Member Survey on Staffing Issues | Conducted January 3-7, 2022

106 responses received. Statewide figures derived by extrapolating to 425 skilled nursing facilities.

NOTE: This survey was conducted before the Omicron wave really started impacting nursing home operations. The current reality is likely worse than these results indicate.

Is the overall staffing situation today better or worse than it was in August 2021, when we last conducted this survey?

- 81% Worse
- 19% Better

Number of Nursing Home Employees Today

- Total Number of Nurse Aides: 14,618
- Total Number of Licensed Practical Nurses: 5,323
- Total Number of Registered Nurses: 2,865
- Dietary, Housekeeping, Laundry Staff: 8,688

Vacant Positions

- CNAs: 4,994 open positions — Vacancy rate of 25.5% of 19,612 total positions
- LPNs: 2,164 open positions — Vacancy rate of 28.9% of 7,487 total positions
- RNs: 1,224 open positions — Vacancy rate of 29.9% of 4,089 total positions
- Dietary…: 2,089 open positions — Vacancy rate of 19.4% of 10,777 total positions
- **Average NC facility has openings for nearly 25 employees: 11.75 CNA; 5 LPN; 3 RN; 5 Dietary, etc. (24.75 total)**

Statewide Quits in December 2021 4,206
Statewide New Hires in December 2021 3,231
Net loss of 975 staff members statewide in December 2021

How NC Nursing Homes Are Addressing Staffing Shortages

- 98% of facilities are using traditional and online media to advertise openings
- 91% have increased hourly pay
- 97% are paying shift bonuses
- 95% are using recruitment and retention bonuses
- 88% are having salaried employees cover duties in nursing, dietary, and other departments[1]
- 72% are using Temporary Nurse Aides
- 23% are mandating that staff stay and work
- 43% are using longer than normal shifts

[1] *These hours may not be reflected in federal hours per patient day staffing data. CMS will only allow 40 hours for salaried employees unless they are paid separately for this work, even though they are exempt from overtime/wage and hour laws.*

Top Reasons for Job Vacancies

- 84% no applicants
- 53% no qualified applicants
- 75% competition with other employers
- 27% non-competitive wages and benefits
- 65% vaccine mandates

Staffing Shortages Are Limiting Access to Care in NC Nursing Homes

- 49% of facilities are maintaining levels below capacity due to workforce shortages
- 10% have a hold on all new admissions
- 92% are admitting from hospitals
- 59% are turning away some hospital referrals
  - > 61% said this is due to staffing
  - > 86% said this is due to ability to meet the needs of the specific patient being referred
  - > 25% said availability of private room with bath
- 25% of skilled nursing facilities have a waiting list for admission
  - > The average waiting list has five people per facility
  - > Statewide, that's 500+ individuals on waiting lists for admission to a nursing home

Biggest Employee Needs, ranked

1. CNA
2. LPN
3. RN
4. Dietary Staff
5. Housekeeping
6. Other Support Staff (e.g., maintenance, office)
7. Rehab Staff
8. Infection Preventionist
9. Activities Staff
10. Director of Nursing
11. Social Worker

Use of Agency Staff Continues to Increase

- 58% of facilities are currently using agency staff to cover some shifts
  - Among those NOT using agency, 64% can't get it because it's not available in their area
- 54% of SNF using agency are using MORE agency staff than in August 2021
  - 24% are using the SAME amount
  - 20% are using LESS

Overtime Usage

- 98% of SNFs are using overtime/double shifts to cover some shifts
  - 76% of facilities are using this tactic MORE than they did in August 2021
  - 18% are using it the SAME amount
  - 6% are using it LESS

In The Last 60 Days…

- 98% of facilities have asked staff to work overtime or take extra shifts
- 56% of facilities have not had sufficient staff to fill all shifts
- 66% of facilities have utilized agency staff to fill shifts

In 2021, the primary cause of staff losses was COVID

- 92% of facilities said COVID (direct or indirect cause)
  > 71% said burnout/stress of job
- 68% said higher paying job elsewhere
- 8% change in living situation/moved
- 8% retirement
- Other: vaccine mandates

What would help with recruitment/retention, ranked:

1. Higher reimbursement to offer better pay and benefits
2. Less regulation/paperwork
3. Improved perception of the profession
4. Permanently implementing the Temporary Nurse Aide program
5. Improving the workplace culture
6. More training programs
7. Career ladders