

# 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. From Aug. - Dec. 2021 alone, senior living settings lost a net 4,500 employees.

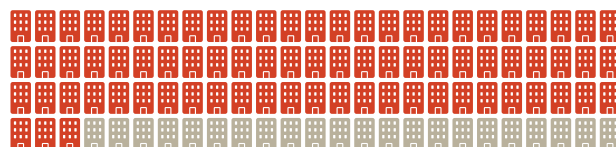
Dietary,  
Housekeeping

RNs

LPNs

NARs/ULPs

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



# 78 PERCENT

of nursing homes are limiting admissions. 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.

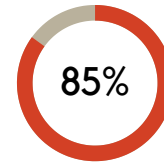


Caregiving is a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week commitment. Unlike other sectors, we can't limit our hours or sell fewer products. We cannot accept a lower quality of service. We are committed to providing safe, quality care for everyone we serve.

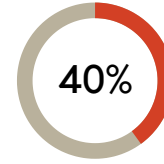
The State plays a major role in funding senior care. Our ability to increase wages is tied directly to state funding allocations. As wage pressure mounts, providers cannot increase wages to attract new workers without the State's help.

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.

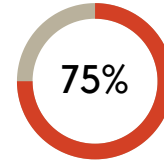
Long-term care employers are using multiple strategies to recruit new workers and keep the caregivers they have:



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 permanent solutions. Minnesota's long-term care system needs support from the state to pay caregivers the wages they deserve and ensure access to care in all the places seniors call home.**

**SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL CAREGIVERS WITH WAGES THEY DESERVE:**

Funding for permanent investments in Medicaid rates will allow us to raise wages, recruit new workers, and retain the dedicated professionals who care for Minnesota's seniors – whether they live in nursing homes, assisted living, or other home- and community-based settings.

**POLICY SOLUTIONS:**

- Fund permanent wage increases for caregivers
- Invest in Elderly Waiver
- Improve Value Based Reimbursement

**ENSURE SENIORS HAVE ACCESS TO THE CARE THEY NEED CLOSE TO HOME**

To care for the growing number of older adults in Minnesota, we must support new and alternative care models and fix regulatory barriers that impact access to safe, quality care in all the communities they call home.

- Update the assisted living license
- Explore new ways to serve seniors through PACE and Alternative Adult Day Services