

# Guide to Investing in Frontline Health Care Workers



- Executive Summary
- Why Invest in Your Frontline Health Care Workforce?
- Employer Best Practices for Making Effective Investments
- A Framework for Integrating Workforce Investments with Business Impact
- **Resources for Investing in Frontline Workers**

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## RESOURCES FOR INVESTING IN FRONTLINE WORKERS

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## Business Impact Analysis

### ▶ Business Value Assessment

The Aspen Institute's Workforce Strategies Initiative designed this method to help practitioners and their employer partners assess the business value of their workforce services. Aspen WSI has developed a handbook explaining BVA and a toolkit containing spreadsheets and questionnaires for collecting and tracking various measures of business value.

<http://www.aspenwsi.org/resource/bva-toolkit/>

### ▶ Every Voice Matters: The Bottom Line on Employee and Physician Engagement.

Press Ganey, 2013.

Hospitals with high levels of employee and physician engagement score demonstrably higher on quality measures tied to payment reforms under the Affordable Care Act, according to this white paper by Press Ganey, health care human resource consultants. Employees' belief that their organization provides career growth opportunities is one of the key metrics of engagement. This research found that scores for core measures of the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey were higher in all dimensions when employees are highly engaged, including lower preventable readmissions. Hospitals that perform highly on employee engagement also improve their bottom line, receiving \$1.17 for every dollar at risk in the Affordable Care Act's Value-based Purchasing Program, which rewards health care providers for lowering costs. [http://healthcare.pressganey.com/2013-PI-Every Voice Matters](http://healthcare.pressganey.com/2013-PI-Every-Voice-Matters)

### ▶ From Hidden Costs to High Returns: Unlocking the Potential of the Lower-Wage Workforce.

Tony Proscio, 2010.

Insight Center for Community Economic Development. This business brief summarizes research that found that selected pioneering companies are benefiting financially by investing efforts and resources in employee development for their lower-wage workers and rewarding their growth

with significant earnings increases. These employers see workforce development as key to maintaining a competitive edge. They view their lower-wage workers as a valuable asset: a means of continually improving quality and a potential talent pool for higher-level positions.

<https://nationalfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/HiddenCosts-HighReturns-1.pdf>

### ▶ Greater Cincinnati Workforce Network, Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati. Return On Investment Report: 2011.

This report, prepared by the NewGrowth Group, analyzes the return on investment to a hospital employer, University of Cincinnati Health, for training low-skilled incumbent workers for occupations requiring Associate's degrees, as well as the benefits to employers of certificate training programs for low-skilled workers.

[https://nationalfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/HCC-ROI-UCHealth\\_11.pdf](https://nationalfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/HCC-ROI-UCHealth_11.pdf)

### ▶ Measuring Business Impact in Workforce Development: A Workforce Development Practitioner's Guide. Lisa Soricone, Navjeet Singh, & Rebekah Lashman, 2011.

This is a step-by-step guide to measuring business impact of sector-based workforce projects, including health care, drawing on the work of Massachusetts' Commonwealth Corporation. The guide is targeted to both workforce development practitioners engaged in project planning or implementation, inside or outside the workplace, as well as program evaluators.

[http://commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/resources\\_2011-11-measuring-business-impact-workforce-development-guide.pdf](http://commcorp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/resources_2011-11-measuring-business-impact-workforce-development-guide.pdf)

### ▶ Measuring Business Impact: Lessons Learned from Workforce Development in Massachusetts.

Lisa Soricone and Navjeet Singh. 2011.

In this companion document to the Workforce Development Practitioner's Guide, the authors

present challenges and opportunities of business impact measurement, using projects from Massachusetts' Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, including health care, manufacturing, trades, and financial services.

[www.commcorp.org/resources/detail.cfm?ID=899](http://www.commcorp.org/resources/detail.cfm?ID=899)

► **Profiting From Learning: Do Firms' Investments in Education and Training Pay Off?** Laurie J.

Bassi, Jens Ludwig, Daniel P. McMurrer, & Mark Van Buren, Association for Talent Development, 2000.

This study found a significant correlation between what firms invest in work-based learning efforts and their total stockholder return. Of the nearly 600 companies examined in this study, those firms investing in employee development experienced better earnings, a higher return on equity, and better stock performance. Specifically, firms that invest more than the average amount on work-based learning programs have total stockholder returns that are 86 percent higher than firms that invest less than the average, and 45 percent higher than the total market average. The bottom line is that training creates value for organizations.

<https://www.td.org/Publications/Research-Reports/2000/Profiting-from-Learning>

► **ROI 360°: How Workforce Partnership Training Benefits Business, Workers, and Community.** 2014.

JOIN, the Job Opportunity Investment Network, is a Philadelphia-based public-private partnership of regional and national funders that invests in and evaluates best practice efforts in the education and training of the low-skilled workforce. This publication presents analysis and case studies on the return on investment for employers and workers of workforce programs in health care and human services (an independent living center), and in high-technology manufacturing (computer components), while explaining the methodology for estimating ROI. It found that businesses captured "significant value" from participating in partnerships and trainings, even if the latter were short term. Workers, on the other

hand, accrued greater benefits from longer-term training, involving career paths and credentials.

[http://joincollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/JOIN\\_ROI.pdf](http://joincollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/JOIN_ROI.pdf)

► **Talent Investments Pay Off: White Paper. Cigna Realizes Return on Investment from Tuition Benefits.** Lumina Foundation, 2016.

Working with consulting partner Accenture, the Lumina Foundation sponsored a study of the Return on Investment of the Education Reimbursement Program of insurer and health services provider Cigna. Accenture developed a framework for calculating the ROI of Cigna's tuition assistance, drawing on employee data from 2012 to 2014, as well as a "maturity model" to help employers assess their capacity to measure ROI from tuition programs. The study found that Cigna reaped \$1.29 for every dollar invested in the Education Reimbursement Program.

<https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/talent-investments-pay-off-cigna-full.pdf>

► **Turning Skills into Profit: Economic Benefits of Workplace Education Programs.** Michael R. Bloom and Brenda Lafleur, Conference Board, 1999.

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (now the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education), the Conference Board studied 45 national workplace education projects. It found a wide range of benefits, including bottom-line results such as increased profitability, greater employee and customer retention, reduced errors, improved job skills, and increased employee morale and team functioning.

[http://www.conferenceboard.ca/Libraries/EDUC\\_PUBLIC/Skills\\_Profits.sflb](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/Libraries/EDUC_PUBLIC/Skills_Profits.sflb)

- ▶ **Why Companies Invest in “Grow Your Own” Talent Development Models: Including a Tool for Calculating Return on Workforce Readiness Programs.** Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2011.

This brief summarizes research conducted by CVWF that sought to calculate whether the education and training investments made by three well-known American companies were effective, and whether they were creating a positive return on investment. The employers— CVS Caremark, Johns Hopkins Hospital, and Pacific Gas and Electric—participated in the research and shared information about their workforce readiness training programs. The report features a companion “Return on Investment (ROI) Tool” designed to help calculate the real dividends associated with workforce education and training. <http://gradsoflife.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Why-Companies-Invest-in-Grow-Your-Own-Talent-Models.pdf>

- ▶ Corporate Voices for Working Families also produced a brief summary of its research, findings, and methodology, in the following report, **Building the Business Case for Investing in Tomorrow’s Workforce: Employers See Positive Returns from Community Partnerships.** <http://www.readyby21.org/sites/default/files/Building%20the%20Business%20Case%20for%20Investing%20in%20Tomorrows%20Workforce.pdf>

## Health Care Workforce Development

- ▶ **A Guide to Upskilling America’s Frontline Workers: A Handbook for Employers.**

Deloitte, in collaboration with the Aspen Institute, 2015.

This handbook was produced for UpSkill America, a coalition of employers, educators, nonprofit organizations, unions, and government agencies committed to advancing the nation’s 24 million frontline workers across all industries. It shares with CareerSTAT the mission of recognizing leading

employers that provide career opportunities to frontline workers, promoting widespread adoption of such practices, and cultivating public/private education and workforce development efforts in support of skill and career development. The handbook offers employers tools for assessing their capacity for upskilling their workforce, making the business case, and initiating workforce development programs. It includes a “maturity model” that helps track where a business stands in terms of defining job roles, identifying workers’ skill sets, and building career pathways.

[http://www.upskillamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Upskilling\\_Employer\\_Handbook\\_042015.pdf](http://www.upskillamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Upskilling_Employer_Handbook_042015.pdf)

- ▶ **Developing an Effective Health Care Workforce Planning Model.** American Hospital Association, 2013.

This white paper outlines a process for health care workforce planning, including developing a current workforce profile, defining future workforce needs, and determining gaps. It includes an assessment tool to discern workforce needs, particularly in light of a shift to team-based models of care. The paper covers four components of workforce planning: workforce data, workforce planning strategy, planning to create pipelines for filling workforce needs, and evaluation to monitor effectiveness of the plan. The AHA produced the paper in cooperation with the Association of Nurse Executives and the American Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration.

<http://www.aha.org/content/13/13wpmwhitepaperfinal.pdf>

### ▶ **The Pioneer Employers Initiative**

The Hitachi Foundation has documented a number of employers who have found economic incentives for improving the jobs and career opportunities of employees, including many in health care. In cooperation with researchers from HealthForce Center at UC San Francisco, the Foundation produced a series of case studies, **Innovative Workforce Models of Health Care**, showcasing primary care practices that are expanding the roles of medical assistants and other frontline workers in innovative ways. The organizations selected are implementing practice models that improve organizational viability and quality of care for patients while providing career development opportunities to frontline employees.

<http://www.hitachifoundation.org/our-work/good-companies-at-work/pioneer-employers/the-pioneers-of-healthcare>

<https://healthforce.ucsf.edu/publications>

- ▶ For further guidance on developing frontline health care worker programs, with a hospital focus, see: **Developing Your Own Pioneer Program Implementation Toolkit**. The Hitachi Foundation, January 2013.

[http://www.hitachifoundation.org/storage/documents/Toolkit\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.hitachifoundation.org/storage/documents/Toolkit_FINAL.pdf)

- ▶ **Strategies for Health-Care Workforce Development**. Kalima Rose, Mary Lee, and Victor Rubin, PolicyLink, 2015.

Building an Inclusive Economy series. This brief was created as part of a series of policy papers to assist civic leaders in New Orleans with addressing high unemployment rates among African-American residents and was later adapted for a national audience. It provides case studies of workforce training and career development initiatives in health care, both community- and employer-based, including key strategies and recommendations.

[http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/pl\\_brief\\_nola\\_healthcare\\_FINAL\\_0\\_0.pdf](http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/pl_brief_nola_healthcare_FINAL_0_0.pdf)

## Frontline Health Care Worker Champions

CareerSTAT's Frontline Health Care Worker Champions are recognized by their peers for their sustained investment in skill and career development of frontline workers. Representing health care organizations across the care continuum, these industry leaders are improving health outcomes for patients and increasing their business impact by making learning and advancement more accessible for their frontline employees. Since 2014, CareerSTAT has recognized 25 organizations. Their practices, policies and strategic approach inform the CareerSTAT Guide, best practices, and resources. Learn more about the Frontline Health Care Worker Champion program at [www.nationalfund.org/initiatives/careerstat/frontline-health-care-champions/](http://www.nationalfund.org/initiatives/careerstat/frontline-health-care-champions/).

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CareerSTAT is a network of health care leaders promoting investment in the skills and careers of frontline workers. It supports health care organizations in using workforce development programs to increase business impact, improve health outcomes, and provide good jobs. CareerSTAT produces an array of resources on the benefits of skill and career development, recognizes organizations leading the industry as Frontline Health Care Worker Champions, and tracks innovative practices for advancing frontline workers. CareerSTAT is an initiative of the National Fund for Workforce Solutions and Jobs for the Future and is generously supported by The Joyce Foundation. To learn more about CareerSTAT, visit: <http://www.nationalfund.org/careerstat>.

**Jobs for the Future** develops, implements, and promotes new education and workforce strategies that help communities, states, and the nation compete in a global economy. In more than 200 communities across 43 states, JFF improves the pathways leading from high school to college to family-sustaining careers.

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**The National Fund for Workforce Solutions** is a national network promoting economic opportunity and prosperous communities through investment and innovation. Based in Washington D.C., the National Fund partners with philanthropy, employers, workers, public and private community organizations, and more than 30 regional collaboratives to invest in skills, improve systems, and generate good jobs. The National Fund supports civic and business leaders in promoting evidence-based practices and policies that build shared prosperity. Learn more about the National Fund and its local partners at [www.nationalfund.org](http://www.nationalfund.org).





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