

*Belinda Jordan, Personal Care Assistant
HB 6486, March 8, 2011*

My name is Belinda Nicky Jordan and I've been a PCA for two years on and off. I started working in home care through a friend who needed some assistance with one of her clients. She didn't want to let a patient down but had to move on to another job. So I helped her once and I ended up with the client longer than that. I took the class and trained in CPR and have been doing home care since then. I'm a people person and so it's good for myself and my clients to do this job. I keep them company and I enjoy helping out people.

I have two clients right now. I have 15 hours a week with one client and 25 hours a week with the other. At one point I actually had a full-time client through Allied, which is very unusual. Allied is the organization that helps connect PCAs and clients and they help with billing and financial management of care, but usually they have clients that will only hire for 25 hours a week. I got full-time with one client only because my client paid workers' comp out of her own pocket. Otherwise no client can give one PCA full-time hours.

At one point it was hard to find clients. Mostly I found them through friends. And then after that I started to receive calls. I went through a few clients because they were hospitalized and didn't need the assistance any more or because the job didn't work with my schedule and I had to give it to another aide. Some of my assignments were temporary from the start.

Right now I'm going to business school, and I'm hoping to do something big. I'm career oriented and I've been a department manager. I think this job as a PCA works well for young adults going to school or for older people with more relaxed schedules. I'm 29 years old and there are other things that I want to do. I want to be comfortable financially so that when my mother needs care I can afford to do that. I think this job being a PCA could be career-oriented if it was more stable as far as hours, communication, more stable hiring of aides. But this way it's not.

If I could improve one thing about the system, it would be communication. Some of my clients have had 2 or 3 caregivers and there's no way for us to easily check-in with each other. If one of us is sick, we can't call the other PCAs, we have to call our client who has to call a back-up. If we do something we can't compare notes with the other PCAs. It would be better for our development as workers and would be better for our client's care if we could communicate more.

I'm supporting a Workforce Council because having PCAs get together would help solve this communication problem. I hope lawmakers will support this bill.