

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 and again in Fall, 2019. Prior to these times assisted living facility responses were combined with other long term care facilities. Below are examples of findings from assisted living facilities. More responses 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: 2019

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies by date of reporting	
Spring 2019	Fall 2019
Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant
Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse
Home health aide or home care aide	Home health aide or home care aide
Registered nurse	Registered nurse

↑ Most cited

Reasons for vacancies reported by assisted living facilities (Fall, 2019 examples)

- (Nursing assistants) 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.
The cost to on board is about \$1,250 to get all DSHS approved certificates. Classes are hard to get in and work some hours. Lack of teaching places in our area.
CNAs are incredibly underpaid and their jobs are demanding. Many of them float around from company to company in search of better pay.
- (Licensed practical nurses) Not enough qualified people to do the job and applicants not willing to work the schedule assigned. Wage is always an issue.
Salary competition with skilled and acute care.
- (Home health aides/home care aides) Certification requirements are a barrier for some. Competitive wages on a Medicaid facility budget is challenging.
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.
- (Registered nurses) We had to significantly increase wages to hire an RN and due to such a small pool, the vacancy still remained open for a number of months.
Labor pool seems small; salary competition with skilled and acute care.

Assisted Living Facilities

Reasons for increased demand for workers reported by assisted living facilities (Fall 2019 examples)

- (Nursing assistants) Aging population requires more help.
- (Licensed practical nurses) Increased census and level of care.
- (Home health aides/home care aides) We previously did not hire HCA's.

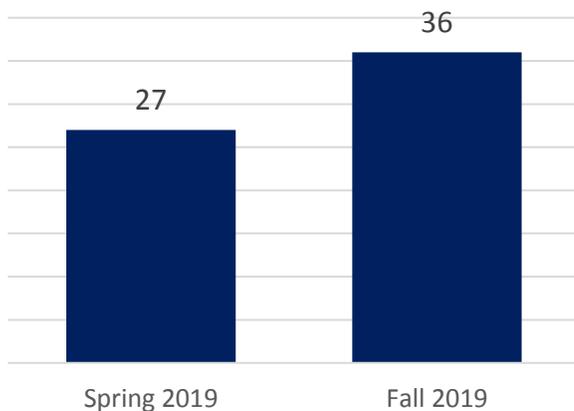
Changes in facility's priorities regarding orientation/onboarding for new employees or training for incumbent workers reported by assisted living facilities (Fall 2019 examples)

- (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. Continuing education training is more targeted and specific for staff members. utilizing online courses to ensure every team member receives the same training.
- (Registered nurses and licensed practical nurses) Had previously preferred RNs and LPNs with dementia and mental health specialty trainings already completed but now will train internally or pay for external training after hire.

Reasons for worker retention/turnover problems reported by assisted living facilities (Fall, 2019 examples)

- (Nursing assistants) Pay and also no-call no shows for shifts. We have had a balance of voluntary and involuntary terminations recently. Staff not wanting to work weekends and holidays.
- (Licensed practical nurses) Workload is demanding as typically only 1-2 nurses scheduled for 80 residents; pay is higher in more acute settings.

Number of Sentinel Network Responses from Assisted Living Facilities in WA by Data Collection Date



Number of Assisted Living Facility Responses by Accountable Community of Health (ACH) (Fall, 2019)



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.wa.sentinelnetwork.org.

Contact: healthworkforce@wasentinelnetwork.org