

My name is Marc Oldham. I am a Program Coordinator for the Rolf Hansen group home for Benco in Corvallis. I manage a home for 5 individuals with developmental disabilities. I have a staff of 7 DSP's (Direct Support Professionals) who support these residents. I have worked for Benco for 5 years plus an additional 4 years at 2 other providers.

I strongly feel average DSP wages are not high enough to provide sustained, consistent staffing to those living with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Consistent staffing is crucial to sustaining the much needed ongoing supports these individuals request and require.

When there is a lack of adequate staffing and/or inexperienced staffing (due to high turnover), this leads to an increase in volatile, negative behaviors along with possible increased medical implications.

I support 1 individual who has had a change in trained, experienced support staff over the past 5 years. Once relationships are created, weak wages and better employment opportunities lead to a revolving door of DSP's. This leads to unstable supports to this individual who has a dual diagnosis of both an intellectual disability and a mental health condition. Results have ranged from self-destructive behaviors to physical attacks toward staff and the public. Strong, trained DSP's can assist this individual to lead a calm, productive and meaningful life; working to fulfill their hopes and dreams.

Please pass HB 2964, because Oregonians with IDD rely upon these services, and they deserve a skilled, stable DSP workforce.