Direct Care Workforce Workgroup Policy Recommendation

From: "Definition of Health Care Provider" Subgroup
Date: Revised and Approved at the Task Force Meeting on 5/14/20 (changes highlighted below)

Policy Idea: Definition of "Health Care Provider": For purposes of COVID-19 related provisions, recommend a definition of "health care provider" that includes home and community based service providers.

Some states are expanding on their COVID-19 definition of "health care provider" to specifically include providers of home and community-based services (community health providers) for people with disabilities and older adults as part of the recognized essential workforce that is keeping vulnerable populations safe while also risking their own health by providing essential personal cares that cannot be completed with social distancing. People with disabilities and older adults sometimes live and receive care in congregate settings such as group homes, community-based residential facilities or nursing homes, where COVID-19 spread and fatality rates have been disproportionately high. People with disabilities and older adults who receive care in their homes are also at risk when receiving personal cares. Ensuring that Wisconsin's COVID-19 definition of health care provider is inclusive will ensure that these community-based direct/personal care workers and their employers, including workers in the self-directed care program and paid family caregivers, can access all appropriate benefits, flexibilities and protections.

Wisconsin should, in all COVID-19 response planning and policies, adopt a definition of health care provider that includes any employee or any provider of support to people with I/DD, people with physical disabilities, older adults, individuals with mental health needs, including substance use, and who is providing direct care and support essential to activities of daily living and independence funded through any state or federal program, including Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waivers.