



January 10, 2022

Dear Gateways Families,

Wishing you all a more normal and happier 2022. This has been an incredibly challenging 21 months, and the disruption due to COVID the last few weeks has made it even more difficult.

Daily, I am grateful that the loss we experienced in the beginning of the pandemic is not so prevalent due to vaccinations and boosters. Gateways has encouraged all its staff to get vaccinated and we have encouraged boosters as well for all who qualify.

Gateways has a wonderful team of employees, and we work very closely with all our providers to ensure that the clients we serve receive the best care. Staff at Gateways have been providing extra support to our front-line staff, particularly in our group residences providing 24-hour care with severe staff shortages. We at Gateways are also being challenged by the work force shortages not unlike others in the health care industry. Breakthrough cases throughout the Greater Nashua region have made the last few weeks particularly difficult.

Staffing, recruitment, and retention of staff - especially our staff who work directly with clients - is our number one priority. Workforce shortage was a challenge before the pandemic and finding and retaining workers has been severely exacerbated by this event in the past two years.

I know, for our families who hire Family Managed workers jointly with Gateways, that finding workers to work with your family member is extremely difficult. I know that the last 21 months, many of our families have had to take on the substantial responsibility of taking care of your loved one because of limited candidates applying for these jobs. I know those individuals that live in our regions' residential care have witnessed staff working extensive overtime. In the last few years, we have had a large number of individuals Gateways serve receive approval for funds to begin service but have not been able to get the services started due to the lack of available staff to begin your son/daughter into day or employment services.

Gateways is collaborating closely with our providers and other Area Agencies, both at the state and federal level, to identify ways to attempt to address these major workforce concerns. The pandemic has not been easy, to say the very least.

Please know we are by your side, and we are working collectively with others to create opportunities to address these challenges.

Sincerely,

Sandra Pelletier