Long Term Care Workforce Shortage Crisis: Who will care for ME?

Maine’s long term care facilities have been in the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated an already serious workforce shortage. The Maine Health Care Association recently surveyed its 200 provider members and received 122 concerning responses showing just how seriously workforce shortages are crippling the ability of long term care facilities to meet the needs of residents.

MHCA member survey results:

Are you experiencing a staffing shortage?

- Yes: 94%
- No: 6%

How concerned are you regarding current staffing levels?

- Not really: 0%
- Slightly Concerned: 10%
- Moderately Concerned: 20%
- Very Concerned: 30%
- Crisis level with numerous openings and few to no qualified applicants: 40% (93%)

Crisis level with numerous openings and few to no qualified applicants: 93% of respondents stated that they believe COVID-19 impacted staff turnover rates for 2020.

Percentage of respondents with openings in these job classes:

- CNA and Direct Care: 99%
- Dietary Staff: 65%
- RN/LPN: 60%
- Housekeeping: 60%
- Maintenance: 25%
- Activities: 22%
- Administration: 13%
- Social Work: 12%
- Rehab: 9%

Staffing positions open on average:

- 1-5: 29%
- 6-10: 25%
- 11-15: 17%
- 16-20: 8%
- 21+: 20%
### Strategies to address workforce challenges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing wages for staff</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering bonuses to staff who work overtime/doubles</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offering sign on bonuses</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using contract/agency staffing</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiring campaign</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Other includes: Cross training, incentive pay, recruitment bonuses, advertising on social media, etc.*

### Respondents believe staff left for the following reasons:

- **Burnout / Stress**: 80%
- **Vaccine Mandates**: 72%
- **Quit the Industry**: 50%
- **Other**: 34%
- **Better opportunity in healthcare**: 31%
- **Retirement**: 24%

*Other includes: Health insurance costs, COVID-19 fears and impact on child care, unemployment benefits.*

### In the last 60 days, providers have:

- **99%** asked staff to work overtime or take extra shifts;
- **86%** provided increased wages to staff for overtime or extra shifts;
- **83%** had nurse leaders / DONs work nights or weekends to cover open shifts;
- **79%** felt you did not have sufficient staff to fill shifts;
- **62%** turned to agency staff to fill shifts.

### Who will care for ME?

Our long term care providers have been our hometown heroes throughout the pandemic. Today we are seeing the additional impact of COVID-19 fatigue, the rise of the Delta variant, and a provider community stretched thin. The long term care community and its residents need your help addressing this crisis.