

Minnesota's Workforce Shortage and Its

IMPACT ON SENIOR CARE

Minnesota has a crisis in caregiving.

We are facing unprecedented, record-level workforce shortages in assisted living and nursing homes across our state. The Long-Term Care Imperative surveyed its members and uncovered alarming data showing just how deeply workforce shortages have impacted access to safe, quality care when and where seniors need it.



23,000

positions throughout our settings are open, representing over 20% of Minnesota's caregiving workforce. The gap in unfilled positions is widening at a rapid rate. In August, we experienced 1.5 times more resignations than hires, a rate that is unsustainable.

Dietary,
Housekeeping

RNs

LPNs

NARs/ULPs

Shortages of staff are impacting access to care across the continuum.



70 PERCENT

of nursing homes are limiting admissions, up nearly 30% since July 2021. The primary reason cited was insufficient staff to meet resident needs.



The crisis is not limited to one part of the state or one type of care. It's systemic, and a growing number of seniors cannot receive the long-term care they need when they need it.

The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on seniors has exacerbated the problem. For some caregivers, risking their health and that of their families was simply too great a burden. The remaining staff are stretched thin, and the stress of COVID-19 has taken a dramatic toll.



Caregiving is a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week commitment. Unlike other sectors, we can't limit our hours or sell fewer products. We cannot accept a lower quality of service. We are committed to providing safe, quality care for everyone we serve.

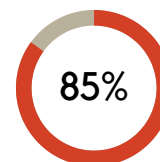


The State plays a major role in funding senior care. Our ability to increase wages is tied directly to state funding allocations. As wage pressure mounts, providers cannot simply increase wages to attract new workers.

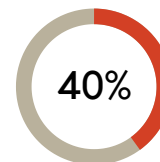


Low wages make it difficult to attract skilled, compassionate caregivers. And those who choose caregiving careers despite low wages often cannot make ends meet. Many leave the field for jobs with less stress and more pay.

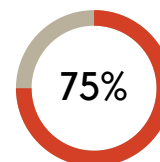
Long-term care employers are using multiple strategies to recruit new workers and keep the caregivers they have:



Use Unsustainable Pay Increases



Use Temporary or "Pool" Staff if they can find it



Use Regular Shift Bonuses



1 in 5 shifts is being filled with overtime or pool staff. Virtually all providers are using overtime, an increase of 18% from just last year.

We are calling on lawmakers to address the crisis in caregiving with immediate solutions. We also ask them to create a more responsive and better funded system of reimbursement to pay caregivers the wages they deserve.

Immediate solutions:

We are calling on the administration to use unspent ARP money for strike teams to fill emergency staffing needs and providing respite for the heroic caregivers who have been on the frontlines for over a year.

Near-term solutions:

In an upcoming special session, we ask lawmakers to appropriate upfront money to enhance caregiver wages to bolster retention and recruitment efforts in long-term care.

Longer-term solutions:

In the 2022 legislative session, lawmakers must work together to modify our State's Medicaid reimbursement system to help providers raise wages and better respond to evolving labor market demands and the ongoing threat of COVID-19.