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Wisconsin DSPS Takes Part in Midwest Licensing Summit

Idea born in Wisconsin leading to collaborative solutions

Madison -- The Midwest Occupational Licensing Collaborative 2024 Summit wrapped up Thursday in Lansing, Michigan, following a day-and-a-half of conversation and collaborative discussion about licensing and regulation across the region.

“Conversations and information sharing about common challenges and unique solutions are extremely valuable and can benefit communities across the Midwest,” said Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) Secretary Dan Hereth. “I’m excited to see this collaborative, which Wisconsin DSPS created last year, continue on in 2024 and beyond.”

Wisconsin DSPS launched this collaborative to create a forum for interstate engagement and information sharing. Frustrated with the lack of regional organizations or venues for formal educational programming, DSPS reached out to licensing and regulatory leaders in other Midwest states to form a group of state regulatory colleagues and then planned and hosted an inaugural gathering in Madison last August, as well as several virtual webinars in subsequent months. Michigan’s Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs hosted this year’s summit.

Presentations at this year’s summit included Sec. Hereth speaking about Workforce Ready Wisconsin, a collection of Wisconsin DSPS initiatives designed to further Governor Tony Evers’ success in addressing the state’s workforce challenges, using novel collaborations, technology, and data to speed up the transition from classroom to job site.

“I was thrilled to share the work we’ve undertaken in Wisconsin, collaborating with key stakeholders, to streamline processes and speed up entry into the workforce,” said Sec. Hereth. “We take our responsibility to protect the public seriously, and we know we do that better when we engage with the people doing the work and when we innovate.”

Other topics included substance use disorder programs, nursing homes, and skilled trades and mass timber. The gathering also included regulatory leaders from Indiana, Minnesota, Illinois, and Ohio.

“I am happy to see MOLC really taking root as a forum for regional conversations on best practices, emerging issues, and more,” Hereth said. “We knew there would be value in participating in this kind of organization, so we created exactly what we needed. It turns out that our colleagues in neighboring states see the value, too, and I expect more excellent MOLC programming in the coming months and years.”

About DSPS: DSPS issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, and maintains the Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public

health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, DSPS is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.

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