



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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Governor Whitmer proclaims Sept. 12 - 18 as Direct Support Professionals Week

LANSING, Mich. – LANSING, Mich. – To honor the valuable services provided by the state’s direct support professionals who provide hands-on care, support and respite for individuals with physical disabilities, mental illness and developmental disabilities, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has proclaimed Sept. 12 – 18 as [Michigan Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week](#).

“Tens of thousands of Michigan families are relying upon them to help manage their daily lives and activities,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. “Direct support professionals are dedicated, passionate and caring – and we could not be more grateful for their work, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Direct support professionals, including direct care workers, personal assistants, personal attendants, in-home support workers and paraprofessionals, are key to providing publicly funded support and services for children and adults with serious emotional disorders and adults with mental health needs and disabilities. Direct support professionals are a critical element in supporting individuals who are receiving health care services for severe chronic health conditions, as well as individuals with functional limitations, and in helping with the transition from medical events to post-acute care and long-term support and services.

Many of these professionals actually took time away from their own lives and families to support clients who were ill with COVID-19 during the pandemic.

“They were determined to support the people in their care no matter what,” said Sherri Boyd, executive director and CEO of The Arc Michigan. “Given the low pay and limited career pathways that exist in this field, we offer them an extra helping of our gratitude as we honor them this week.”

Nearly a million Michigan residents rely on the services of direct support professionals. Currently, about 50,000 of these workers are on the job in Michigan.

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