

## Challenging Extrinsic Factors that Affect the Employment Longevity of Direct Care Staff Who Work with Clients Possessing Intellectual Disabilities

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### Abstract

We report the results of an empirical, qualitative research study conducted with 28 direct care staff (DCS) from two Midwestern facilities. The research question involved exploring the dynamics of employment conservation with staff who work with a relatively challenging population of individuals. In-depth interviews were conducted and three primary extrinsic concerns were noted by DCS. These included administrative policies, level of pay and insurance benefits, and legal restrictions imposed on DCS job descriptions. The latter included both care plans and technical requirements. We discuss the results in light of the relatively high turnover rates among DCS working with persons possessing intellectual disabilities. While job turnover is important in all work settings, because of the psychological needs and limited development of individuals with intellectual disabilities, job turnover is a particular concern in this milieu. Giving voice to the perspectives of DCS is viewed as the first step toward potentially improving job tenure rates among this work population.