

# **Webinar for State Departments of Health and Other Stakeholders: State-based Approaches to Nursing Home and Other Long-term Care Facility Support during COVID-19**

November 30, 2021 – 4 p.m. ET

# Welcome and Introduction

## **Nimalie Stone**

Senior Advisor for Long-term Care Partnerships, Prevention and Response Branch,  
Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[ELC Nursing Home & Long-term Facility Strike Team and Infrastructure Project Guidance \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dlqp/long-term-care/ELC-Nursing-Home-Long-term-Facility-Strike-Team-and-Infrastructure-Project-Guidance.html)  
[Nursing Home Strike Teams and Infrastructure Projects Resources: Connecting Public Health and LTC Communities – ARPA 2021 \(johnahartford.org\)](https://www.johnahartford.org/resources/nursing-home-strike-teams-and-infrastructure-projects-resources-connecting-public-health-and-ltc-communities-arpa-2021)

# State Program Presentations

## **WASHINGTON: Carolyn Ham**

Strategic Partners Program Supervisor,  
Healthcare-Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance Section  
Washington State Department of Health

## **RHODE ISLAND: Erin Abrahamsen**

Team Lead, COVID-19 Prevention Field Team COVID-19 Unit  
Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH)

## **WISCONSIN:**

### **Kevin Coughlin**

Policy Initiative Advisor, Division of Medicaid Services  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

### **Patricia Benesh**

Policy Analyst, Division of Quality Assurance  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services



# RESPIRATORY PROTECTION FOR LONG-TERM CARE IN WA STATE



Healthcare-Associated Infections  
and Antimicrobial Resistance

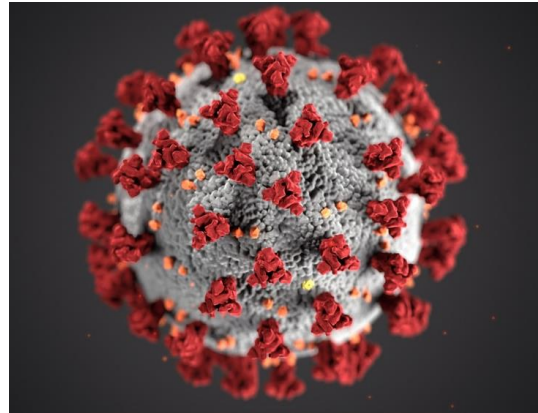
# Background

- If staff are exposed to a respiratory hazard, facilities are required to have a respiratory protection plan and provide fit testing respirators (such as N95s) to all staff
- Respiratory hazards include:
  - Caring for patients in isolation or quarantine for COVID-19
  - Caring for patients undergoing an aerosol-generating procedures, regardless of COVID status
- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, respirator use was rare in long-term care facilities in WA
- There was a significant knowledge deficit among facility staff and administrators
- In WA State, we have:
  - 202 Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF)
  - 548 Assisted Living Facilities (ALF)
  - 3,609 Adult Family Homes (AFH)
    - 6 or fewer residents





# Unmet Needs:



- In August-September 2020, **9.8%** of Adult Family Homes (AFH) had at least one caregiver fit tested for N95 respirators
- In November 2020, **23.7%** of LTCF did not have any N95s in stock
  - **96.7%** were AFH

# Partnerships

---

- Labor and Industries
- Department of Social and Health Services
  - Residential Care Services
  - Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Long-Term Care Associations
- Emergency Management Agency
- ***FEMA and ELC Funding***



# Action

---

- **Occupational Health Staff:**
  - First OHN October 2020
  - Two additional OHNs early 2021
  - Two Resource Coordinators Fall 2021
- **Contracts:**
  - **Online medical clearance system (3M)**
    - As of 11/12/21, 17,757 long-term care staff certified
  - **Mobile fit testing, no-cost, statewide**
- **Supplies:**
  - Fit testing kits (procurement)
  - Respirators (from EMA)
- **Training:**
  - Training LTCF staff to provide fit testing to their staff
  - Technical assistance to facilities to implement respiratory protection



# The Five Steps of the Respiratory Protection Program

[Five Steps of the Respiratory Protection Program \(PDF\)](#)



- 1 Written Program**
  - Program administrator (RPA)
  - Hazard(s)
  - Respirator selection
  - Accommodation
  - Program evaluation
- 2 Respirator Medical Evaluation**
  - Questionnaire
  - Clearance/Certification
  - Frequency
- 3 Training**
  - Storage
  - Use
  - Disposal
  - Emergency
  - Limitations
  - Frequency
- 4 Fit Testing**
  - Initial
  - Annual
  - After any physical change
- 5 Recordkeeping**
  - Medical clearance
  - Training records
  - Fit testing result

## DOH Contractors Providing Free Fit Testing by County

Northwest Response

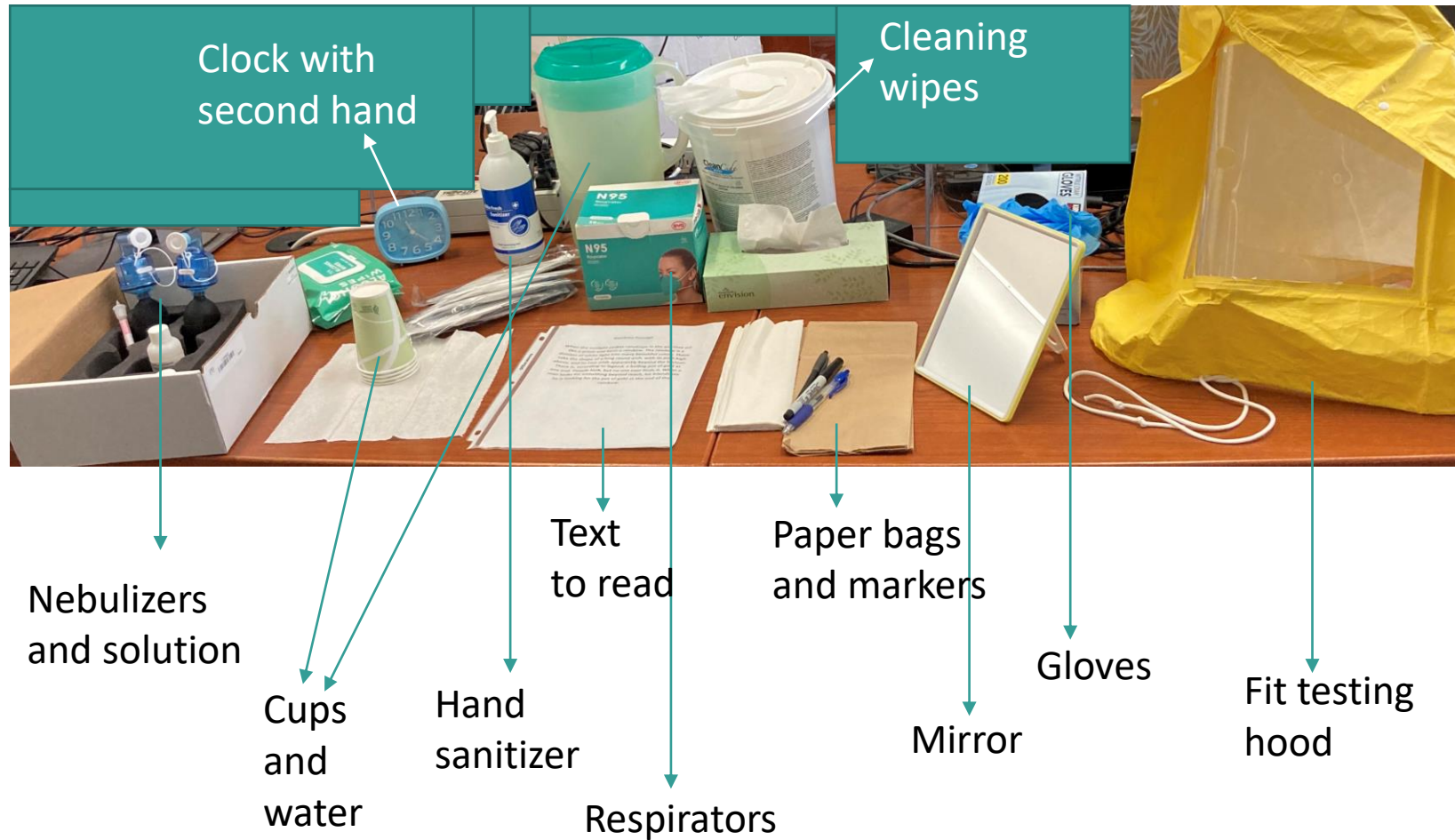
Kyron Environmental



Performance Occupational Health

Columbia Safety

# Fit Testing Demonstration



# Impact

18,598 staff certified  
through the medical  
clearance system

1,950+ Facilities registered

356+ Facilities receiving  
consultations from WA DOH  
Occupational Health Nurses



# Lessons Learned

- Started small, underestimated the need
- Initial focus on fit testing, facilities missed out on full understanding of respiratory protection plan requirements
- Facilities need to understand fit testing is their responsibility
- Small facilities need more support to be prepared



**Our program website can be found here:**

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/HealthcareProfessionsandFacilities/HealthcareAssociatedInfections/RespiratoryProtectionProgram>



**Contact: Carolyn.Ham@doh.wa.gov**





# Innovative Strategies to Support LTC

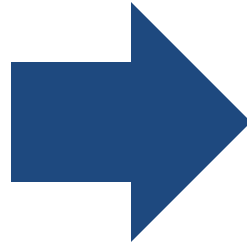
**The work of the Congregate Setting Support Team (CSST) and  
COVID-19 Prevention Field Team (CPFT) in Rhode Island**

RHODE  
ISLAND

# Evolution of Rhode Island's Field Team Response

## CONGREGATE SETTING SUPPORT TEAM (CSST)

- Spring 2020 - Spring 2021
- Targeted supports to congregate settings – primarily long term care and group homes
- Staffed with National Guard medical members (25 members scaled down to five)
- Offered staff training/education
- Advised on infection control, Q&I units, prevention/mitigation strategies
- Coordinated resources – PPE, Staffing, Testing
- Coordination Cell met 3-5 times weekly



## COVID-19 PREVENTION FIELD TEAM (CPFT)

- Spring 2021 - Currently operational
- Targeted supports more broadly – employers, shelters, corrections, long term care and group homes
- Civilian staff members (4 team members)
- Advise on infection control, Q&I units, prevention and mitigation strategies
- Coordination Cell meets once weekly
- No staffing resources



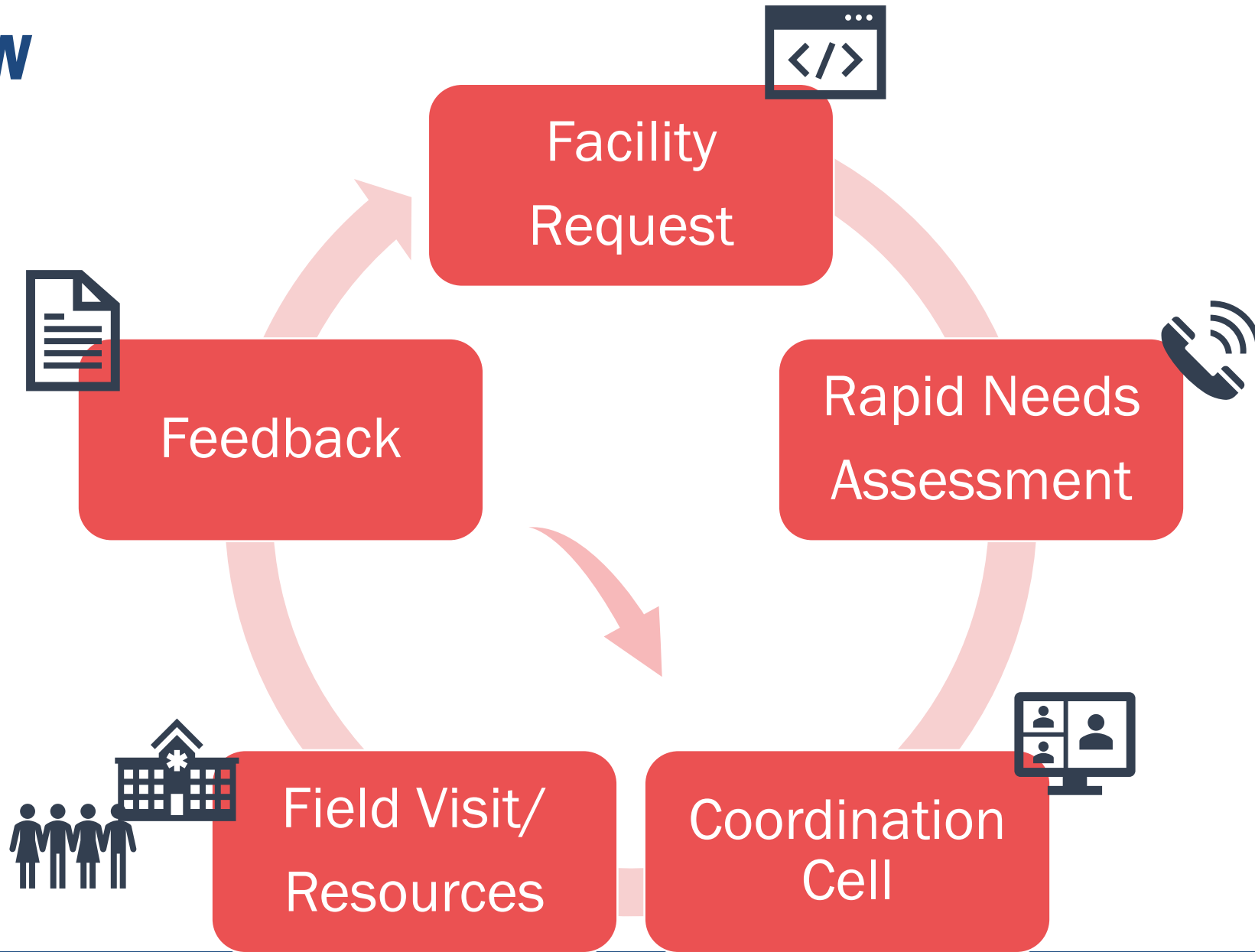
# Guiding Principles

**Enduring principles that have provided direction regardless of setting, outbreak status, or changing guidance**

- **Team must be invited by facility, visits are non-regulatory and optional**
- **Instill competence and confidence in infection control and outbreak response with staff**
- **Train/Advise/Assist – Train staff, Advise leadership, Assist with resources**
- **Remain scalable, adaptable, transferable**
- **Don't let perfection be the enemy of good**



# Workflow



# Rhode Island Populations Impacted April 2020-April 2021

3,419

Personnel  
Trained

16,557

Residents  
Impacted

66%

Facilities  
Experiencing  
an Outbreak

# COVID-19 Prevention Field Team

Erin Abrahamsen, Team Lead, Nurse

[Erin.e.abrahamsen.ctr@health.ridoh.gov](mailto:Erin.e.abrahamsen.ctr@health.ridoh.gov)

RHODE  
ISLAND

## COVID-19 Prevention Field Team



### What is the COVID-19 Prevention Field Team?

It is a State interagency resource for employers, facilities, and community organizations to provide on-site support in implementing COVID-19 prevention strategies as well as resources and education when there is a rise in positive cases. The team aids in reintegrating Rhode Islanders safely back into their workplace and community settings in accordance with state guidelines. The goal is to improve the knowledge base, technical proficiency, confidence, and competence of staff, leadership, and community members. Together we can reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Rhode Island.

### What can be expected from a Field Team request?

The Field team can provide on-site support for locations looking to implement COVID-19 prevention strategies or for those who are experiencing a rise in cases.

#### This support can include:

- The best approach to keep symptomatic and exposed individuals at home.
- How to assess your building and re-open so your staff feel confident returning to the workplace.
- How to understand guidance regarding vaccinated and unvaccinated employees in the workplace.
- How to set up in-house COVID-19 testing (with BinaxNOW rapid test kits) and what to do when an employee or staff member tests positive, how to do contact tracing, and more.
- Strategies to promote vaccination and treatment (including monoclonal antibody).



### How can your facility or organization request support from the Field Team?

The organization can access our web portal, complete a brief questionnaire and submit the request directly to the COVID-19 Prevention Field Team (CPFT). If an organization has a contact with an Epi/Ops Specialty Team at the Rhode Island Department of Health, they can also reach out to their contact. A Field Team member will then follow-up to learn more about your needs and develop a plan to best support your facility or organization.



### Will the Field Team need to enter the facility?

Not necessarily. Depending on the specific needs of the organization, the technical assistance and assessment may be performed virtually or over the phone.

### Who can I contact with any general questions?

Please submit a request form through our portal at: <https://forms.office.com/g/fAMAVCVfyD> and a team member will contact you within one business day.

6/24/2021

[covid.rl.gov](https://covid.rl.gov)



RHODE  
ISLAND





WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
*of* HEALTH SERVICES

# Wisconsin WisCaregiver Careers



Kevin Coughlin  
Pat Benesh  
Department of Health Services

# WisCaregiver Career Program

- Wisconsin received \$2.3 million to encourage 3,000 Wisconsinites to become a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) and work in a nursing home.
- Free training, free testing and a \$500 retention bonus.
- Workforce solutions – website, resources for recruitment and retention, webinars
- Budget
  - \$250,000 Marketing (11%)
  - \$100,000 Tracking System (4%)
  - \$20,000 Program Administration (1%)
  - \$1,665,000 Training 3,000 (72%)
  - \$283,500 Testing 3,000 (12%)

# Timeline

DATE	EVENT
3/15/17	Award notification
7/1/17 to 1/31/18	Ramp up – contracts, media & marketing, support system, recruitment, tracking system, web & training
3/1/18	Soft launch
4/1/18	Media launch
3/12/18	First training enrollment
4/20/18	First training completed
4/10/18	First person employed
10/10/18	First person received bonus
7/31/19	Stopped website registrations
8/15/19	Stopped training enrollment
12/31/19	Stopped training sessions
12/30/20	Original end of project
6/30/21	Final end of project after COVID-19 extension

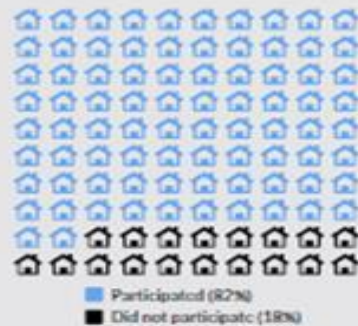
## Free Nurse Aide Training and Testing

### Key Facts and Figures

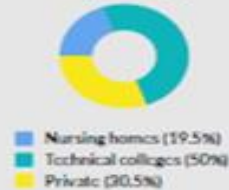


### Participation in More Detail

#### Wisconsin Nursing Home Program Involvement



#### Enrollment By Training Program Type

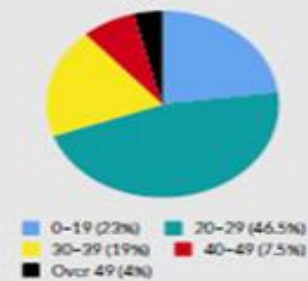


#### Training Programs Types

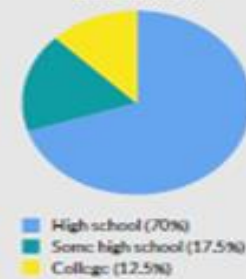


### More About the Participants

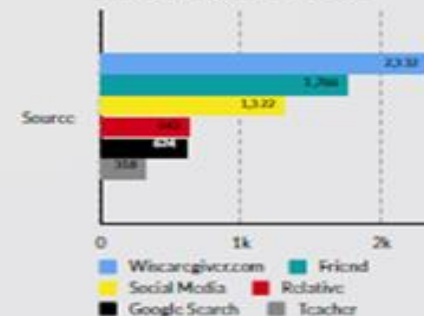
#### Age



#### Education



#### How Participants Learned About WisCaregiver Careers



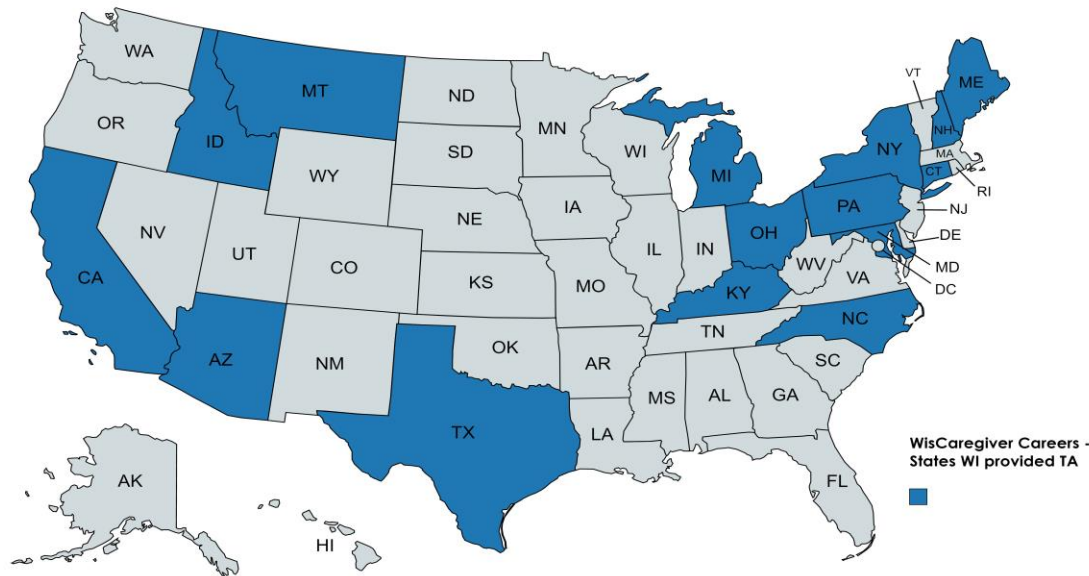


# Lessons learned

- Plan and budget for the administration of the project. Significant support required.
- Don't underestimate the benefit of a good marketing plan and tracking system.
- Be prepared for significant interest – free training, free testing and a \$500 bonus resonates with a lot of people.
- Implement a mechanism to ensure nursing home data submissions.

# Assisting Others

- Idaho, Kentucky, California, Texas, Montana, Ohio, New Hampshire, Maryland, North Carolina, New York, Michigan, Maine, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Connecticut
- Ontario, Canada



# Contact and Resources

- **Kevin Coughlin**

DHS, Division of Medicaid  
Services

[Kevin.coughlin@wi.gov](mailto:Kevin.coughlin@wi.gov)

- **Pat Benesh**

DHS, Division of Quality  
Assurance

[Patricia.Benesh@wi.gov](mailto:Patricia.Benesh@wi.gov)

- **Website:**

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/caregiver-career/index.htm>

- **Student webpage:**

[www.wiscaregiver.com](http://www.wiscaregiver.com)

## Additional Q&A

# Thank You

[NHStrikeTeams@cdc.gov](mailto:NHStrikeTeams@cdc.gov)