

Cultivating Our Country's Care Workforce to Meet Growing Demands on In-home Care

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Policymakers, business leaders, and media commentators agree:

America is in the midst of a healthcare crisis, which is greatly affecting individuals, families, employees, communities, and the country as a whole. Rising numbers of older Americans are struggling with chronic illnesses, functional deficits, and social isolation, putting them at high risk for poor health outcomes and institutional placement. These changes and the increasing need for high-quality, non-medical home care are being driven by the following ongoing societal trends:

1. **The aging of America is creating a burgeoning need for caregiving.** According to the U.S. Census Bureau, one in five of Americans will be ages 65 and older by 2030. As the population of older adults increases, the demand for care services will also rise. That care will necessarily be home-based because most Americans want to age in place. In a 2024 *U.S. News & World Report* survey, 95 percent of respondents ages 55 and older highlighted aging in place as an important goal.
2. **Because of shortages, the caregiver workforce is inadequate to meet this growing demand.** According to an AARP Public Policy Institute brief, the ratio of Americans ages 45–64 to those ages 80 and older was seven to one in 2010; by 2030, it will be four to one. As a consequence of these shifting demographics and other factors, 1.8 million healthcare positions were vacant in 2023.
3. **Caregiver job satisfaction and caregiver shortages greatly affect health outcomes for older Americans.** A 2021 review of 31 previous research studies found that frontline healthcare workers who had greater job satisfaction because of better working conditions, such as appropriate workloads and training, had a positive impact on patient health outcomes, including lower incidence of pressure ulcers and falls. Job dissatisfaction, on the other hand, has resulted in a 40–60 percent annual caregiver turnover rate in recent years as well as negative effects on patient outcomes. A 2025 study conducted by Sensi.AI found that older adults who need care are alone in their homes 91 percent of the time, leading to a greater number of falls and medical emergencies.

Help at Home — a 50-year-old home care provider with 60,000 caregivers serving 70,000 clients in 11 states — has developed a powerful strategy to remedy America’s care crisis: increase caregiver satisfaction to improve clients’ health outcomes through enhanced relationship-based care.

By treating caregivers with the reverence and appreciation they deserve—solving such a critical societal problem—Help at Home has proven that it can make significant headway in solving the caregiver crisis. It is essential to recognize the invaluable contributions of caregivers and to provide the support and resources they need to thrive. This approach yields a triple win: better care for clients, a more satisfied caregiver workforce, and improved care and cost outcomes.

How does Help at Home increase the satisfaction of their caregivers? It starts with culture.

“We work hard to put ourselves in the shoes of our care workforce and we know we need to ensure the right schedule in the right location with the right client,” said Sarah Anderson, Help at Home Caregiver Senior Vice President.

“It’s important that we listen and then react in response to caregiver feedback for continuous improvement.”

The company is able to recruit 3,000–4,000 caregivers per month, nearly doubling its care workforce in the last five years. Help at Home delivers 85 million hours of care annually, with the average caregiver working 24 hours a week and serving the same clients for four years. It has a caregiver retention rate of 67 percent, higher than the industry average, and a Net Promoter Score that is 19 percent higher than the industry average, too.

“Help at Home is the one company that encourages each and every person to be the best they can be,” said Mary, a Help at Home caregiver.

“Staff is always available to give us the best working environment, keeping us well educated on upcoming details and problem-solving.”

Help at Home’s culture of “Caring for the Caregiver,” designed and implemented by its dedicated Caregiver Management team, is operationalized through multiple initiatives that cover the lifecycle of a caregiver. Potential new caregivers are offered automated and high-touch recruitment and onboarding. They can easily apply for a position at Help at Home through its online, 24/7 technology, which also enables ease of screening, credentialing, and preservice training. Newly hired caregivers receive calls from a Caregiver Management team member prior to their first day of employment, on that first day, and then periodically during their first two months to ensure that they feel comfortable and supported in their new job.

Once hired, caregivers are carefully considered for client matching. Because Help at Home has a large clientele in multiple states, it can intentionally match caregivers with clients based on demographics, interests, location, the hours required by the client, and convenience to caregivers. This maximizes the likelihood of forging an optimal and long-lasting client-caregiver relationship.

These long-term caregiver relationships are important to the company’s mission of better connecting home care to healthcare.

“Because caregivers know their clients well, they are instrumental to helping to identify issues that can cause adverse incidents to administer interventions, avoiding hospitalizations and institutionalizations for three quarters of a year longer than they would otherwise,” said Help at Home’s Chief Human Resources Office Michelle Bonfilio. “Supporting clients’ health in turn also empowers the caregiver, and they feel more fulfilled and connected to their client’s overall well-being.”

As valued team members, Help at Home caregivers are accorded a voice in company practices. They are asked to fill out “pulse” surveys monthly to inform the company about what they appreciate and find challenging about their jobs. This enables a better understanding of their concerns and allows caregivers to feel and be heard. Leadership keeps close tabs on this information to understand global issues and implement systemic improvements. To ensure that caregivers truly feel supported, Help at Home’s Chief Caregiving Officer facilitates the company’s Caregiver Committee, composed of caregivers who regularly discuss everyday stresses and offer solutions. One theme that the Committee is tackling now is how to offer better emotional support to caregivers on a more personal and regular basis.

At the end of the day, supporting caregivers with the right training, tools, and recognition produces results that affect not only the caregivers, but also the clients they serve and the entire healthcare ecosystem. With an unwavering focus on creating a strong caregiver support framework, Help at Home uses a high-touch, high-tech approach with manifold impact, which includes:

- **Improved Retention and Satisfaction:** Attention to matching the right caregiver with the right client can lead to greater caregiver satisfaction and referrals.
- **Better Care Quality:** Well-trained caregivers who are appreciated exhibit higher job satisfaction and provide higher quality service.
- **Reduced Administrative Burden:** With tools like the caregiver app, which includes pay, schedule, and access to trainings, caregivers can focus on care delivery.
- **Improved Compliance:** Caregivers who are recognized and rewarded are more likely to complete trainings and electronic visit verifications.

The concept may seem simple, but these initiatives require strategy, technology, infrastructure, and—most importantly—a culture of caring for the caregiver. These elements serve as foundational building blocks for a well-supported care workforce. Treat people well, and they will respond with their best efforts. Caregivers will thrive and clients will age in place as independently as possible—in their own homes.