

Iowa Association of Community Providers  
2025 Annual Conference  
Breakout Session List



The 2025 IACP Annual Conference is shaping up to be our largest offering of training options yet! Below, you'll find an alphabetical list of topics and descriptions. Check them out and [register today!](#)

1. **Aging in Place** presented by Brenda Godbersen, Hope Haven, Inc. - Aging is a normal human process. As we age, we all have the desire to continue living our lives within our own homes. As the intellectual disability and mental illness population begins to age, we believe members of our communities also have the same desire. This session will give you a picture of what Aging in Place may look like in your communities. We will explore how to form a team to address the aging population and what each staff member's role will be in the process. Resources will be available as you begin to explore Aging in Place for your community.
2. **Iowa's ASO Implementation** presented by the Iowa Primary Care Association - Iowa Primary Care Association and others will share an update on Iowa's Behavioral Health ASO system and how it will be operationalized.
3. **Cannabinoids: Where are We Now** presented by Brandon Eddy, Jazz Pharmaceuticals - This exploration of cannabinoids "The Science of Cannabinoids", presented by one of our medical team. In this presentation, you will learn:
  - What Cannabinoids Are: Discover the nature of cannabinoids, their sources, and their interactions with the body's endocannabinoid system.
  - Key Cannabinoids: Explore prominent cannabinoids like THC and CBD, and their distinct effects.
  - Evidence-Based Approach to Cannabinoid Science: Delve into evidence required for drug regulatory approval.
  - Legal and Regulatory Landscape: Get an overview of the evolving legal status of cannabinoids and the challenges faced in research.
  - Consumer Health and Safety: Learn about the safety considerations and cannabinoids in consumer health.
4. **Change That Counts: Saving Lives and Reducing Costs by Addressing the Fatal Five** presented by Hilary Gaytan, IntellectAbility - This training highlights the Fatal Five, the top five PREVENTABLE causes of death in people with I/DD, and their prevalence in the field. Participants will explore the financial and human costs of these conditions and learn about an eLearning course designed to empower staff with prevention and intervention skills. Through a real-world case study, the session will demonstrate how one agency leveraged the training to improve health outcomes and likely reduce costs. Attendees will leave equipped with knowledge and strategies to enhance care quality, save lives, and drive meaningful change in their organizations. It addresses a critical issue in the I/DD field: the preventable health risks that contribute to unnecessary suffering and loss of life. This training equips participants with practical tools and proven strategies to recognize, prevent, and respond to the Fatal Five, empowering them to make a real difference in the lives of

those they support. Additionally, it highlights how investing in staff education can improve health outcomes, reduce costs, and create a safer, more efficient care environment. For organizations aiming to enhance care quality while maximizing resources, this training is an invaluable solution.

5. **Communication Solutions** presented by Jessica Watkins, Relay Iowa - Relay Iowa offers support to people who are Deaf, DeafBlind, hard of hearing and for those with speech difficulties. Our resources and options not only may prevent social isolation but can also increase independence and confidence. There have been updates and changes to our services and equipment options this past year which will be highlighted. This session will provide options for people who may not be able to accomplish responsibilities due to having a hearing loss or speech difficulty and cannot manage phone calls. Communication solutions will be the focus of the sessions as we share what is available through the FCC and the state relay program in Iowa.
6. **Conflict to Connection: A Restorative Approach to Resolution** presented by Bonnie McHugh, Optima LifeServices - Learn how to effectively resolve conflicts and debrief challenging situations using restorative practices. This presentation introduces the principles of restorative approaches and highlights the importance of asking intentional questions to foster accountability, empathy, and collaboration. Participants will gain practical tools to manage difficult conversations, de-escalate tensions, and improve communication within their teams. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to apply restorative questioning in everyday situations, helping to create a more positive and supportive environment for both the staff they lead and the individuals that they serve.
7. **DSP Recruiting & Retention Strategies: How to Attract & Keep the Staff You Want** presented by Jocelyn Leatherman, SETWorks - Employee recruitment and retention is an ongoing challenge, especially in disability service agencies where staff turnover and scheduling complexities are common. In this session, discover proven strategies for building a supportive workplace that attracts top talent, focusing on mission-driven leadership, well-structured working conditions, and a dedication to staff well-being. We'll highlight best practices in alternative scheduling, providing meaningful perks, and fostering a positive organizational culture. By understanding the true drivers of high turnover and low new-staff pipelines, you'll gain practical, actionable techniques for sustaining a stable and committed direct support workforce, ensuring quality care for people with disabilities through solutions.
8. **Driving Sustainable Change: Effective Strategies for Leading Organizational Transformation** presented by Marth Valadez, Woodward Resource Center of Excellence - Leading successful organizational change requires more than a well-written plan; it demands dynamic leadership, clear communication, and systemic alignment. This presentation provides a comprehensive approach to driving sustainable transformation in organizations, with practical strategies that empower leaders at every level. Attendees will explore the importance of fostering a shared vision, building trust, and addressing resistance to change through case studies and actionable insights. Whether you're leading a small team or a large-scale initiative, this session equips attendees with tools to drive

meaningful, lasting change while promoting a culture of collaboration, accountability, and innovation.

9. **Employee Benefits Roundtable: A Discussion on Retirement Plan Design & The Secure Act's Coming Changes, HR Solutions, Wellness Strategies and Mental Health First Aid Certification, Healthcare Cost Containment, R/x Mapper & Increasing Employee Engagement** presented by staff from Mutual of America, Imagine the Possibilities, HR Connect, PDCM - Key Secure Act provisions & what plan sponsors can expect. Review strategies, frequency, best practices, pitfalls, difficult areas of evaluation and tools to answer, is our benefit competitive?
  - HR Connect – What to consider if outsourcing various HR duties and/or adding resources to your existing team
  - Innovations in Healthcare Cost Containment
  - Risk/Reward
  - R/x Mapper – Prescription Savings Plan
  - Wellness Strategies
  - Mental Health First Aid Certification – Importance in the workplace & Getting Certified
10. **Empowering Neurodiverse Employees: Practical Strategies with Assistive Technology and Universal Design** presented by Kathryn Abrams, UI REACH – University of Iowa- Understanding and embracing neurodiversity is essential for fostering innovation and productivity in the workplace. This session explores the concept of neurodiversity, its benefits, and practical strategies for creating an inclusive environment. We will highlight the role of assistive technology and the principles of universal design in enhancing accessibility. Participants will gain insights from neurodiverse employees and experts and learn about various assistive technologies. By the end of the session, attendees will be equipped with tools and knowledge to support neurodiverse employees and promote an inclusive workplace culture.
11. **Ensuring Quality and Compliance** presented by Nate Reveley, Compliatric - This presentation explores effective strategies for ensuring quality and compliance within organizations. It will highlight the importance of implementing robust quality control and assurance systems to maintain high standards in products and services. The session will cover methods for adhering to industry regulations and legal requirements, focusing on compliance management and continuous monitoring. Key topics will include risk management, the role of audits and inspections, and the significance of documentation and reporting. Additionally, the presentation emphasizes the importance of fostering a culture of quality and compliance through staff training and cross-departmental collaboration, ensuring long-term success and sustainability.
12. **Expanding Access & Expertise: Introducing Iowa's ADRC Technical Assistance and Call Center** presented by Maggie Pickett, UCEDD University of Iowa - Explore how X continues to build on its legacy of supporting Iowans with disabilities to take on an expanded role in advancing the capacity of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) network. This session will explore the historical impact of X in navigating disability and aging services and outline future contributions to professional development through

free on-demand training and continuing education. Learn how X is collaborating with Iowa HHS to develop a comprehensive training framework, enhanced call center operations, and an updated resource database to ensure consistency, accessibility, and relevance in ADRC service delivery statewide.

13. **From Data to Drive: How Motivation Moves DSPs from Good to Great** presented by Jocelyn Leatherman, SETWorks - What truly sets a “good” Direct Support Professional (DSP) apart from a “great” one, and how can we empower frontline staff to realize their full potential? While performance metrics and ideal DSP profiles can point us in the right direction, real transformation occurs when we understand and harness the individual motivations of DSPs. In this session, Jocelyn shares her journey of measuring motivational factors and uncovering the “why” behind each DSP’s commitment. By tapping into what drives your frontline staff, you can redefine success, boost performance, and create a supportive environment that benefits everyone—drastically reducing turnover while enhancing outcomes. Using a practical, measurable framework, you’ll learn how to apply these insights for immediate and long-term organizational success.
14. **Get Decision Alignment, or Get Derailed** presented by Courtney Smock, Slingshot25 Every successful change initiative starts with a decision—but making the decision is only half the battle. If key stakeholders aren’t aligned from the beginning, organizations can quickly find themselves spinning their wheels, wasting time, money, and energy trying to course-correct. Misalignment leads to confusion, resistance, and unnecessary delays that can derail even the best-planned efforts.

In this session, we’ll explore:

- **The Power of Clarity** – Why getting ultra-clear on change-related decisions is essential for execution and long-term success.
- **Common Pitfalls** – The top reasons decision misalignment happens and how to recognize the warning signs before they become full-blown obstacles.
- **Four Fool-Proof Strategies** – Actionable techniques to ensure decisions are well-communicated, consistently reinforced, and fully supported.
- **A Must-Have Decision Tool** – A simple yet powerful framework that any leader, team, or organization can use to maintain alignment and keep change initiatives on track.

Whether you’re leading a major transformation or managing day-to-day operational shifts, this session will equip you with practical strategies to avoid unnecessary derailments and drive change with confidence.

15. **Learn from the Mistakes of Others: Employers’ Top 10 Missteps in the Accommodations Process** presented by Frances Haas, Nyemaster Goode, P.C.- In this program, we will discuss the complex and evolving issue of employee workplace accommodations. We will discuss mistakes that other employers have made in the past about tricky accommodation issues and learn from those mistakes. We will develop a framework for examining legal risk in accommodation issues, and attendees will leave with some practical tools to work through accommodation issues and avoid or minimize legal risk.

16. **LEAP Forward: Building Leaders at Every Level** presented by Amber Corrieri, Mainstream Living - This presentation explores how providers can implement inclusive leadership development programs that span all organizational levels. Using Mainstream Living's LEAP program (Leadership Exploration with Authenticity and Purpose) as a case study, we'll examine how combining structured learning, mentorship, and peer collaboration creates lasting impact. Learn practical strategies for designing an accessible curriculum that builds authentic leaders through personalized goal setting, community partnerships, and intentional relationship building. Discover how breaking traditional leadership development barriers helps organizations unlock potential across their workforce.
17. **Metrics for Enhanced Services** presented by Dr. Mike Strouse, GoodLife University - This session offers a comprehensive toolbox for measuring and addressing organizational (in)stability. With over 30 years' experience designing and implementing innovative labor solutions, Dr. Strouse will share specific and practical strategies to optimize provider margins and organizational health, including the use of a data-driven approach to collecting, analyzing, and utilizing key performance metrics. Attendees will discover the secrets behind a dynamic dashboard that highlights the health of critical departments and will receive impact data from numerous case studies where X's methodologies were analyzed, including GoodLife itself where 98% of our DSP positions are filled. Meaningful performance metrics will contribute to a culture of evidence-based continuous improvement. Use these tools to look both ahead and behind to experience real progress.
18. **Mitigating Cyber Risks: Strengthening Healthcare Cybersecurity** presented by Alex Walker, Trivium Life Services - Educate attendees on NIST CSF 2.0 as a guide to bolster an organization's cyber-security posture. The NIST CSF, developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, is a flexible, risk-based framework designed to enhance cybersecurity practices across various industries. It consists of 6 core functions: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover, Governance, which provide a structured approach to managing cybersecurity risks. NIST CSF is particularly beneficial for organizations seeking to comply with regulatory requirements, especially in federal contracting environments.
19. **Operational Hazards & Liability and Insurance Coverage** presented by Matt Wilson, Assured Partners - Buying insurance for a provider organization can become a matter of routine. While it is essential that regulatory insurance requirements be met, insurance purchased should be tailored to match operations. After this session, providers will better manage their risk by understanding the protection and limitations of the insurance they purchase.
20. **Partnerships, Training, and Transformed Lives: An Innovative Approach to Supporting People with Serious Mental Illness** presented by Mandy Hatten, Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health - Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is the only evidence-based model of supported employment, shown through extensive research to better support people with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders. This is a widely underserved population for supported employment- studies show that 60% of people with serious mental illness want to work, but only 2-3% have access to services

that support them with finding and maintaining employment. In this presentation you will learn what makes IPS effective, and how you can support people with serious mental illness in your area by considering becoming a provider of IPS. You will also learn what role the CEBH plays in supporting agencies through the IPS start-up process, and ongoing.

21. **Practical Solutions for Managing Medication Complexity in IDD Care** presented by Preston Finkle, Neighborhood LTC Pharmacy - Managing complex medication regimens for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) can be challenging for caregivers and providers. This session provides actionable strategies to simplify medication management, reduce risks, and ensure effective treatment. Attendees will leave with practical tools, solid examples, and proven methods to improve outcomes and streamline care processes.
22. **Practical Strategies for Working Through Change** - Dr. Celina Peerman - Change isn't just about strategy—it's about people. Resistance is a natural part of any change process, yet it can be the biggest obstacle to progress. This interactive session will focus on understanding why people resist change, how to address their concerns, and ways to help teams move forward with confidence. We'll explore practical steps to navigate difficult transitions, build trust, and engage employees at different stages of the change process. Participants will gain actionable tools to turn resistance into resilience, ensuring that even the most challenging changes lead to stronger teams and better results.
23. **Project ECHO** presented by Dr. Jodi Tate, University of Iowa - This session will introduce Project ECHO, a collaborative model of medical education and care management that empowers clinicians to provide better care to more people. Attendees will learn about the ECHO model, its impact on healthcare delivery, and how to implement it in their own organizations.
24. **Your Organization: Navigating Cyber Security Challenges** presented by Rob Else, Eide Bailly - In today's rapidly evolving digital world, protecting your organization from cyber threats is more critical than ever. This session will provide a comprehensive overview of the current threat landscape. Attendees will learn practical strategies and best practices to safeguard sensitive information and enhance their organization's cyber defenses. By examining real-world case studies, participants will gain valuable insights and lessons to strengthen their cyber security knowledge and resilience. Join us to empower your staff with the tools and knowledge needed to navigate cyber security challenges effectively.
25. **Proven Practices for Confronting DSP Recruitment & Retention** presented by Courtney Kelly Chapman, CQL | The Council on Quality and Leadership - There are numerous issues impacting the direct support professional (DSP) workforce, with recruitment and retention at the top of that list. We're aware of the problems, but what about the solutions? Where do you start? How do you know they'll have the desired impact? In this breakout, we're sharing innovative programs that organizations have put in place to confront DSP recruitment and retention. You'll leave this session with action steps that can produce results. We'll also present data that demonstrates how investing in your DSPs can improve quality of life for people with disabilities who receive your services.

26. **Seizure First Aid Ready** presented by Roxanne Cogil, Epilepsy Foundation of Iowa - The Seizure First Aid Ready program educates the public on the X's basic procedures for responding to someone having a seizure. This course aims to increase knowledge in seizure recognition and applying seizure first aid. One of the most common requests we get for seizure training in Iowa is from numerous agencies and community service providers. This is because there is very little seizure training in the required training for HCBS providers. Many are scared and do not know what to do when they witness a seizure. 1 in 10 will have a seizure in their lifetime and 1 in 26 will develop epilepsy. The comorbidity with other neurological conditions is higher. My 20-year-old daughter has epilepsy and two brain surgeries (including a hemispherectomy) and has been on the Brain Injury Waiver for about 17 years, so I am able to share lived experience and examples throughout the program for safety in the home and community. This program is supported by the CDC, and I am a certified instructor of the program. Thank you for your consideration.
27. **The 10 Cs of Inclusive Leadership** presented by Dr. Holly Stevenson, Optima LifeServices - Inclusive leadership is a style of leadership that values team members for their uniqueness and their diverse perspectives. Such leaders intentionally create an environment where people feel valued and able to contribute. This interactive presentation will work through eight skills that the inclusive leader has, as well as providing tools to grow each skill.
28. **The Power of the Pause** presented by Dr. Holly Stevenson, Optima LifeServices - Through compelling storytelling, Dr. Stevenson explains our propensity to unknowingly focus our time and energy towards things we cannot control, causing our energy to deplete. Through learning about Stoicism, participants will gather tools for living a life of influence while protecting their peace. This interactive presentation also discusses the importance of pausing for fostering inclusion, connection, reflection, and resiliency.
29. **Unraveling Diagnoses: Perseverations, Obsessions, Dissociation, Hyperfocus, and Delusions** presented by Dr. Suzanne Richards, ChildServe - To understand the complex nature of comorbid conditions of individuals with repetitive thoughts and behaviors, clinicians often piece together a puzzle without knowing what is being assembled only to discover that there is more than one puzzle. Using case studies to illustrate and research from neuroscience to highlight the overlap, clinicians can better discern if the function of behavior is an obsession that sparks compulsions or is the need for routine. They can understand if behavior is due to social avoidance or dissociation. Clinicians can distinguish between hyperfocus and what is a special interest. Finally, they can understand the difference between delusional thinking and thoughts that have changed due to time spent in thought. Treatment can then begin.
30. **Use of Antipsychotics in the Individuals with IDD: Back to the Future** presented by Nanette Wrobel, Tarrytown Expocare Pharmacy - This session describes the history of treatment of our individuals with mental health issues, starting in the 1950's until today. It focuses on improving the lives of our individuals and reducing the potential side effects and polypharmacy issues seen in our individuals by collaborating with the treatment team. The use of antipsychotics has increased over the years due to a variety of reasons. Many drugs in this class are on the market and it is incumbent on the members of the treatment team to

choose wisely and individually the use of these medications to allow our individuals to lead their best lives.

31. **Using a Values Based Culture to Improve Employee Engagement & Accountability** presented by Christina Smith, Community Support Advocates - We will share our journey of building a values-based culture and how it has improved our employee engagement, accountability, DEI efforts, and prepared us for transformative change. There are so many things that Executives today in our field cannot control, like funding, changes to the system, lack of staffing, etc. Building a values-based culture gives us something we can control- from Executives through DSPs. It's been the best thing we have done, and I hope it will help others.
32. **Using Augmented Intelligence to Address Workforce Challenges** presented by Dennis Morrison, Morrison Consulting - Workforce challenges are affecting behavioral health providers nationally. In addition to a diminished workforce pool to recruit from, providers uniformly are faced with overwhelming documentation challenges which is a primary source of burnout and recidivism. The use of artificial intelligence technologies has significantly changed this landscape, especially those that apply augmented intelligence, i.e., clinical decision support to documentation. 80% reductions in documentation time have been reported with improved clinical quality and much improved work-life balance for providers. This session will explore the use of these technologies, especially regarding their impact on the workforce problem our industry faces.
33. **Workforce 101: Solutions to Stabilize Your Workforce** presented by Megan McKinney Todd, GoodLife University - This session offers a comprehensive toolbox for measuring and addressing organizational (in)stability. With over 30 years' experience designing and implementing innovative labor solutions, we will share specific and practical strategies that are proven to increase provider margins and DSP wages, improve payroll/benefits, and will discuss unique approaches for front/back scheduling and vacancy coordination. Attendees will receive impact data from numerous case studies where GoodLife's methodologies were analyzed, including GoodLife itself where 98% of our DSP positions are filled.