adequate staff to continue caring for all their patients and residents is a key component to the state’s COVID-19 response.”

The administration has already fulfilled six staffing requests and is currently working on fulfilling a dozen additional requests. Health care entities that have exhausted all local resources, including making a request through the [Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry \(WEAVR\)](#), can work with their local emergency managers to request necessary resources, including staffing. Facilities will share in the cost of staffing with the state, which is utilizing CARES Act funding to reduce the cost burden to facilities seeking to hire additional staff. Additionally, the administration has helped secure federal staffing resources to fill healthcare staffing shortages across the state.

In addition to contracting with a staffing agency, the [Department of Workforce Development\(link is external\)](#) and DHS are entering a new phase of the [WisHealth Careers](#) marketing campaign. A new broadcast television ad will begin airing across

Wisconsin as well as print ads in local newspapers. The purpose of this campaign is to connect new and lapsed health care workers to jobs and training opportunities at hospitals, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes in their own communities.

In November, Governor Evers and DHS pledged an additional \$30 million toward a skilled nursing facility (SNF) post-acute care admission incentive program. This program supports nursing homes with the cost of staffing additional beds, allowing them to admit more residents directly from hospitals and helping to alleviate strain on the hospital system. To date, 302 SNFs have received payments, with another round of payments scheduled to go out next week. Regardless of when a SNF enrolled, payments will be calculated based on the number of people admitted directly from acute care hospitals beginning October 18, 2020. DHS intends to make payments to facilities on a biweekly basis until all payments have been made or funds allocated for the program have been exhausted.

Find the latest information about Wisconsin's COVID-19 response on the [DHS COVID-19 webpage](#), and follow @DHSWI on [Facebook\(link is external\)](#) and [Twitter\(link is external\)](#), and @dhs.wi on [Instagram\(link is external\)](#).