

OHCC Connections

Tips from the experts.



Episode 002: Required training for new homecare workers, personal support workers, and personal care attendants.

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Cheryl Miller: Welcome back, everyone to the OHCC Connections podcast. Thank you for joining us today. I'm Cheryl Miller, the executive director of the Oregon Homecare Commission. This is Part 2 of our five-part series on new training requirements for homecare workers, personal support workers, and personal care attendants. I'm joined again today by our partners from Carewell SEIU, 503 training, Sarah and Whitney. Please introduce yourselves.

Sarah Edwards: Hi again everyone. I'm Sarah Edwards, and I'm the director of Care Well SEIU 503 training.

Whitney Taylor: And I'm Whitney Taylor, the curriculum development manager for Carewell training. Hello again. We're happy to be here.

Cheryl Miller: In our first episode, we talked about the training requirement, where it came from, and that the training is available now for those who want to take it. Today, we are going to dive a little deeper into what this new requirement looks like for new workers. This is for folks who are new to the workforce and just applying to receive their provider number. Sarah, why don't you lead us off with an overview?

Sarah Edwards: Sure thing. So, the new worker training series consists of three parts. They're four hours each, so it's a total of 12 hours of training. Our first part is orientation, and this is currently online, but it'll be in person once it's safe for everyone to go back to a classroom, and this one is done before employment, so preemployment. Next is the online core and these are self-directed modules that you can access online and

there's 10 of them. And then after online core comes core workshop, which is an interactive webinar that's led by a trainer.

Cheryl Miller: So, Sarah, can you tell us how many folks have taken the training series so far?

Sarah Edwards: Quite a lot, actually. We've had nearly 5,500 people complete our orientation and over 900 people complete the entire 12-hour training series.

Cheryl Miller: Wow. How has the training been received so far?

Sarah Edwards: Very well, actually. Folks are really liking that it's easy to access, and it's really convenient that folks can do it on their own schedule, and the training's really engaging. So, folks are really liking engaging with the trainer, and with other learners in the webinar, and then they're really liking that it's directly related to their work and it's really practical and applicable, and they can take those skills and use them immediately with their consumer.

Cheryl Miller: Whitney, can you talk a little bit more about what folks are expecting in a self-directed, online module? Are they just reading a screen for four hours?

Whitney Taylor: No. The online modules are narrated and contain interactive elements like drag and drop, matching, and knowledge check questions to keep people involved along the way. Another important thing about the online modules is that they vary in length and some are as short as 15 minutes. So, you don't have to set aside a big chunk of time. You can just work on the training a little bit at a time.

Cheryl Miller: Wow. That sounds great. That's better than reading the screen for four hours, and what about the content? What types of topics are covered?

Whitney Taylor: So, we talked about a little bit about the broad topics that are covered in the first episode and how those came about. So, if you haven't listened to that one yet, you might want to check it out after this episode. But a few of the more specific topics include professional

boundaries, how to set and maintain those; confidentiality, why it's so important, what it really means; nutrition; medication safety; and in our core workshop, which is the last portion of the training series, it provides tools for communication and quite a bit of the time is devoted to working through scenarios, and the feedback we're getting is that the scenarios are really helpful and that people really like being able to connect with their fellow workers and have their voice heard with their experience.

Cheryl Miller: Well, those are great topics. Are there are any favorites?

Whitney Taylor: They're kind of surprising. But yeah, we get a lot of comments about the preventing abuse and neglect module from orientation. People find it really eye-opening. They're surprised to learn about all the different kinds of abuse and neglect that people who receive services and supports can suffer, and they're really happy to learn about ways to recognize it, report it, and even prevent it if possible. Another topic we get a lot of comments about are person-centered services. Providing person-centered service is a core tenet of these programs, meaning that services are provided in the way the person receiving them would like them to be provided. And while it may seem like a simple concept, care providers really feel like the training gives them a better understanding of how important person-centered services and how they can provide it.

Cheryl Miller: So, Sarah, can you talk a little bit about the enrollment process so that new workers can better understand what it looks like and what to expect?

Sarah Edwards: Sure. So, the first thing new workers need to do is apply and submit their background check information. And then, after they've done that, they should take orientation right away, and we really encourage people to do that while they're waiting for their background check. Then, they'll be issued a provider number, and once they have that provider number, they can go online and take the online core, which is those self-paced modules we talked about. After they've completed all 10 of those modules, then they can take the core workshop, which is the instructor-led webinar. After the workshop, there's an assessment and a survey and then there's a question about how folks would like to receive their stipend and once they've done all of those things, then the training will

be a hundred percent complete. And then they can go online to the registry and fill out their profile so that, if they're looking for work, a consumer-employer can find them.

Cheryl Miller: That sounds great. Thank you. That is very helpful for new workers to understand what the process will look like. We mentioned that the training is currently in the pilot phase. When will it be required?

Sarah Edwards: Starting in September of this year, the new worker training series will be a requirement. Orientation will need to be taken before an applicant will be issued a provider number, so they're encouraged to take it right after submitting their application and background check. And then after receiving a provider number, new providers will have 120 days to complete the next two pieces of the training, which is online core and core workshop.

Whitney Taylor: And I do want to add that anyone who completes the training series now will not have to do so in September. Starting in September, anyone who has a provider number and has not completed the training series will be considered a current worker and must complete the refresher training series.

Sarah Edwards: That's right. Great point, Whitney. We really encourage folks to go ahead and do the training now so they can get it off their plate. And so to get started, you can go visit our website which is CarewellSEIU503.org/training, but we'll also include that website link in the show notes.

Cheryl Miller: Yes, we will. Make sure to include links to the resources we have mentioned and a few others that may be helpful in the show notes. Well, that is all we have for today. Sarah and Whitney, thank you. We appreciate everyone who has taken the time to join our conversation through this podcast. We look forward to sharing more information with you. Join us next week for our discussion about the refresher training series for all current workers.