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Alaska Department of Labor
and Workforce Development

Alaska Department of Health
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JOINT DEPARTMENTAL RELEASE

For immediate release: May 23, 2017

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Alaska Pioneer Homes Start New Apprenticeship Program *Expanded training will continue improving quality of care for residents*

JUNEAU, Alaska— The Alaska Pioneer Homes are starting a new registered apprenticeship program for its employees who provide long-term care. The apprenticeship features in-depth training in dementia care and other long-term care specialties. This training program represents a partnership between the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes; Alaska State Employees Association; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship.

“With this workforce development partnership, the Pioneer Homes will continue improving on what Alaskans already recognize as the best long-term care facilities in the state,” said Labor Commissioner Heidi Drygas. “I applaud Alaska Health and Social Services Commissioner Valerie Davidson and Division Director Vickie Wilson for their hard work to develop this program.”

“Alaska’s senior population is one of the fastest growing in the nation. One of our primary goals at the Department of Health and Social Services and the Pioneer Homes is to meet our seniors’ changing needs while providing the best care to our residents,” said Commissioner Valerie Davidson. “I thank Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Heidi Drygas and our partners at the Alaska State Employees Association and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship for making this program possible. This apprenticeship will allow Pioneer Home staff to grow professionally and improve the quality of care they provide on a daily basis.”

The Pioneer Homes long-term care apprenticeship program is a model for other long-term care providers to consider. It provides a structured on-the-job learning program with dedicated mentorship, along with related technical instruction. The Pioneer Homes will administer the training program after developing it in partnership with the state employees’ union. The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development have provided technical assistance to help the Pioneer Homes staff develop the program.

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