

Thank you to our Ohio Legislators for listening to my testimony.

Kim Musgrave Testimony

Senator Dolan

Senate Finance Committee

Interested Party Testimony, HB 33

Written testimony for May 25, 2023

My name is Kim Musgrave. I am the mother of a 25 year old son with disabilities and complex medical issues. My son, Luke, receives home nursing services and is on an IO Waiver.

My testimony is about my experience with the difficulty of finding and keeping Home nurses to help care for my son and how it effects our family.

My son is approved for 54 hours per week of Private Duty Nursing services, however we barely get 12-18 hours per week covered. He used to have more hours covered, but we continue to lose nurses because they leave home care to work in hospitals or other jobs that pay more. Last year we lost one nurse that was absolutely like a family member! Luke just adored her and she truly loved working here with Luke. However she really had to make more money in order to support her family and she left us to work in a hospital. Our whole family was heartbroken to lose her. Another nurse (whom we loved) that worked here through an agency also left in order to work at a different higher paying job. That was 24 hours per week of help that was gone. I spent many months trying to find nurses to replace the nurses we lost. We still have not found enough to cover his approved hours. This has happened many times in the past several years. I am constantly searching for nurses in different ways. First, by asking the agencies in our area to recruit for our case. They always say that they are trying but can't get any nurses. I also advertise on Indeed, on social media, provider listings, and reaching out to anyone and everyone I possibly can. The search is very stressful. I have heard from other families that it is equally as difficult to find Home Health aids to work in the home, as many of them are only paid \$10-\$11 per hour. My son could also get HPC aid services but I hear that it is immensely hard to keep aids because they often leave due to low pay. These essential caregivers are locked into these pay rates and they truly deserve to be paid more for the important work they do.

While I love caring for my son, providing full time care for him with minimal help is exhausting! There has been many times that my health has been effected by the stress associated with not getting a break. It is also very stressful to realize that I need to find help so that as I age I can keep my son here in his home. I do not want to place him in a facility as that would be the worst thing for his health and safety.

Luke is full time care and requires help to do everything, including walking, eating pureed food (he is an aspiration risk) playing, using communication devices, medication administration and g-tube feedings. My son also has seizures daily and he needs constant supervision. When he is tired he is at particular risk of having seizures, which are very convulsive and he sometimes stops breathing for a time. He also requires lung assessments and other procedures, and when he is sick he requires suctioning. Recently he has been having difficulty with walking and I need help to get him walking or to transfer him to and from his wheelchair, as he is 108 pounds and I am unable to do some of these things by myself. I also need help to give him a bath. Leaving the house with Luke is also a challenge to accomplish by myself, so having help in the home allows me to get him out into the community.

I have been searching for over a year to replace nurses we have lost due to low pay in home care and have bene unable to find any nurses.

There is a significant provider crisis going on in Ohio and myself, and other families like ours, are feeling desperate for help. I am asking you and our legislators to help us by approving an increase in funding to Home and Community Based Services and therefore an increase in the wages that will pay all Direct Support Providers in Ohio.

Thank you SO much Senator, for listening to my plea for help. I sincerely hope that the many voices expressing concern for Ohio's most vulnerable population and their families will be heard and that help will be coming our way.

Sincerely,

Kim Musgrave

Parent of my angel Son with Complex health issues and special needs

Email: imthemom68@yahoo.com

Below please find some very helpful links to support the need for help to alleviate this provider crisis. I believe these will help in your decision making process.

Ohio DD Crisis website – website by The Impact Group

This organization has been conducting interviews of families in Ohio so that legislators can actually see the people that have been impacted by this provider crisis. This link has several short videos of families telling their stories that will be helpful to legislators in making decision on this important issue.

PLEASE visit this website and scroll down to view the short videos.

<https://ohioddcrisis.com>

Documentary : “Unseen: How we are failing parent caregivers and why it matters”

Below is a link to the trailer. There will be a FREE viewing of this incredible documentary on Saturday March 25th at 12:15 pm The link to sign up for this free viewing via the Vinfen organization will be below the link to the trailer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-RgSPtjZd0>

<https://vinfen16.eventive.org/welcome>

I highly encourage you to watch this impactful documentary.

There have been several studies and reports that link the reason for the provider crisis to the fact that providers are locked into a low pay rate. See below.

An extensive report was release in 2021 by PHI National called **“It’s Time to Care – A Detailed profile of America’s Direct Care Workforce”**

The link to that report can be found below.

<https://www.phinational.org/caringforthefuture/itstimetocare/>

Another section of the report details challenges of Home Care Workers

https://www.phinational.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/phi_homecare_factsheet_2017_0.pdf

This specific page of the report has a “Workforce Data Center” where you can select search criteria, such as the number of Direct Care staff that still are on public assistance, wage trends etc.

Below is a link to that page

<https://www.phinational.org/policy-research/workforce-data-center/#tab=National+Data&natvar=Public+Assistance>

