

# LTC Employs Nearly 4 Million People

## Direct-Care Workers Number 2.2 Million

Recent findings from an American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living study show that according to estimates developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), more than 3.85 million workers were employed in the long term care delivery system in 2003. For purposes of this analysis, the long term care delivery system was based on the North American Industry Classification

workers. In assisted living, there are approximately 276,000 direct-care workers, according to government statistics (*see chart below*)

According to BLS estimates, paraprofessional direct-care workers in long term care are typically women with an average age of 39. From 25 to 33 percent are unmarried and living with children.

In 2003, the median hourly wages for paraprofessional direct-care work-

### BREAKDOWN OF PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS IN ASSISTED LIVING

Professionals		Paraprofessionals	
Registered nurses	22,010	Home health aides	72,890
Licensed practical nurses	31,040	Nurse assistants	112,050
		Personal & home care aides	38,210
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,050</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>223,150</b>

Source: BLS "Occupational Employment Statistics Survey"

System coding and defined as two primary service categories: facility-based (skilled nursing and assisted living facilities) and home-based services.

All projections are based on the BLS "Occupational Employment Statistics," which is designed to estimate employment and wages for industries and occupations based on a sample of 1.2 million establishments.

In all of long term care, there are approximately 2.2 million direct-care workers, of which 545,690 are professionals, such as registered nurses or licensed practical nurses, and 1.65 million are paraprofessionals, such as certified nurse assistants or personal care

ers was \$9.20, compared with median wages of \$13.53 for all U.S. workers. According to the recent report "Nursing Aides, Home Health Aides, and Related Health

**In 2003, the median hourly wages for paraprofessional direct-care workers was \$9.20.**

Care Occupations—National and Local Workforce Shortages and Associated Data Needs," published by the U.S. Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources, and Services

Administration, 20 to 30 percent of paraprofessional direct-care workers are employed on a part-time basis, and 20 percent of all paraprofessional direct care workers earn incomes below the federal poverty level.

—Amy Waye