



## Issue:

### Wisconsin Long-Term Care Workforce Shortage

Caregiver vacancy rates, long a concern for Wisconsin long-term and residential care providers, have reached crisis levels. In the largest survey of long-term and residential care providers to date, which was completed in March of 2016, responses from 689 providers revealed:

- High levels of caregiver vacancy rates in assisted living and nursing homes. One in four providers experience caregiver vacancy rates of 20% or higher.
- Major problems finding applicants and qualified caregivers.
- Significant wage disparity between people working as trained personal caregivers and unskilled entry level workers taking jobs at gas stations, big-box stores, and fast food restaurants. Providers reported a median hourly starting wage for personal caregivers of \$10.75 compared to \$12.00 for unskilled entry-level workers.
- Lost admissions due to lack of caregivers. 18% of providers limited admissions in the past year.
- An exodus of caregivers to jobs outside of healthcare. An estimated 10,600 personal caregivers may have left for jobs outside of health care in the past year.
- Widespread use of overtime, double shifts and other strategies to fill scheduling gaps. 84% of providers use these strategies, which can lead to caregiver burnout.

The results of the survey, together with data from the Wisconsin Office of Caregiver Quality showing a decline in persons seeking or renewing certification as nursing assistants (CNAs) and direct service providers, expose a significant workforce crisis facing providers caring for people in need of long-term and residential care.