

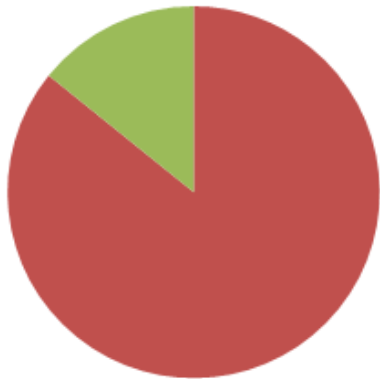
Wisconsin is currently experiencing a direct care workforce crisis that is putting people with disabilities and older adults in danger of serious illness, harm and a loss of independence.

Direct care workers make it possible for people with disabilities and older adults to lead safe and healthy lives in the community. This is not only where people prefer to live, it is also the most cost-effective setting. DHS's Community Relocation Initiative found that **moving people from nursing facilities to the community reduced costs by 26%**.

Survival Coalition heard from over 500 people who rely on direct care services and their family members about the impact the workforce crisis is having on their lives.

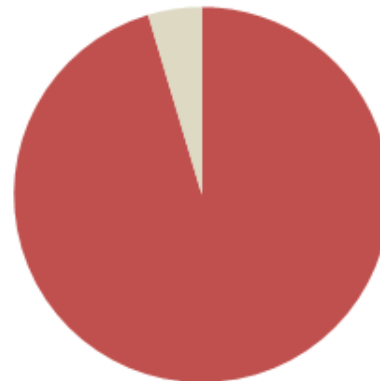


## People Can't Find Workers...It's Putting Them at Risk



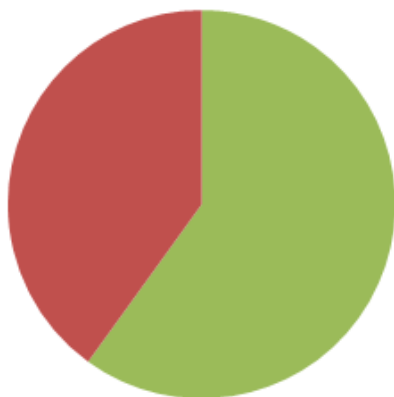
**85%**

don't have enough workers to work all of their shifts



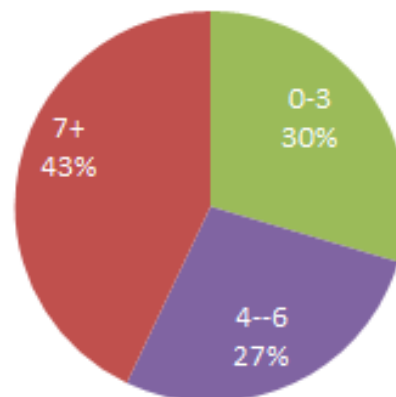
**95%**

said it's "Very Hard" or "Somewhat Hard" to find workers



**60%**

get sick more often when they don't have enough workers



**43%**

can't find a worker 7 or more times per month

## Impact of the Crisis

When asked what happens when they don't have a direct care worker, the most common responses were:

- I had to quit my job or miss work days (38%)
- I don't feel safe at home (27%)
- I missed a medical appointment (24%)
- I missed a meal (26%)
- I missed a medication or other treatments (26%)
- I will have to move/I am thinking of moving (22%)
- I have had to stay in bed all day (17%)



## Why Can't People Find Workers?

When asked about the factors that make it difficult to find workers, the most common responses were:

- The worker wants to be paid more than I can pay (69%)
- I can't find qualified workers (61%)
- There are no available workers at the time of day I need help (46%)
- No available workers where I live (40%)

"I live in Wood County, an agency was hired to take care of me in my apartment. They did not have enough staff to show up for every shift, or when present had to leave early. So I was usually left in a chair from 3:00 p.m. til 9:00 a.m. the following day without supper, bathroom assistance, or even water."

"I live in Florence County. Recently I was transferring into bed by myself, which is something I usually have assistance with. I fell, and I had to lay on the floor for 9 hours until my caregiver came for her morning shift. This would not have happened if I had been able to find a caregiver for the night-time shift."

"I've had to sleep in my chair because my morning staff called in sick late one night and I couldn't find a replacement. If I had went to bed, I would have had to stay in bed for more than 15 hours straight. I didn't use the restroom for that long either because I need physical assistance." —Winnebago County

"The shifts that I do not have workers come, leaves me on my own and I go without many things, such as medicine, getting my lunch and snacks ready, not being prepared for school and leaving me to wander around campus, unsupervised, which often times gets me into trouble." —Kenosha County