

# LeadingAge® Workforce

2019

The United States is experiencing a significant shortage of, and a growing demand for, competent workers who are capable of managing, supervising, and providing high-quality long-term services and supports (LTSS) for older adults. LeadingAge conducted a 2017 workforce survey to gather baseline information about the workforce challenges that its members face.

Several trends are fueling this national workforce crisis:

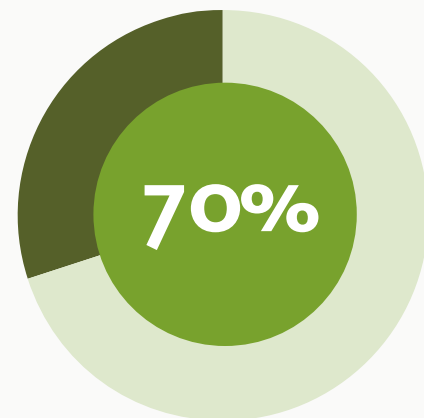
- **A rapidly growing older population:** The population of adults age 65 and older will increase from 47.8 million in 2015 to 88 million in 2050.
- **A growing need for assistance:** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that nearly 70% of people who reach the age of 65 will ultimately need some form of LTSS.

47.8M

U.S. Older Adults  
in 2015

88M

U.S. Older Adults  
in 2050



- **A growing need for workers:** By 2030, job openings in the LTSS field are expected to grow substantially, particularly for counselors, social workers, community and social service workers, home health aides, and personal care aides. The nation will need 2.5 million LTSS workers by 2030 to keep up with the growth of America's aging population. Yet, more workers are currently leaving the LTSS sector than are entering it. As a result, provider organizations are experiencing high turnover, vacancies, and difficulty attracting new employees.

76%



By 2035, the number of older households with a disability **will increase by 76% to reach 31.2M**

- 17M OLDER HOUSEHOLD WITH MOBILITY DISABILITY
- 12M SELF-CARE DISABILITY
- 27M ACTIVITY DISABILITY

## POLICY SOLUTIONS

**Legislate a foreign guest worker program.** LeadingAge urges Congress to authorize a guest worker program in aging services. The initiative should include limits on the amount of time guest workers could remain in the U.S., direct responsibility of employers for guest workers they sponsor, and guardrails protecting guest workers from exploitation.

**Immigration reform.** Recognizing that nearly 25% of the nursing home and home care workforce are foreign-born, we support immigration policies that enable all types and levels of LTSS workers to enter the country and work in aging service settings. We oppose any new restrictions on family-based immigration. Also, we support policies allowing workers with temporary protected immigration status to remain in this country.

**Geriatrics workforce legislation.** LeadingAge supports reintroduction of 115th Congress legislation to promote the direct care workforce, such as the Improving Care for Vulnerable Older Citizens through Workforce Advancement Act (HR 3461) and Direct Creation, Advancement and Retention of Employment (CARE) Opportunity Act (HR 3778). These bills provide educational and grant opportunities for direct care workers and enhance the profession. We also support S. 299, the Geriatrics Workforce Improvement Act introduced by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Bob Casey (D-PA). This bill would help to ensure a more adequate supply of health care and other professionals trained and educated to meet the special needs of people as they age.

**GAO study on the workforce crisis.** We urge Congress to direct the Government Accountability Office to study and report on the LTSS workforce crisis, to raise the visibility of the challenges and recommend additional policy solutions.

**CNA Training:** LeadingAge supports the Nursing Home Workforce Quality Act, HR 1265, to provide more flexibility in the relationship between nursing home surveys and CNA training programs. The current mandatory two-year lock-out from CNA training authority is counterproductive to quality nursing home care and exacerbates the workforce shortage.

## Who We Are:

LeadingAge is the largest association of nonprofit aging services organizations in the country. We have over 5,300 members and 38 state partners and we are committed to developing innovative solutions for our members. As leaders in aging services, we work together toward a shared purpose—to enable the next generation of older adults to live their fullest life and pursue meaning every single day. And as the trusted voice for aging, we commit to empowering our members to transform the aging experience for all.

For more information, please visit [LeadingAge.org](https://LeadingAge.org)

The Trusted Voice for Aging

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 LeadingAge®

2519 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
(202) 783.2242