



Nursing Home Workforce Report

After historic job losses in recent years, the nursing home workforce is steadily recovering and stabilizing.

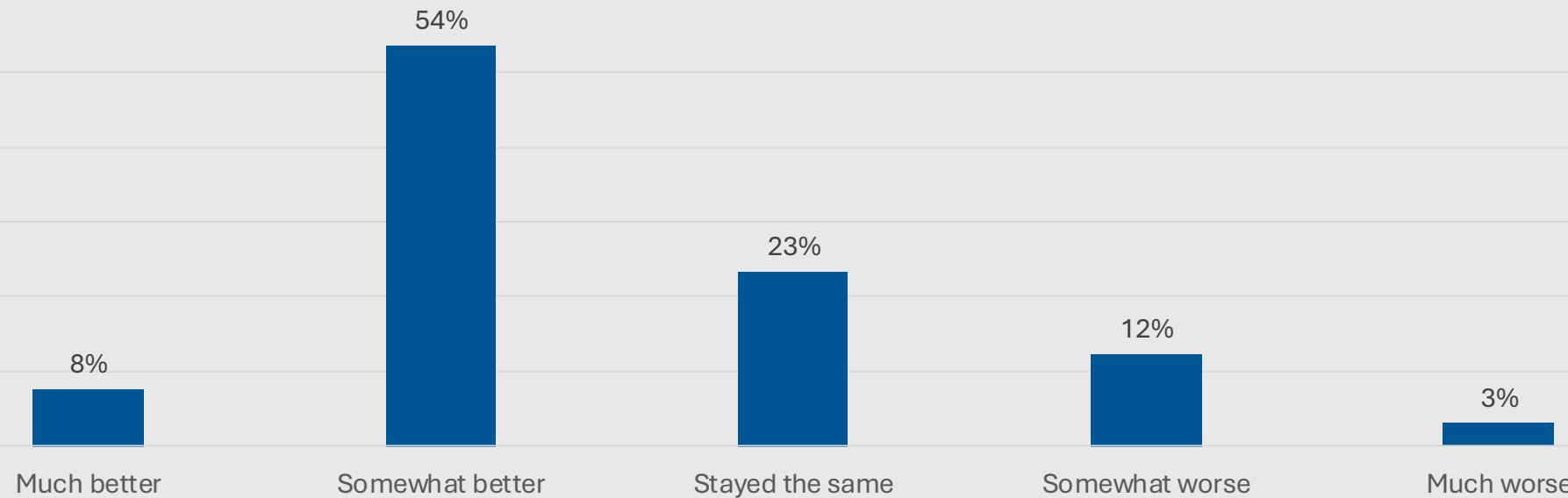
January 2026

The nursing home workforce is steadily growing, gaining more than 40,700 total workers in 2025.

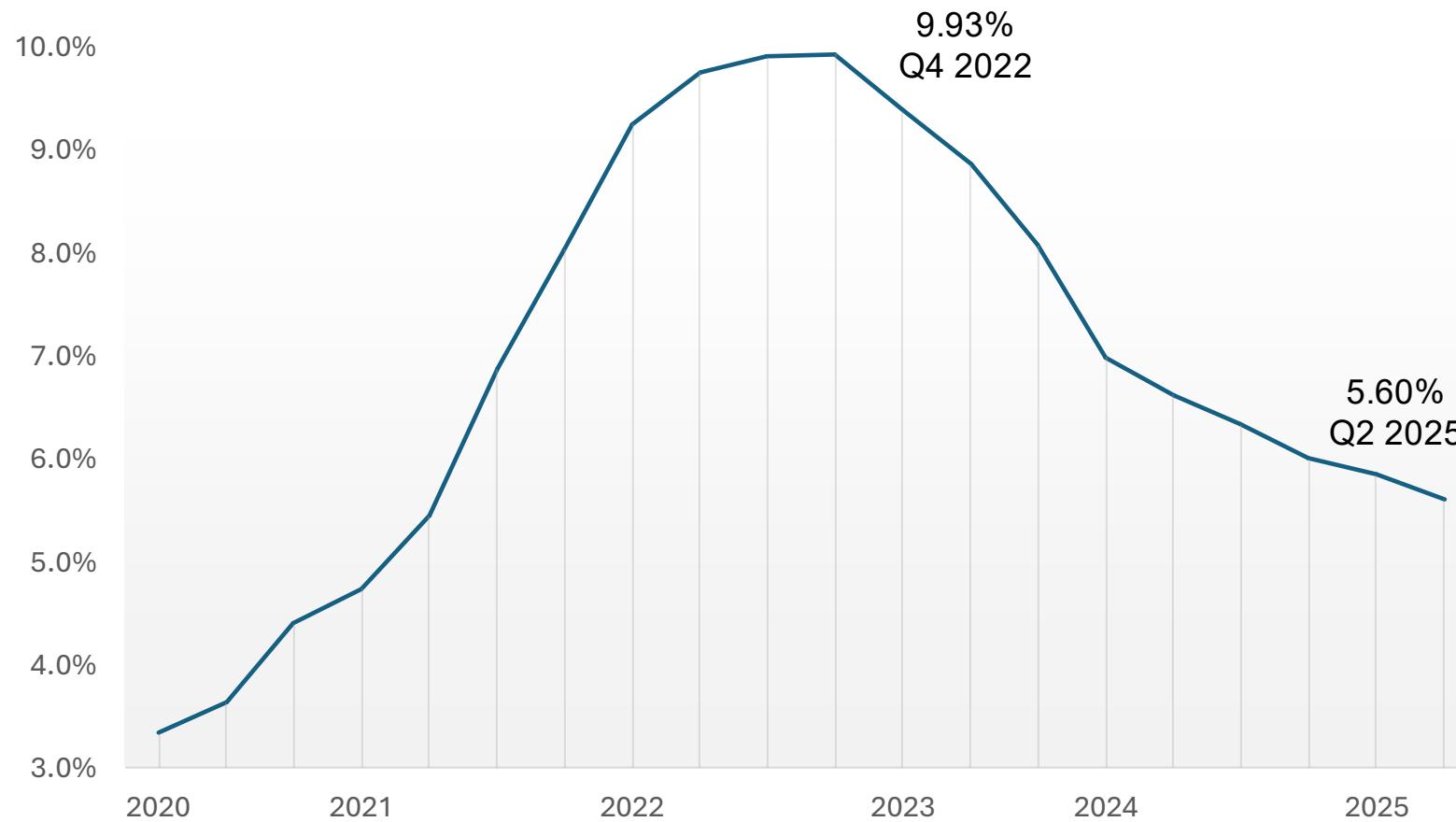


62% of providers say their overall workforce situation has gotten better in the past year.

In the past year, would you say your organization's overall workforce situation has generally gotten better or worse?



Agency usage has declined nearly 44 percent since 2022.

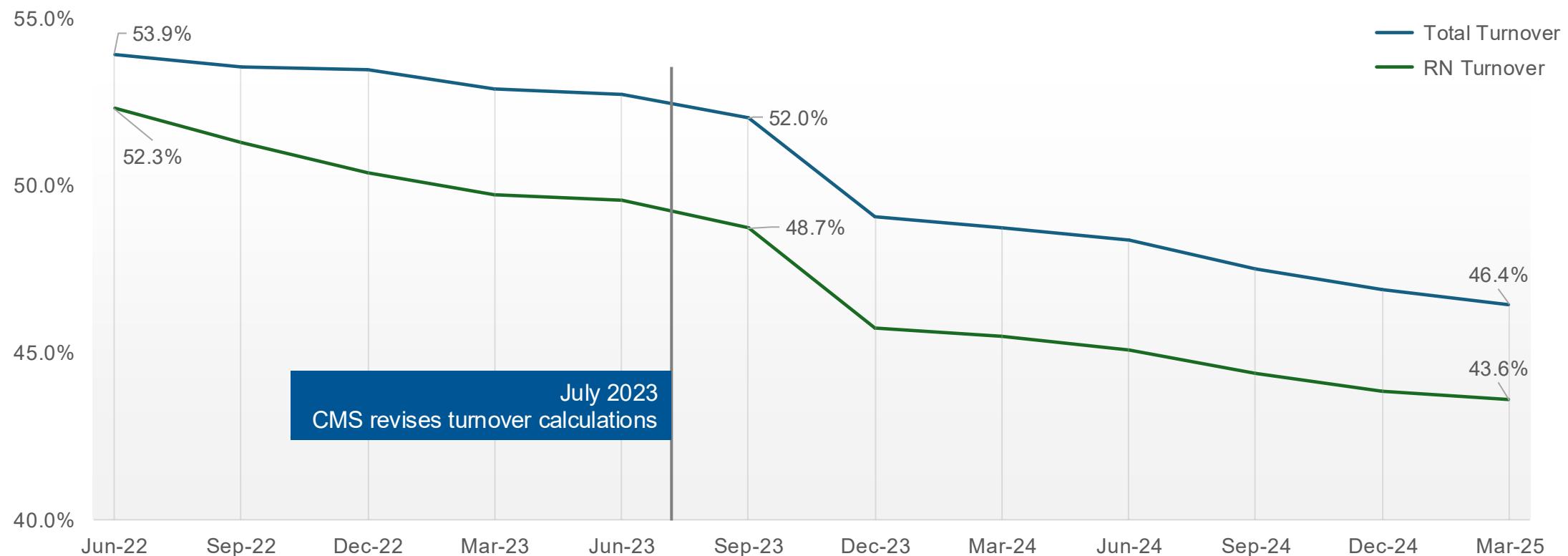


"We are still recovering from 2020 but have done a good job at reducing agency use over the past year...We are focusing on retention, hiring, and staff education."

*Provider-submitted response,
AHCA Provider Survey,
May 2025*

Nursing turnover rates have steadily declined since mid-2022.

Nursing homes have reduced total nursing and RN turnover by nearly 11 percent.



Investing in Caregivers and Careers: During the pandemic, nursing homes offered the highest wage rate increase across all of health care. This commitment continues as providers consider a variety of ways to recruit and retain employees.



Wages continue to increase for nurses and direct caregivers.

Directors of Nursing	Registered Nurses	Licensed Practical Nurses	Certified Nursing Assistants
+ 3.63%	+ 3.41%	+ 3.44%	+ 3.41%

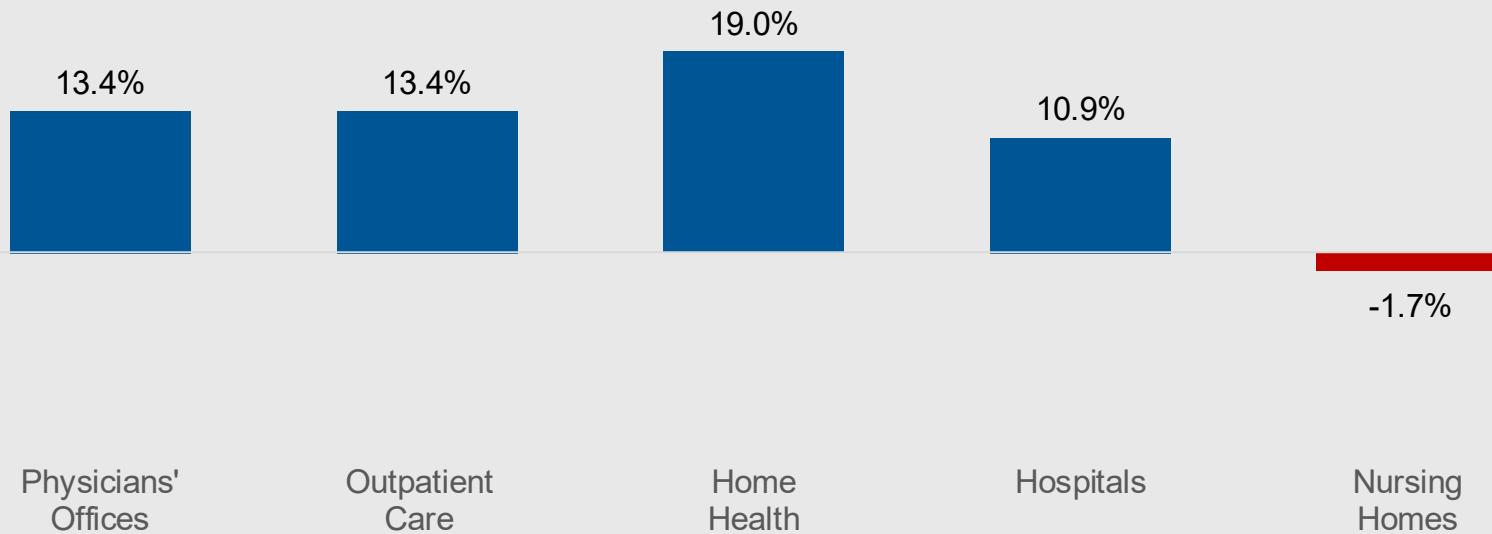


The Sector Still Needs Help

The nursing home workforce is headed in the right direction, but support and resources are needed to address the nation's growing caregiver shortages and to help nursing homes stay competitive in recruiting caregivers.

On the Verge of Recovery

Percent Change in Health Care Sector Employment
Feb 2020 - Dec 2025

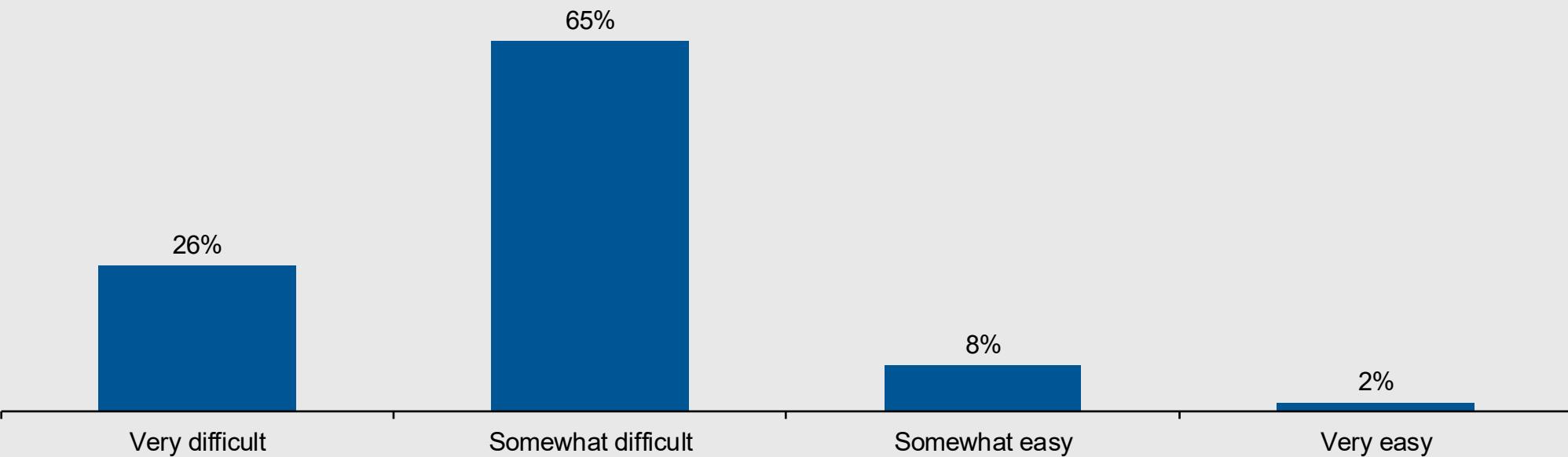


While all other health care sectors have already gained additional jobs, nursing homes are still rebounding from the COVID-19 pandemic. Nursing homes need **26,500** workers to return to pre-pandemic levels.

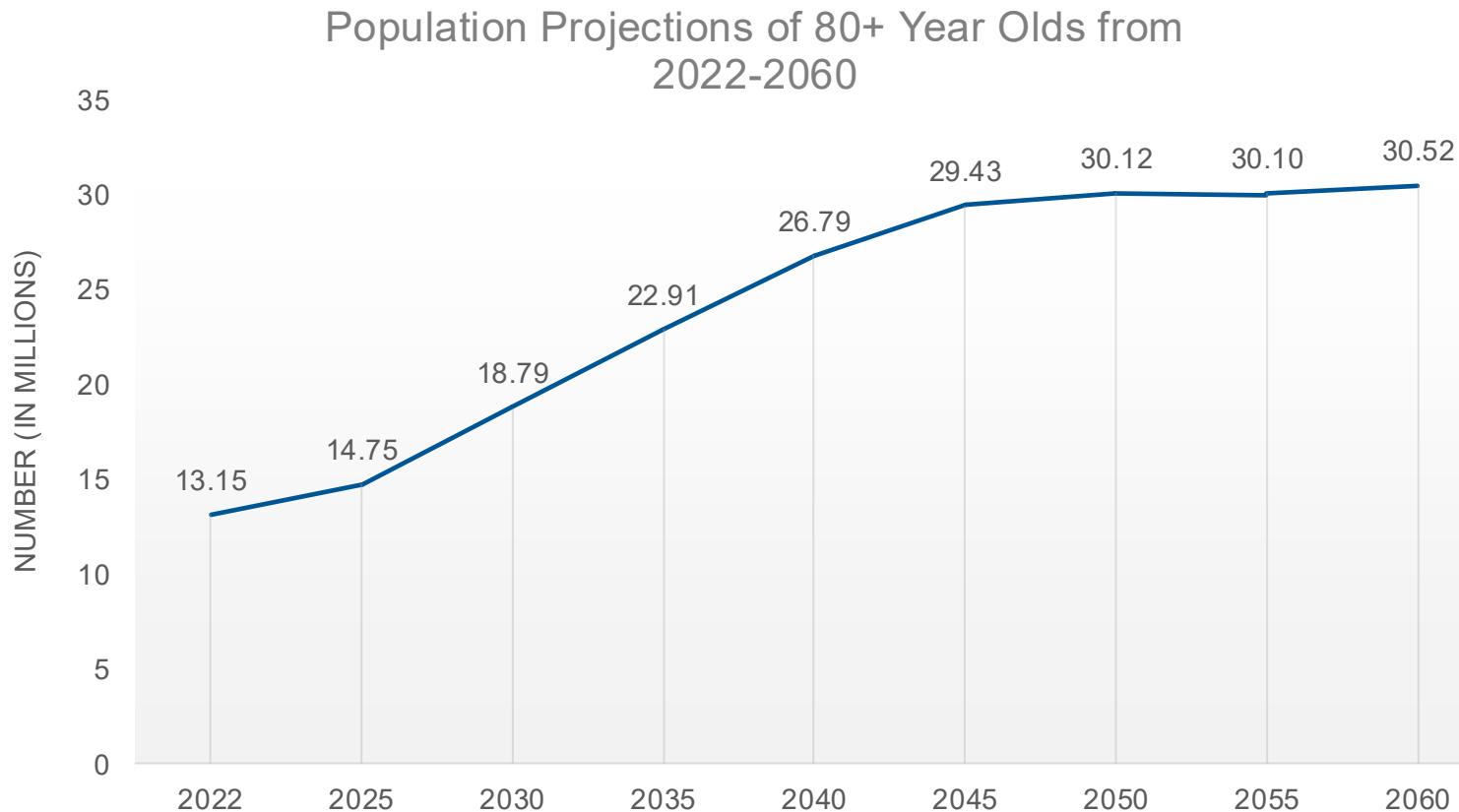
Struggling to Compete

Intense competition from other care settings and private industries, many of which have more resources, continue to make recruitment to the nursing home profession challenging despite providers' best efforts.

How would you rate your ability to recruit new staff?



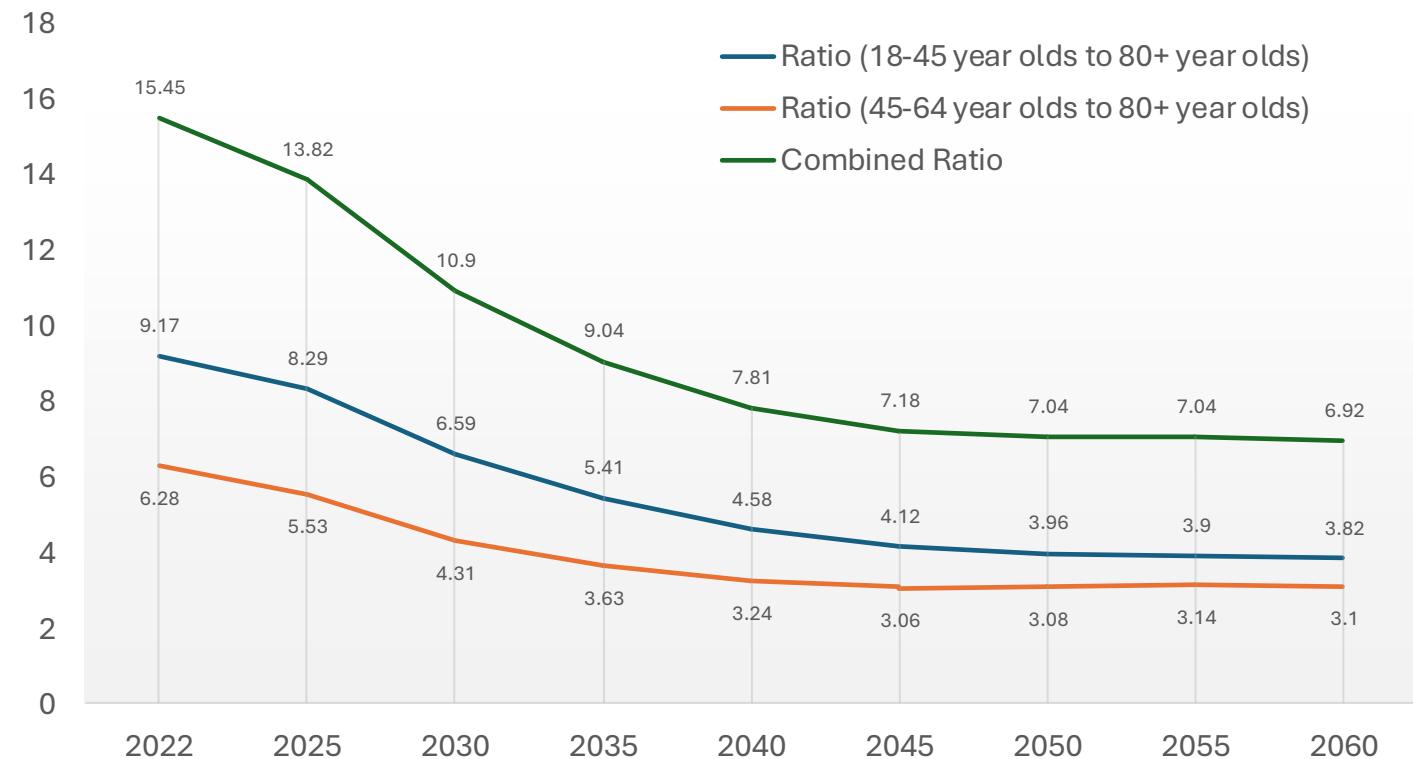
The Growing Demands of An Aging Nation



In the next decade, the population of adults aged 80 and older is expected to increase by **8 million**. The average age of a nursing home resident is 79.

The younger generation is not keeping pace, and the U.S. will experience nationwide caregiver shortages.

This graph demonstrates the declining ratios of 18 to 44-year-olds and 45 to 64-year-olds compared to 80+ year olds in the United States, indicating the need for innovative caregiver solutions as our population ages.





The Better Way: Caregivers for Tomorrow

To ensure seniors and individuals with disabilities have access to high-quality care, we must prioritize policies that strengthen the long term care workforce.

Caregivers for Tomorrow

AHCA's policy solutions are a multi-pronged approach to an urgent issue.

Recruitment & Retention

- Develop incentive programs: loan forgiveness, tax credits, etc.
- Offer grants to support student scholarships

Training & Career Growth

- Expand & expedite career ladder programs
- Support skill development, such as apprenticeship programs

Technology & Innovation

- Extend telehealth flexibilities
- Advance AI clinical policies

Building the Pipeline

- Invest in nursing schools & nursing faculty
- Streamline legal pathways for international caregivers