

SENIOR CARE POLICY BRIEFING

May 26, 2023

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NEWSFLASH

- [A top court reinstated charges against a former administrator and former medical director](#) at a Massachusetts nursing home. The case alleges that residents endured avoidable suffering and death due to the administrator's decisions to merge residents with and without indications of COVID-19 into a single congregated space, a directive that conflicts with longstanding infection control standards and protocols.
 - With drug-resistant superbug infections on the rise and COVID-19 still a health threat, [the nursing home industry bemoans rising costs of infection control](#), despite already being paid to provide a safe and clean environment. Due to lax enforcement of basic safety standards, [poor infection control is a widespread and persistent problem](#).
- Private equity firms and real estate investment trusts continue to focus on profits over patients and are optimistic about the senior living industry. [LTC Properties Chairman and CEO stated](#) that "demographics are on our side as needs-based care continues to grow and the population continues to age and live longer."

LTC BY THE NUMBERS

- **Razor-Thin Margins?** [The Ensign Group](#), one of the country's [largest nursing home operators](#), boasted of "particularly impressive" results after acquiring 19 operations in the first quarter and a total of 42 new operations in the past 12 months. If nursing homes are running on razor-thin margins, as the industry often claims, we have to wonder how they [continue to report exceeding expectations](#).
- **Americans Want Safe Staffing.** Requiring minimum staffing standards in nursing homes so residents receive quality care is supported by 89% of Democrats and 74% of Republicans, [according to a new AARP poll](#).
- **1 to 70.** A former assisted living executive states he was fired in retaliation for reporting [severe understaffing levels](#) (one caregiver for 70 residents) at a facility in Washington.

GET THE FACTS

- The notion that the "[United States is experiencing a nursing shortage is a popular narrative](#), but it is perhaps one that ignores a more nuanced phenomenon. The real issue is that nurses do not want to work in places where they are undervalued and underappreciated..."
- [Lawmakers and union members](#) are advocating for a federal minimum staffing mandate and increased wages for workers to improve patient care while the [nursing home industry](#) is resisting the mandate due to concerns about increased costs and reduced profitability.

A [recent study](#) found nurse staffing shortages linked to a 10.5% increase in resident deaths during the height of the pandemic.



Figure 1: Staffing Shortages and Resident Deaths in Nursing Homes, Week Ending on May 31, 2020 to Week Ending on May 15, 2022

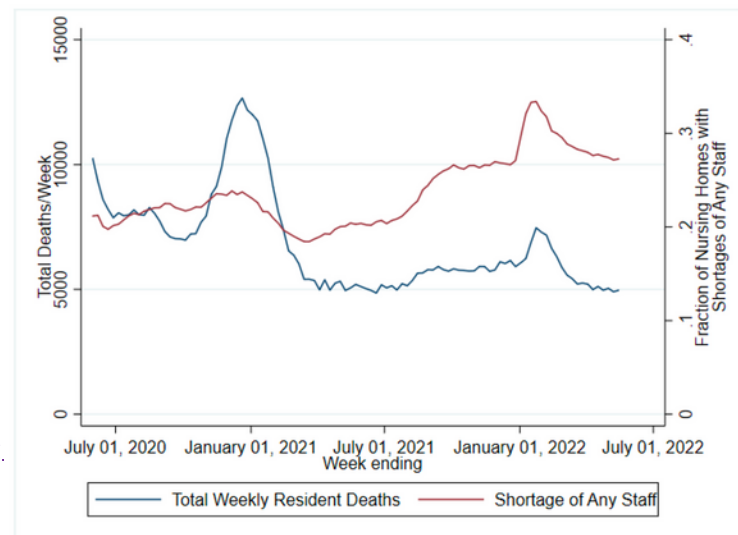


Chart via pre-proof edition of "Staffing Shortages, Staffing Hours, and Resident Deaths in U.S. Nursing Homes During the COVID-19 Pandemic. For more information, visit [https://www.jamda.com/article/S1525-8610\(23\)00411-5/fulltext](https://www.jamda.com/article/S1525-8610(23)00411-5/fulltext).

VISIT [NURSINGHOME411.ORG](https://www.nursinghome411.org)/JOIN OR SCAN QR CODE TO RECEIVE THE ONLINE VERSION OF THIS BRIEF.



The Long Term Care Community Coalition is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to improving nursing home care.

Visit [NursingHome411.org](https://www.NursingHome411.org) for the latest data on staffing levels and quality for every U.S. nursing home as well as resources on resident rights, quality standards, and more.