

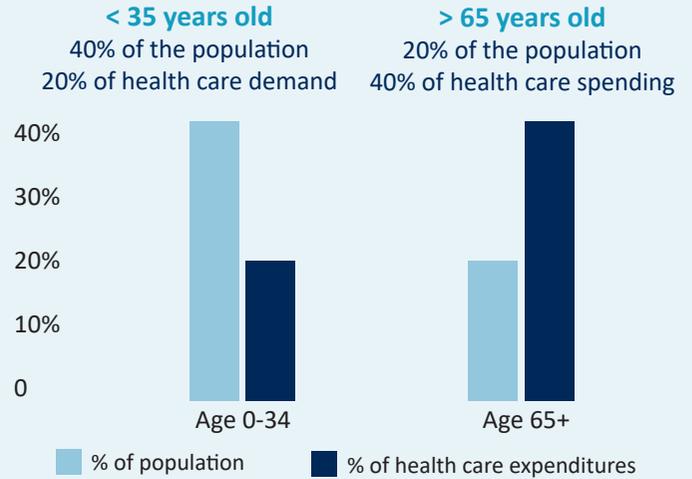
Wisconsin's Health Care Workforce Challenge: Growing Demands on a Shrinking Pool of Workers

Wisconsin Workers at Retirement Age



Wisconsin's aging workforce means health care workers are retiring faster than they can be replaced.

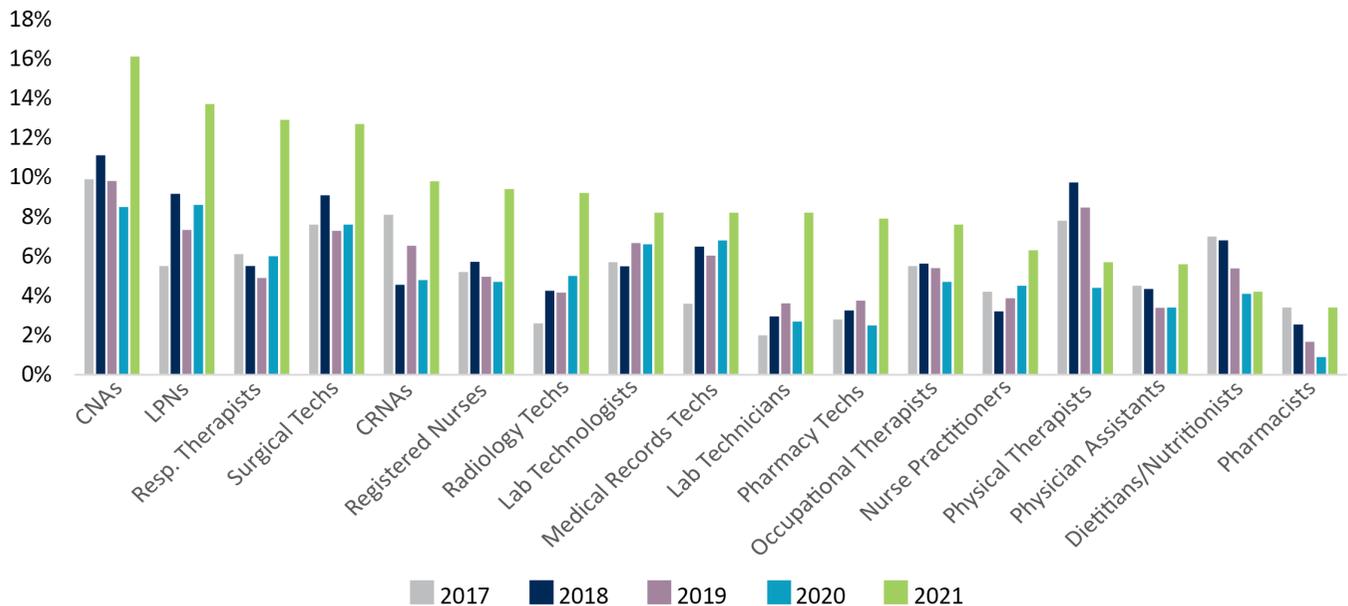
The Need for Health Care Goes Up as We Age



The Silver Tsunami and a persistent pandemic increased vacancy rates in 17 of 17 professions in 2021. The overall hospital vacancy rate increased to 9.9%, up from 5.3% just one year before.

Vacancy Rates for Selected Hospital Professions

Source: WHA Information Center Annual Survey of Hospitals



2021 heralded a nursing shortage in Wisconsin for the first time since the early 2000s.

WHA-Recommended Strategies to Support Wisconsin's Health Care Workforce

#1 Provide attainable educational and occupational pathways to attract new entrants to the health care workforce.

The benefit health care careers offer over other industries are visible, easy-to-define and accessible career pathways.

#2 Promote rapid innovations to retain and recruit health care workers.

As the health care industry seeks to attract new workers and build new capacity from within, it must also support workplaces as engines of well-being.

#3 Break down barriers to top-of-skill practice.

Responding to the demands of COVID-19 demonstrated how versatile health care workers can be when allowed to put their skills to full use.

#4 Leverage technology to improve care and reduce workforce demand.

Technology can increase access to health care services while at the same time increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of health care services throughout the continuum of care.

#5 Reduce regulatory burden and increase regulatory flexibility.

Burdensome regulatory compliance that offers no care or safety benefit means less time spent with patients.

#6 Support care in the best setting —inpatient, outpatient, or post-acute.

Lack of access to post-acute care resulted in more than 600 patients needlessly occupy hospital beds at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Five Essentials for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being

Centered on the worker voice and equity, these five Essentials support workplaces as engines of well-being. Each Essential is grounded in two human needs, shared across industries and roles.



Hospital Well-Being Efforts

In October 2022 the U.S. Surgeon General released a framework for mental health and well-being in the workplace outlining Five Essentials for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being: Protection from Harm, Connection and Community, Work-Life Harmony, Mattering at Work and Opportunities for Growth. Wisconsin hospitals are putting the framework to practice, applying the five essentials to improve workplace mental health and well-being.



Click [here](#) to read real stories of Wisconsin hospitals' well-being efforts.

Learn more about the Wisconsin Hospital Association's recommendations for health care organizations, educators and policy makers to maintain and grow the state's health care workforce and sustain the excellent health care Wisconsin is known for at www.wha.org/workforce-report.