Nursing homes are struggling to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Labor shortages, inflation, and a lack of government funding are forcing many nursing homes to reduce the number of residents they can serve. This growing access to care crisis is devastating to displaced nursing home residents, prospective patients and family members searching for care, and hospitals that are overwhelmed with patients needing to be discharged.

**Limiting Admissions**
- 55% of facilities are having to turn away prospective residents/patients
- 48% have a waiting list of at least a few days

**Facilities Downsizing**
- 45,217 fewer nursing home beds
- 21% of facilities are downsizing the number of beds/units they can offer because of labor shortages

**Closures**
- 579 nursing homes closed
- 21,508 residents displaced by closures
- 30 more U.S. counties became nursing home deserts

As of June 2023

During the Pandemic (2020-present)

**A STARK DECLINE DURING THE PANDEMIC**

Even prior to COVID-19, the total number of nursing homes and beds had been slightly decreasing, but the decline accelerated by nearly 4 times during the pandemic.

**Pre-Pandemic (2014-2019)**
- Total Loss: 170
- Avg. Loss Per Year: 28

**Pandemic (2020-Current)**
- Total Loss: 403
- Avg. Loss Per Year: 100

Sources: AHCA Research Department analysis of CMS QCOR data
AHCA State of the Nursing Home Industry Survey, Mid-Year 2023
CLA, Staffing Mandate Analysis, December 2022
FEW NEW NURSING HOMES

About 64 new nursing homes were certified each year in 2020-2022.

Only 3 new nursing homes have opened in 2023.

CLOSURES: FACILITY CHARACTERISTICS

Nursing homes that closed during the pandemic tend to be smaller facilities in urban settings where the majority of residents rely on Medicaid. **Nearly two in five nursing homes** that closed were highly rated by the federal government and three in 10 were not-for-profit.

- **76** avg. bed size
- **62%** of residents on Medicaid
- **-17%** avg. operating margin
- **70% / 30%** urban / rural
- **38%** of closures were 4 or 5-star facilities
- **31%** non-profit ownership

FEDERAL STAFFING MANDATES WOULD WORSEN ACCESS TO CARE

The Biden Administration is expected to release a federal staffing mandate for nursing homes when many providers are already struggling to keep their doors open due to a nationwide shortage of caregivers. A staffing requirement without resources or workforce development programs will only accelerate this growing access to care crisis.

**446,715** residents may be at risk of displacement if facilities are unable to increase their workforce and must reduce their census in order to comply with a 4.1 hours per resident day staffing minimum.

BOTTOM LINE

**Seniors deserve access to high-quality nursing home care when they need it.** With a rapidly growing elderly population, the time is now to strengthen this critical aspect of our health care system. Long term care needs meaningful investments by our nation’s policymakers to help nursing homes on shoestring budgets recruit more staff and keep their doors open.

ACCESS TO CARE REPORT