

Hospital Workforce Survey

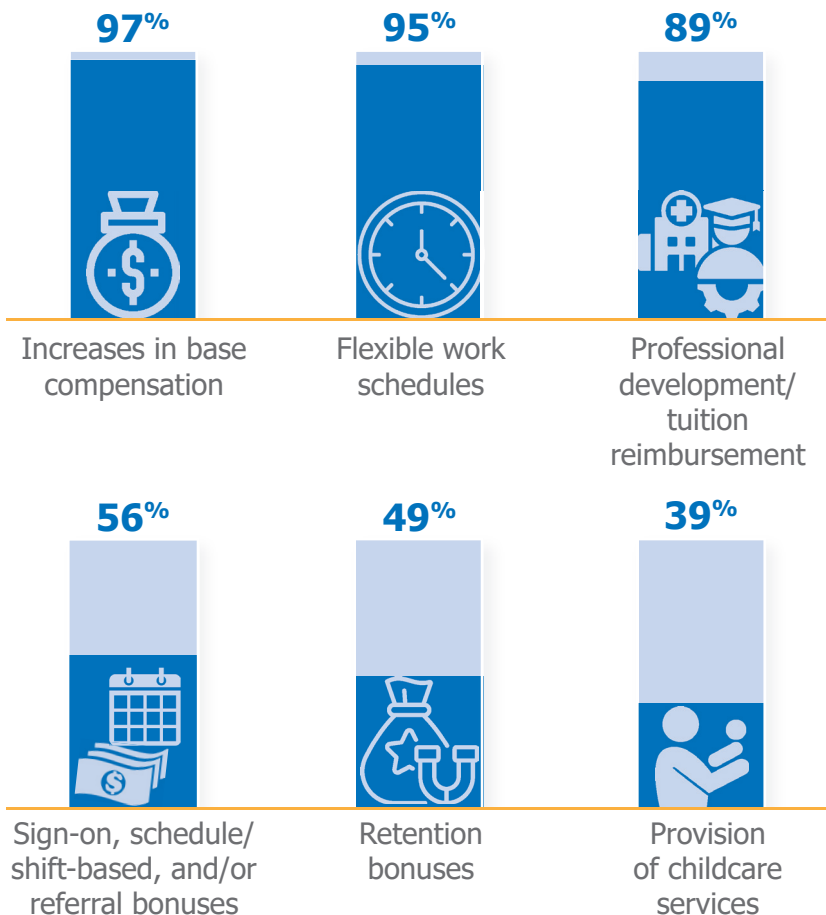
Pennsylvania’s hospitals and health systems are working hard to develop a robust and diverse health care workforce to both serve the current needs of their communities and meet a growing need for care.

HAP’s third annual workforce survey examines hospitals’ efforts to recruit, retain, and develop talented workers; how care is evolving to support providers and patients; health care professional shortages; and strategies to eliminate violence against health care professionals.

While survey responses demonstrate that hospitals’ and health systems’ efforts are beginning to bear fruit, Pennsylvania is projected to experience the worst nursing shortage in the nation by 2026 and the third worst shortages of nursing support professionals and mental health providers. Significant investment and collaboration between educators, providers, and government will be essential to changing this trajectory and growing a health care workforce that meets Pennsylvanians’ needs.

Recruitment and Retention Initiatives

The following percentage of respondents report implementing each strategy since 2022:



Hospitals reduced turnover rates

28% for key positions on average, statewide from 2022–2023*



*See Statewide Average Vacancy Rates for positions surveyed

Other reported strategies:

- ✓ International recruitment 
- ✓ Performance rewards 
- ✓ Assistance with out-of-pocket health care costs 
- ✓ Paid parental leave 
- ✓ Student loan repayment 
- ✓ Programs for clinicians to continue to contribute expertise while reducing physical job demands 

Workforce Development Programs

Respondents report using the following strategies to develop their pipeline of workers:



✓ Internal clinical education and training programs



✓ Apprenticeships and internships



✓ Partnerships with local schools



✓ Education assistance/scholarships



✓ Employer campaign (geofencing, social media, etc.)



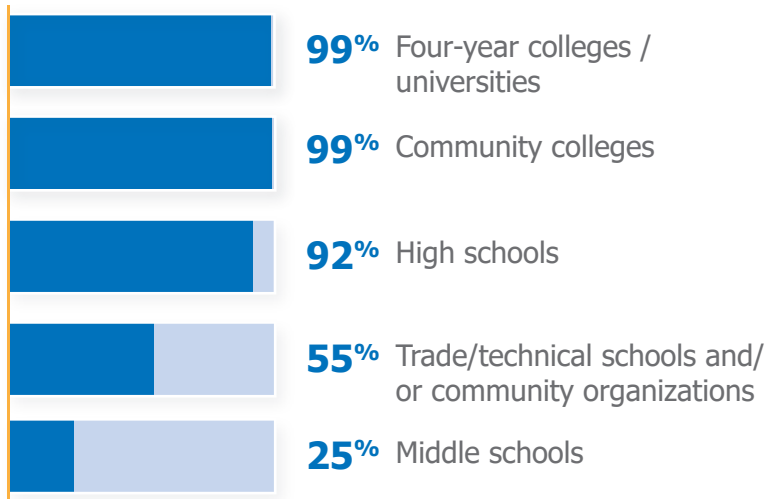
✓ Partnerships with community workforce development groups



✓ Career fairs

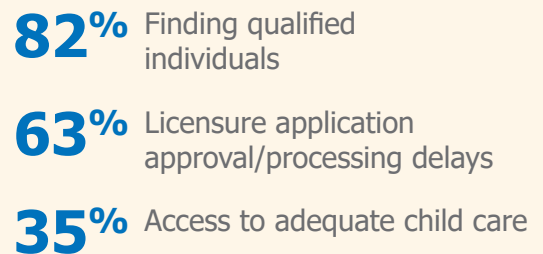
Partnerships with Education

The following percentage of respondents report workforce development partnerships with each entity:



Barriers to Employing Staff

The following percentage of respondents identify each barrier as one of their top three barriers to employing staff:



Evolutions in Care

Innovative Care Models

Hospitals report implementing the following innovative models to support providers and enhance safe patient care:

- ✓ Team-based care
- ✓ Licensed practical nurses (LPN) providing direct care
- ✓ Virtual nursing
- ✓ Technology implementation
- ✓ Telemedicine
- ✓ Hospital-at-home programs

Team-Based Care



68%

increase in the number of LPNs providing direct nursing care as part of team-based care models from 2020 to 2023

Workforce Shortages

2023 Statewide Average Vacancy Rates

Position	Vacancy Rate*
Nursing support staff	19%
Certified nurse midwives	19%
Certified registered nurse practitioners	19%
Certified registered nurse anesthetists	16%
Staff registered nurses providing direct patient care**	14%
Respiratory therapists	14%
Medical assistants	13%
Radiologic technologists/technicians	12%
Phlebotomists	12%
Clinical nurse specialists	10%
Physician assistants	9%
Medical technologists/lab technicians	8%

*Rounded

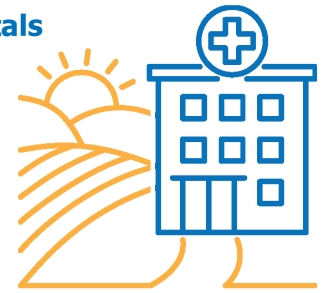
**Excludes nurse managers, case managers, and education staff

Challenges for Rural Hospitals

Hospitals in rural communities report average vacancy rates of:

26% for registered nurses

28% for nursing support staff



Physician Vacancies

Respondents identify their physician practice areas of greatest need as:

- ✓ Anesthesia
- ✓ Behavioral health/psychiatry
- ✓ Emergency medicine
- ✓ Family medicine/primary care
- ✓ Gastroenterology
- ✓ Hospitalists
- ✓ OB/GYN
- ✓ Orthopedic surgeons
- ✓ Pediatrics
- ✓ Urology

A Growing Need

Filling current vacancies for health care professionals is not enough. Hospitals must develop the workforce required to meet a growing need for care as the commonwealth ages.

A 2021 Mercer Report projected that, by 2026, Pennsylvania will need an additional:



277,711

NURSING SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS



20,345

REGISTERED NURSES



6,330

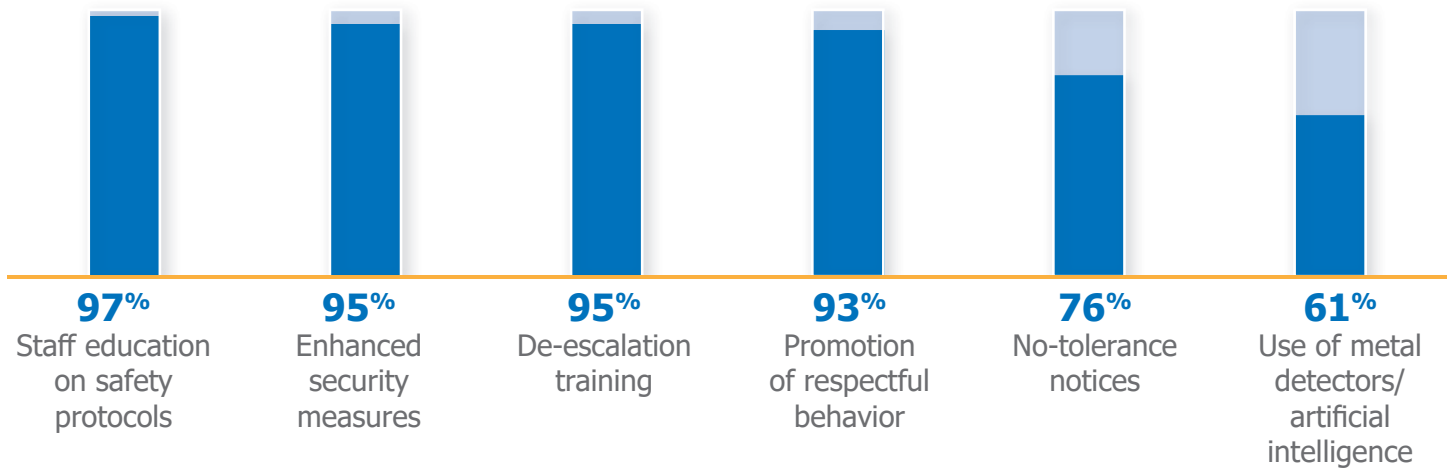
MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Source: Mercer, "2021 U.S. Healthcare Labor Market"

Workplace Safety

Violence Prevention

The following percentage of respondents report implementing each strategy to address rising violence targeting health care professionals:

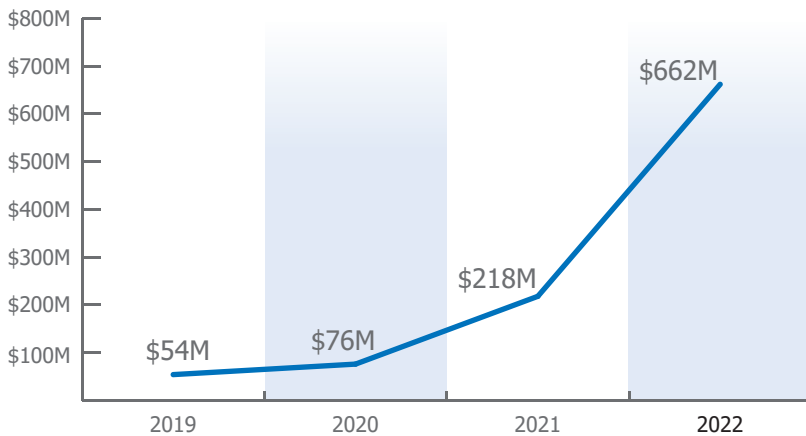


Staffing Agencies

Cost of External Agency Nurses*

\$324 MILLION

Total reported cost for first half of 2023



*Total reported in 2023 among responding hospitals

Methodology

The survey was conducted from October 17 to November 27, 2023. HAP received responses for 99 Pennsylvania hospitals, representing every region of the commonwealth and 53 percent of licensed beds of HAP member hospitals. The response represents a significant sample size of hospitals across the state. Individual hospital responses were requested; however, health system responses were accepted if parallel workforce trends were evident across each hospital within the system. Members were instructed to coordinate the completion of the survey through their human resources departments.

