



## VNSNY launches online home health aide certification

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The Visiting Nurse Service of New York will partner with a Boston startup to offer home care certifications through online courses for the first time in New York.

The nonprofit on Wednesday announced the deal with CareAcademy, a company specializing in workforce development for health care. The program will allow home health aides to receive their required state certification through a mostly virtual program.

The program helps solve dual challenges for VNSNY, said James Rolla, senior vice president for Partners in Care, the nonprofit's home health aide arm.

"The workforce shortage for home health care workers is growing, and the pandemic accelerated that shortage," Rolla said. "That created the need for us to be able to offer training for new individuals to do this work. But the pandemic also put a pause on all of that."

VNSNY serves about 44,000 people each day. Partners in Care, a part of VNSNY that provides home health and private pay services, employs about 6,500 home health aides.

VNSNY hopes the program—which is free for applicants—helps connect new workers to meet that demand. The organization got approval from the state Department of Health for the course Tuesday and hopes to launch classes by March 1.

Home health certification has traditionally required in-person instruction in New York. About 98% of instruction for the new course is online, with two days in person for required skills demonstrations. The courses are held live through Zoom video chat.

CareAcademy in June secured \$9.5 million in venture funding and has seen increased demand for its training services in the home health care field, said CEO Helen Adeosun.

"For us, it is really not just a matter of education for compliance but also for attracting a brand-new workforce," Adeosun said. "We are aligned in helping and promoting VNSNY as an employer of choice and providing a gateway to direct care work that is so necessary at this time." —Ryan Deffenbaugh

*Correction: VNSNY serves about 44,000 people each day. That number was misattributed in a previous version of this story.*