

The Health Care Workforce Transformation Fund supports training programs that address workforce skill needs identified by health care providers as they work to improve patient care and reduce costs. Commonwealth Corporation administers this fund on behalf of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital - Milton (BID-Milton) is a non-profit, 88-bed acute care community hospital. The hospital has a full-service Emergency Department (ED) and offers a wide array of inpatient, outpatient and ancillary health care services. Annually, BID-Milton cares for 6,435 inpatient and observation patients, and averages 26,000 ED patient visits and 300,000 outpatient visits.



## Workforce Challenge:

The communities served by BID-Milton have a larger proportion of seniors (65+ years) than the state of Massachusetts on average. The medical costs associated with serving this population are high and steadily increasing; they have a more varied set of conditions than in the past. The hospital has been hiring nursing students to perform Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) duties in order to provide advanced, quality care to seniors. These students leave for RN positions when they complete their studies and become licensed, contributing to an average turnover rate for CNAs of 10%. The (non-nursing student) CNA workforce that remains needs access to increased education and training related to geriatric health. BID-Milton believed this would lead to increased confidence among staff and, as a result, would contribute to improved care of older adult patients.

“ This program allowed me to see things from a patient’s perspective and taught me ways to improve patient care and satisfaction.”

-BID-Milton Geriatric Associate

## Training Strategy and Expected Outcomes:

BID-Milton developed and delivered an enhanced geriatric CNA and Phlebotomist curriculum, which included the use of simulated technology. The new curriculum included 40 hours of face to face and simulator-based training, building on NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Health System Elders) certification materials. Incumbent CNAs who successfully completed training were promoted to a newly created position of Geriatric Associate with a wage increase. As a result, the hospital now has a better trained multi-lingual, multi-cultural CNA workforce with specialty skills to improve the care and management of the elderly. Nursing leadership reports that CNAs are more proactive in reporting issues and recognizing changes in patients’ conditions. Moreover, BID-Milton has seen a decrease in the 30-day readmission rate for the geriatric patient population and reported reduced turnover of their CNA workforce. In addition, through a partnership with the local Vocational High School, 36 high school students completed enhanced geriatric training which supplemented their CNA certification. The school has incorporated specialty training in geriatric care for all program graduates which will strengthen the pipeline source for trained CNAs from the vocational high school to health care providers in the community.