

ADvancing States and UNC Launch the First-Ever Foundational Leadership in HCBS Certificate Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARLINGTON, VA— ADvancing States, in partnership with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Gillings School of Global Public Health, is proud to announce the launch of the Foundational Leadership in Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Certificate program. This first-of-its-kind training module equips professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to support professionals working in the nation's long-term services and supports (LTSS) systems, with a focus on supporting people in their homes and communities.

"This program represents a milestone for our field. By providing a rigorous foundation for professionals at all levels, we are ensuring that the next generation of leaders is prepared to advance innovation and promote independence in the communities we serve," said Martha Roherty, Executive Director of ADvancing States.

With most older adults and people with disabilities expressing the desire to remain at home rather than in institution-based settings, this certificate program addresses a need for well-prepared leaders in the field of HCBS. Participants will explore the structure, financing, and policies that govern LTSS, including the Older Americans Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Medicare, and Medicaid, while gaining practical insights into the roles of providers, service coordinators, and stakeholders in delivering person-centered care.

"It's incredibly exciting to see comprehensive training on HCBS programs now accessible to the many dedicated professionals working in this important field. Even more inspiring is that the training is developed with guidance from ADvancing States — a nationally respected leader and trusted authority in our nation's HCBS system — so learners know they can count on the quality and relevance of the content," said Anne Jacobs, Principal and Founder of Riverstone Health Advisors and one of the program instructors.

"As people live longer, our long-term services and supports systems must be prepared with a knowledgeable and capable workforce," added Kristin Reiter, PhD, Chair and Humana Distinguished Professor of Health Policy and Management at UNC-Chapel Hill. "This training provides a unique opportunity for professionals to deepen their expertise, strengthen service delivery, and ensure that our systems are ready to meet the needs of aging populations and individuals with disabilities."

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A First-of-Its-Kind Program

The Foundational Leadership in HCBS program is the first national certificate course designed specifically for professionals working in state and local governments, as well as private LTSS organizations. Accessible to individuals with varying levels of education and experience, the program is recommended for anyone working in LTSS, HCBS, or adjacent health systems.

Nancy Messonnier, MD, Dean and Bryson Distinguished Professor at the Gillings School of Global Public Health said, “Gillings is committed to developing the workforce to support the health and wellness of individuals, families and communities across North Carolina and beyond. We are excited to expand our workforce development and health leadership programming to build capacity in home and community-based service management, finance and delivery.

The *Foundational Leadership in HCBS Training* will equip professionals who manage and deliver essential HCBS with the skills and knowledge needed to strengthen HCBS systems and support delivery of person-centered services and supports.

We are proud to partner with ADvancing States, a national leader in policy innovation for long-term services and supports for older adults and individuals with disabilities.”

Building upon ADvancing States’ successful Next Gen HCBS Leaders program, this new certificate expands opportunities for professionals to strengthen their foundational knowledge, support high-quality service delivery, and foster innovation in aging and disability systems.

Foundational Leadership in HCBS Certificate Program Details

- Format: 10-week, self-paced, fully online program
- Eligibility: Open to professionals in state and local government and private LTSS roles
- Cohorts: The pilot cohort launched in September 2025, with additional sessions scheduled for January, May, and September 2026. Interested individuals can join the waiting list at www.sph.unc.edu/hpm/hcbs.

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About ADvancing States

ADvancing States represents the nation's 56 state and territorial agencies on aging and disabilities and long-term services and supports directors. Our mission is to design, improve, and sustain state systems delivering long-term services and supports for older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers.

Acknowledgements

ADvancing States gratefully acknowledges the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Gillings School of Global Public Health, and especially the Department of Health Policy and Management, for their leadership and collaboration in developing this program. The partnership with UNC has been central to ensuring the program's academic rigor, accessibility, and alignment with the real-world needs of the HCBS field.

Special appreciation is also extended to Anne Jacobs, Principal and Founder of Riverstone Health Advisors and instructor in the Foundational Leadership in HCBS program, for her expertise, leadership, and dedication in helping shape the course content and delivering instruction to participants.

ADvancing States also extends its gratitude to UnitedHealthcare Community & State, Molina Healthcare, and Pulselight for their support of leadership development in HCBS through the Next Gen HCBS Leaders program.