



# New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition

## 2008 Fact Sheet

New Mexico faces serious challenges in meeting its citizens' long-term care needs with an adequate and stable supply of caring and well-trained direct caregivers.

Direct caregivers are those paraprofessional workers who provide the bulk of paid long-term care to New Mexicans aging and disabled populations. They are personal care assistants, home care aides, home health aides, and certified nursing assistants (CNAs). They are individuals who work in diverse settings, including private homes, adult day centers, assisted living residences and other residential care settings, and nursing homes.

Direct caregivers are essential for achieving quality care and preserving, to the greatest extent possible, the dignity and independence of persons who must rely on others for their personal care needs.

The New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition was formed to improve the quality of life for direct caregivers. The Coalition provides the space and opportunity for family and professional caregivers to define and advocate on topics of importance to them--be it higher wages, better benefits and workplace supports, training and education needed for improving their own professional development and that of the field. Through the Coalition, direct caregivers convene to enhance and promote the professionalism and image of direct caregivers, supporting professional development and workplace issues.

The Coalition is led by a Leadership Council, a group of 13 individuals whose primary occupation is that of a family or professional caregiver.

Research is underway now to determine current and future workforce of direct caregivers (and Coalition's potential membership) in New Mexico. Preliminary figures from the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that New Mexico's 2006 direct caregiver workforce was in the 20,000-40,000 range (21,520 nursing assistants, home health aides and personal care/home care aides worked in NM in 2006!).

The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) is a funder of the New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition. DDPC is a state commission dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities in New Mexico.

For more information or to become involved in the New Mexico Direct Caregivers Coalition, visit [www.nmdirectcaresupport.org](http://www.nmdirectcaresupport.org), call (505) 867-6046 or write [info@nmdirectcaresupport.org](mailto:info@nmdirectcaresupport.org).