

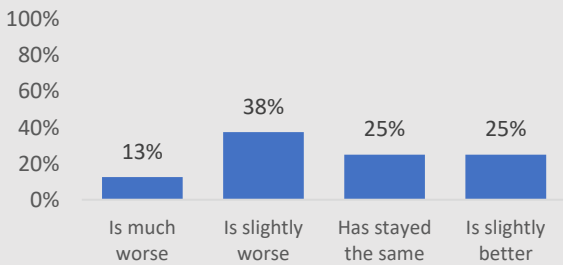
Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

Findings Brief: Assisted Living Facilities

This Findings Brief highlights current workforce needs reported by assisted living facilities in Washington State during March and April 2023. More findings from 2023 and earlier may be viewed at <https://www.wa.sentinelnetwork.org/findings>. Responses to questions about current overarching workforce issues are summarized below. Earlier overarching and pandemic-related findings are at www.wa.sentinelnetwork.org/findings/covid-19/.

Overarching Workforce Issues: Themes and examples

In the past six months, how has your organization's ability to staff your facility/facilities changed?



- *[Slightly better] We have started to see more applicants show up for interviews but there are still not enough qualified applicants*
- *[Stayed the same] [We] have had to limit intake admissions in other facilities due to staffing shortages. [We] have brought in MAs in some cases to assist where we didn't have enough nurses.*
- *[Slightly worse] The past several years have been challenging because of the few qualified applicants, but recently this has been compounded by the "ghosting" that seems to be more prevalent.*

What are your top workforce needs that could be alleviated by new or modified laws, policies, regulations, and/or payment rules?

Suggestions included increased funding for training, additional resources, and promotion of workforce training.

- *Career opportunities for LTC at High School College Fair. This trade is very underrepresented at that level.*
- *Making it easier for staff to access required training or providing financial support for those with interest. The companies cannot always bear the cost of this training.*

Has your organization made any of the following changes in the past year?

	Yes % (#)	Comments
Hired or assigned workers with higher-level qualifications to fill lower-skilled roles or positions.	0% (0)	• <i>My Med Tech does work as a caregiver, but she is also a caregiver. No one applying to even hire.</i>
Hired workers with fewer qualifications than would normally be considered.	63% (5)	• <i>Hiring more "trainee" or beginning level caregivers. Results in more hands-on oversight from experienced team and supervisors and slower care provision for the residents themselves.</i> • <i>We are now doing the training in house so that they can have the state credentials.</i>
Implemented new outsourcing/contracting of specific services (or 'service lines').	25% (2)	• <i>Extensive use of contracted agency care staff.</i>

In the past year, how has your ability to support clinical training experience/preceptorship/rotation opportunities for students/learners (not newly hired or incumbent employees) at your facility changed? What strategies/policies (e.g., financial incentives, student housing, etc.) have been - or would be - the most helpful for supporting clinical training experiences at your facility?

Most respondents indicated that their ability to support clinical training opportunities stayed the same over the past year.

- *We raised our starting wage. It has not helped. We also offer a referral bonus; it has not helped.*
- *If the facility is going to be hosting clinical training they should be compensated.*

Assisted Living Facilities (Spring 2023)

Assisted living facilities and other health care facilities in Washington shared information about their workforce needs with the Washington State Health Workforce Sentinel Network. Below are highlights of trends over time and recent findings. More Assisted living facility findings, along with those from other health care facilities, are at wa.sentinelnetwork.org.

Top occupations cited as having exceptionally long vacancies by date of reporting							
Rank	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
1	Home health aide or home care aide	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Nursing assistant	Licensed practical nurse	Nursing Assistant
						Registered nurse	
2	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Licensed practical nurse	Registered nurse	Cook / Food services	Nursing assistant	Cook / Food services
	Registered nurse						Home health aide or home care aide
	Nursing assistant						
3		Registered nurse	Registered nurse	Home health aide or home care aide	Home health aide or home care aide	Cook / Food services	Environmental services
			Personal care aide		Licensed practical nurse		
4	Multiple occupations cited at the same frequency	Home health aide or home care aide	Cook / Food services	Licensed practical nurse	Registered nurse	Home health aide or home care aide	Multiple occupations cited at the same frequency
			Home health aide or home care aide				
5		Personal care aide	n/a	Personal care aide	Environmental services	Environmental services	
		Cook / Food services					
		Housekeeping					

← Most cited

* Findings prior to Spring 2020 not shown due to space constraints

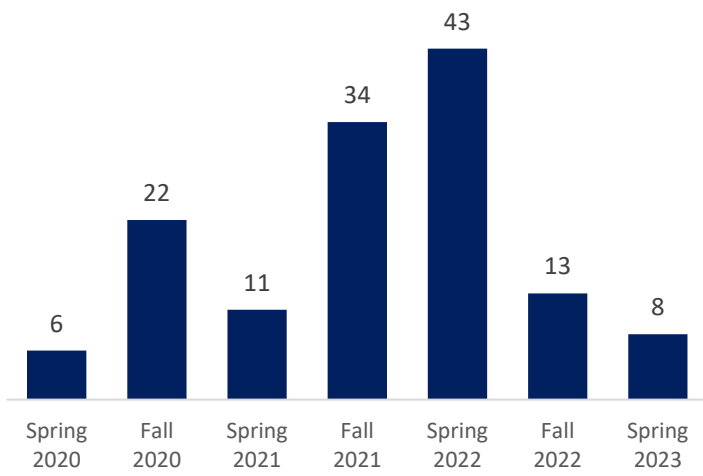
Reasons for prolonged vacancies and reasons for worker retention/turnover problems reported by Assisted Living Facilities

Most respondents reported a lack of qualified applicants, with many also citing workload or patient acuity issues, not enough applicants, and salary, wage, and benefit issues.

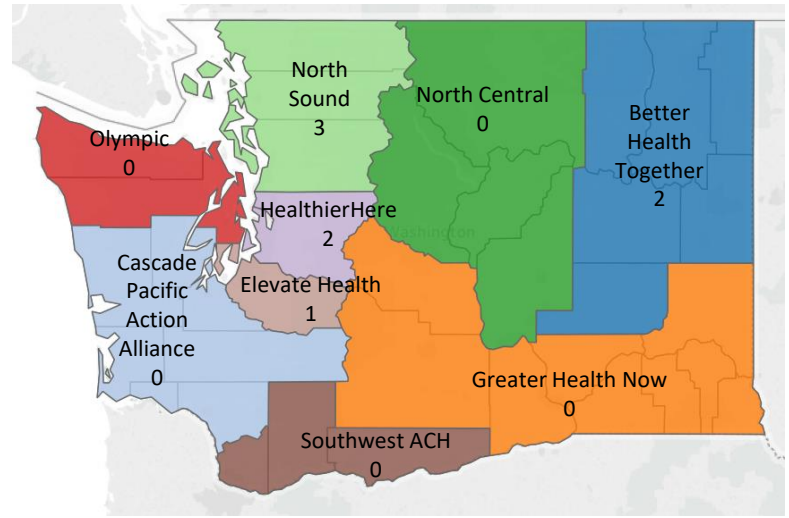
- [Nursing assistant] Lack of total candidates, qualified or otherwise, for interviewing. Of those who do interview and are hired, 1 in 3 does not come to work and is unable to be contacted afterward. Because we are unable to speak with those people, I cannot speak to the cause or propose a solution.
- [Nursing assistant] We are unable to secure experienced NAC/HCA. Job hopping for the best pay. Stay for a week or two and leave for various reason not all pay related. Ghost on the first day.
- [Home health aide or Home care aide] We are in the same pool as home care agencies, and they can pay a higher pay rate and then they will send them in to fill empty spots that we have and then we have to pay them a higher rate which keeps our pay rate lower.
- [Environmental services] We have needed Environmental Services for almost 1 year. I have jobs listing posted on indeed and WA worksorce. We are a [... facility that] cannot afford to sponsor or paid job posting. We also post on our Facebook page. Facebook has taken down their job site for community pages.

Assisted Living Facilities (Spring 2023)

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) (Spring 2023)



*Findings prior to Spring 2020 not shown due to space constraints.

About the Washington Health Workforce Sentinel Network

The Health Workforce 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 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.

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