

Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network Examples of Findings from Assisted Living Facilities

Representatives from assisted living facilities provided information to the Washington State Health Workforce Sentinel Network in Spring 2019, which was the first time assisted living was singled out for reporting separate from some other types of care facilities. This summary highlights some of the information they provided. Additional findings from these long term care facilities can be found on the Sentinel Network dashboard (wa.sentinelnetwork.org) as well as for other types of health care facilities.

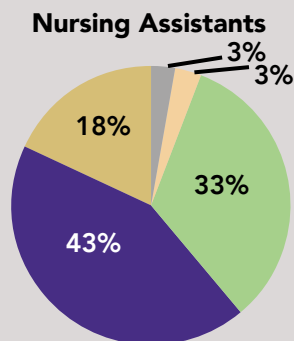
Assisted Living Facilities - Occupations with exceptionally long vacancies: Spring 2019

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies	
Spring 2019	
Nursing assistant	most cited ↑
Licensed practical nurse	
Home health aide or home care aide* Registered nurse*	
Chemical dependency professional* Personal care aide* Social worker*	
# facilities reporting 27	

*tied in rank (# of times occupation was cited by Sentinels) in reporting period

Reasons for exceptionally long vacancies for most frequently cited occupations in nursing homes or skilled nursing facilities (Spring 2019)

Nursing Assistants - Examples of reasons for exceptionally long vacancies



- Not enough qualified applicants
- Recruitment and retention problems not related to salary/wage/benefits
- Salary/wage/benefits issues
- Facility growth/expansion
- [No reason for prolonged vacancies provided]

Not enough qualified applicants

- The cost to on board is about \$1,250 to get all DSHS approved certificates. Class are hard to get in and work some hours. Lack of teaching places in our area
- We've had to increase wages to be competitive in our market and still have low response to our recruiting efforts. It generally takes a few months to find qualified applicants. We have started looking for home care aides (HCAs) to fill these positions..
- NAC shortage in our area, skilled nursing facilities seen as preferred workplace options due to higher wages and education reimbursement.

Salary/wage/benefits issues

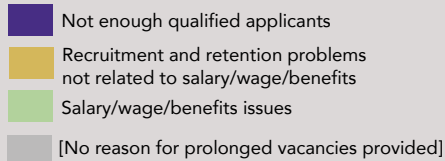
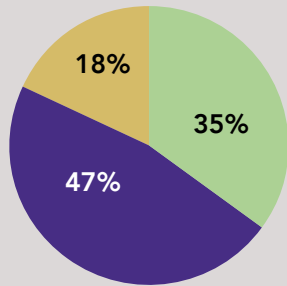
- Training requirements not completed due to cost. Not understanding the need for the training. Not being able to provide a livable wage. Not being able to provide benefits.
- CNAs are incredibly underpaid and their jobs are demanding. Many of them float around from company to company in search of better pay.
- Certification requirements are a barrier for some. Competitive wages on a Medicaid facility budget is challenging.

Recruitment and retention problems not related to salary/wage/benefits

- Our assisted living community is in a high-end market. many of our staff members live further away and must commute. I feel our pay is competitive for our industry; however we are also competing with skilled nursing facilities and hospitals.

Licensed practical nurses - Examples of reasons for exceptionally long vacancies

Licensed Practical Nurses



Not enough qualified applicants:

- Not enough qualified people to do the job and applicants not willing to work the schedule assigned.
- labor pool seems small; salary competition with skilled and acute care.

Salary/wage/benefits issues

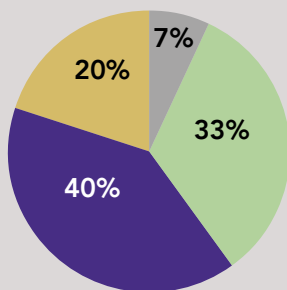
- Wage is always an issue.

Recruitment and retention problems not related to salary/wage/benefits

- LPN applicants that have applied are not willing to work the rotation or to work in the specific area of the building, memory care.

Home health aides/home care aides - Example of reasons for exceptionally long

Home Health Aides/ Home Care Aides



Not enough qualified applicants:

- HCA shortage in our area; often looking for flexibility of home care rather than traditional shifts.
- Due to difficulty recruiting NAC's, we have started recruiting home care aides (HCAs) though haven't hired any at this point.

Salary/wage/benefits issues

- Certification requirements are a barrier for some. Competitive wages on a Medicaid facility budget is challenging. Not being able to provide benefits.

Recruitment and retention problems not related to salary/wage/benefits

- Training requirements not completed due to cost. Not understanding the need for the training. Not being able to provide a livable wage.

Orientation and training changes in nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities (Spring 2019)

Examples of changes to onboarding for new employees

Nursing assistants: We are now having the safety and Orientation class done before they Start any paper work we pay for the class they do the time. If they complete it and come to work we will pay them 4 hours.

Multiple occupations: Company revised orientation/on-boarding to include more classroom training time vs a majority of online courses with the intent to improve quality of training.

Examples of changes in training needs for existing workforce

Multiple occupations: Continuing education training is more targeted and specific for staff members. Utilizing online courses to ensure every team member receives the same training.. Had previously preferred NAC with Dementia and Mental Health Specialty trainings already completed but now will train internally or pay for external training after hire.

About the Washington Health Workforce Sentinel Network

The Sentinel Network links the healthcare sector with policymakers, workforce planners and educators to identify and respond to changing demand for healthcare workers, with a focus is on identifying newly emerging skills and roles required by employers. The Sentinel Network is an initiative of Washington's Health Workforce Council, conducted collaboratively by Washington's Workforce Board and the University of Washington's Center for Health Workforce Studies. Funding to initiate the Sentinel Network came from the Healthier Washington initiative, with ongoing support from Governor Inslee's office and the Washington State Legislature.

Why become a Sentinel? As a Sentinel, you can:

- Communicate your workforce needs and ensure that the state is prepared to respond to the transforming healthcare environment.
- Have access to current and actionable information about emerging healthcare workforce needs.
- Compare your organization's experience and emerging workforce demand trends with similar employer groups.

To view an interactive summary of findings and to provide information from your organization: www.wasentinelnetwork.org.

Contact: healthworkforce@wasentinelnetwork.org