

Spotlight Report

ON CONNECTING IMMIGRANT TALENT TO HEALTHCARE CAREERS

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A Message From the CEO

In her application for IINE's nursing assistant training program, Nininahazwe, a refugee from Burundi, wrote, "I need proper training and experience to help others in the right way, because I feel happy helping another person who needs it."

We hear this often. Our clients are looking for a way to support themselves and their families, and also to contribute meaningfully to the community that has welcomed them. For many, the pathway is healthcare.

Nationally, immigrants represent nearly one in five healthcare workers and are especially represented in essential, patient-facing positions. Many Americans became acutely aware of this during the COVID-19 pandemic when immigrants accounted for the majority of "essential workers," continuing to show up in person to jobs in hospitals, health centers, nursing homes, and in-home care. Their heroic efforts helped us survive one of the greatest public health crises in our recent history.

In Massachusetts, immigrants fill 19% of all healthcare jobs and nearly half (46%) of home healthcare positions. Demand for these workers will continue to grow as the population ages and a large share of the current workforce approaches retirement—New Hampshire alone is projected to see about 80,000 healthcare workers leave or transition out of the field by 2032. At the same time, the population of adults aged 65 and older in Massachusetts and New Hampshire is expected to increase by more than 475,000 people, bringing the region's older adult population to more than 2 million. This demographic shift will

significantly increase demand for nurses, licensed nursing assistants, home health aides, long-term care workers, and other aging-related services. Refugees and immigrants are already helping to fill critical workforce gaps and will play an increasingly important role in supporting the healthcare needs of both states.

IINE first developed healthcare programs in the 1940s when we began providing Red Cross training to newcomers who wanted to assist with the war effort. Over the years, our programs have evolved to meet the needs of the moment, leading us to partner today with university medical schools to provide free nursing and medical assistant training to hundreds of immigrants.

Unfortunately, while the need for skilled healthcare workers is only increasing, immigration policy and government funding for training programs like IINE's are now both in jeopardy.

That's why your investment makes all the difference—for our clients seeking meaningful career paths, for healthcare employers in need of reliable talent, and for all of us who benefit from quality care.



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jeffrey Thielman".

Jeffrey Thielman
President & CEO, IINE

IINE's Healthcare Training

Healthcare has become the major focus of IINE's job skills training program. Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of healthcare employers and of immigrant jobseekers with a range of educational and employment backgrounds.

Part of the Plan: IINE consults state and local workforce plans to understand where help is needed and where entry-level jobs are available, to help our clients meet their immediate goals and advance on their career pathways.

Working with Community Partners: Our curriculum is designed and taught in partnership with local university medical schools and healthcare providers, including hospitals, community health centers, and elder care facilities.

Maximizing Access: Program participants range from immigrants who had long healthcare careers in their home countries to those who see life in the U.S. as an opportunity to pursue a new passion. We teach participants the foundational English skills and workplace orientation needed to succeed in healthcare. Then, we help them earn industry-recognized credentials and secure entry-level jobs.

Our Programs

- *Skills Training and Career Support*
- *LNA for Success (Manchester, NH)*
- *CNA for Success (Lowell, MA)*
- *ESOL for Healthcare*
- *CNA Bridge*



“ I finished medical school in the Dominican Republic. Then, gang violence forced me to flee. Today, I’m working at an Amazon warehouse. But I want better. I am studying for the Medical Licensing Exam. I’ll do my residency and become a doctor. It’s a long journey ahead, but I’ll get there, and CNA is the stepping-stone.”

-McKewen, CNA for Success Student

Our core healthcare training programs prepare English language learners for jobs as nursing assistants and home healthcare aides. These vital healthcare professionals work directly with patients, checking basic health indicators like blood pressure, heart rate, and respiratory rate, and helping patients with bathing, dressing, and mobility. These roles can lead to higher-level positions as medical assistants and eventually, nurses or doctors.

IINE's comprehensive free programs combine:

- Job-focused English language training
- Workplace cultural orientation
- Training in “soft skills” like communication, collaboration, adaptability, and time management
- Practical job-related skills training, including hands-on experience
- Licensure/certificate exam preparation
- Career coaching and job placement support

Innovating Programming to Meet Vital Needs



Award-Winning Approach

Last Spring, LNA for Success won a \$100,000 New Hampshire Innovation Award. In a press release announcing the award, the Senior Director of the Foundation for Healthy Communities wrote, “[IINE’s] passion, dedication, and innovative partnership model impressed the judges’ panel with its mission to support immigrants in advancing their careers and to further meet the state’s workforce needs, all with a ‘one-stop-shop’ trust-based approach...Not only does this initiative empower immigrants, but it also contributes to strong retention rates in the healthcare sector, a field where skilled workers are needed more than ever.”

Meanwhile, in Massachusetts, a grant from the Commonwealth Corporation enabled IINE to expand the CNA for Success program from two classes per year to five.

Bringing the Classroom to the Employer: ESOL for Healthcare

Through the ESOL for Healthcare program, IINE is able to serve current healthcare workers who are English language learners and need support to improve in their roles and advance in their careers.

To provide the training, IINE partners closely with hospitals, healthcare centers, and eldercare facilities. They provide time and space during the workday for their employees to take the training, which includes not only targeted English instruction, but also digital literacy and financial literacy; workplace cultural orientation and collaboration skills; and career coaching, including job-shadowing and access to guest speakers from the local healthcare community.



Elliot Health System

In their evaluations, they’ll say things like, ‘I’ve gained the confidence to say hello to my manager in the morning, whereas before I might just have avoided eye contact.’ That’s what inspires me to keep pushing for this class and making it better every cohort... These are some of the most resilient and hardworking employees we have.”

-Becky Marden, Director of Workforce Development

71

Program graduates
placed in jobs with
45 healthcare
employers in
New England
since 2024

318

Nursing and medical
assistants trained
by IINE since our
programs began
in 2018

How You Can Help



Donate

Significant funding for IINE's healthcare training programs comes from public grants and contracts, which are shrinking due to changing federal priorities. Your support helps ensure the future of this vital programming.



Volunteer

Work one-on-one with students to practice their English, complete homework, write resumes, prep for interviews, and more.



Partner

Do you work in healthcare? Bring ESOL for Healthcare to your hospital, community health center, or eldercare facility.



Advocate

The termination of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for more than 300,000 Haitians is causing a crisis for New England families and for our healthcare workforce. Urge legislators to extend TPS and provide recipients with a pathway to citizenship.