

Supply and shortages in the direct care workforce

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my many collaborators on data that will be presented today. This work has been funded by HRSA and NIA.

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The direct care workforce

- Nursing assistants, home health aides, home care workers, personal care aides, etc.
- Workers provide hands-on care and assistance with daily tasks
- Jobs are characterized by low wages, limited employment benefits, and difficult working conditions
- Women-dominated workforce, disproportionately performed by women of color



Marie Salmon is Bob Dettmer's round-the-clock caretaker. Mr. Dettmer, 77, has Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. Jackie Molloy for The New York Times

On the Job, 24 Hours a Day, 27 Days a Month

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/02/nyregion/home-health-aide.html>

Understanding the direct care workforce crisis

- Tight labor market
- High turnover
- Workforce shortages

- Competition from other industries
- Childcare instability
- Burnout
- Immigration

OPINION

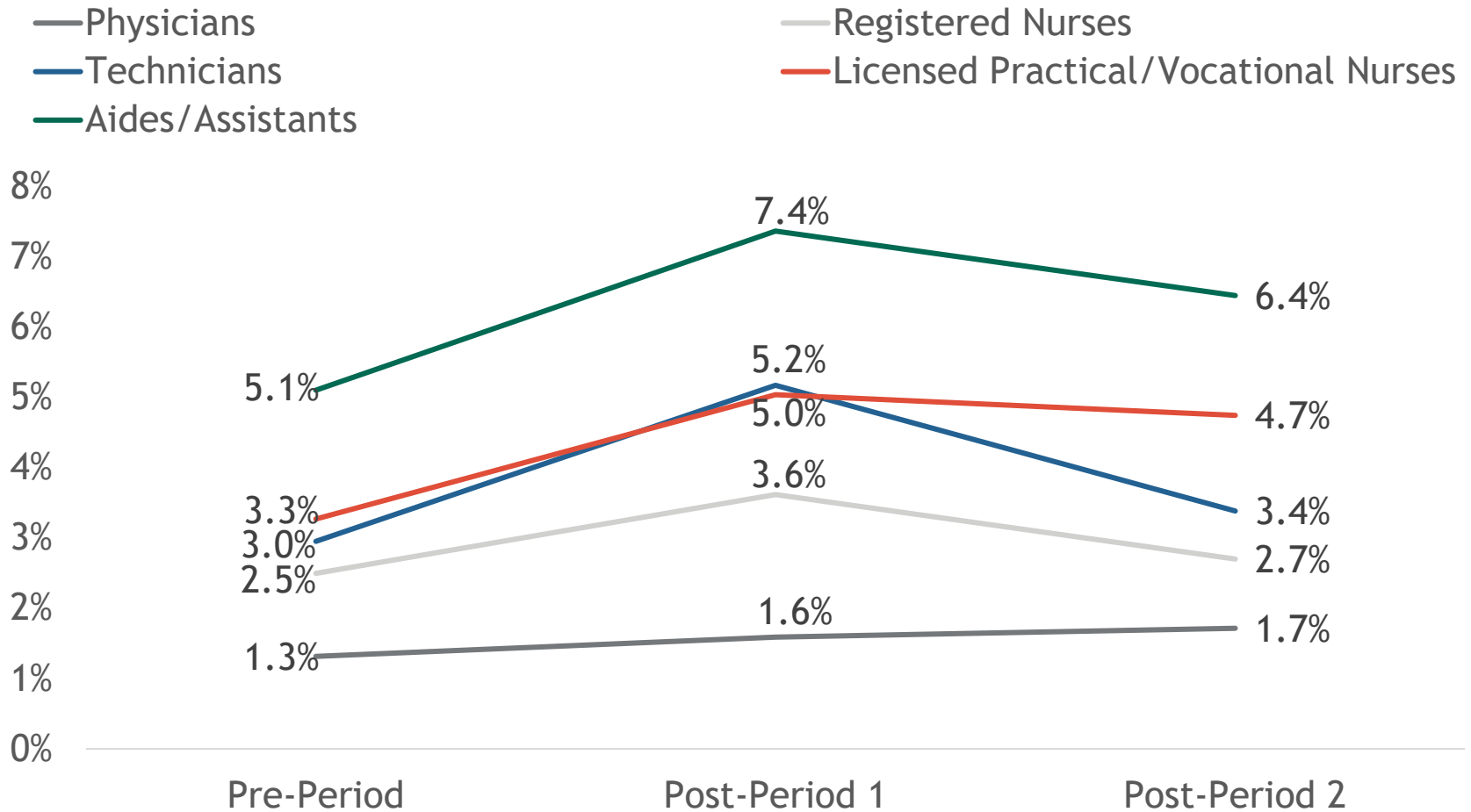
Nursing Homes Are in Crisis. We Can't Look Away Any Longer.

April 14, 2022

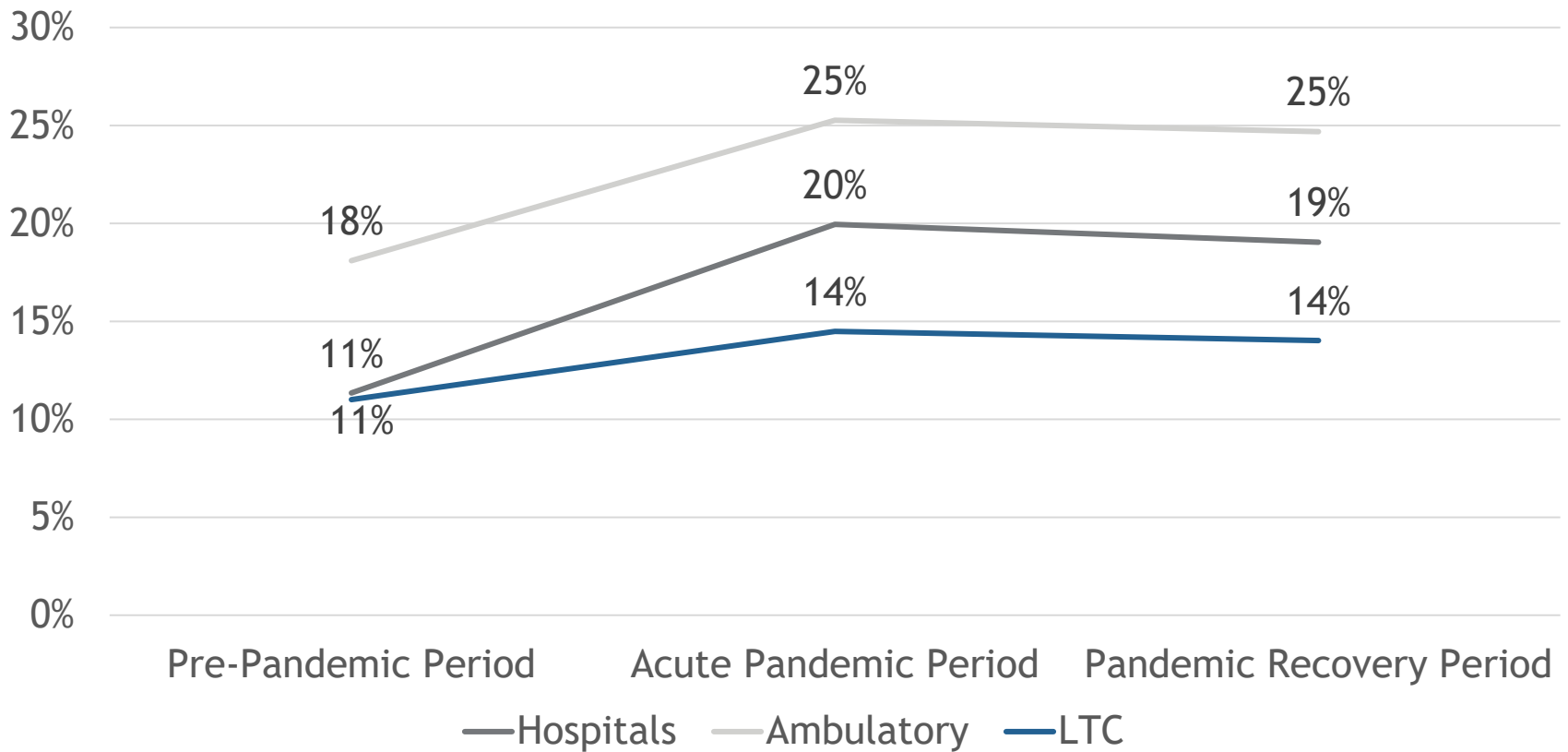


<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/14/opinion/nursing-homes-crisis.html>

Health care workers exiting the labor force



Direct care workers transitioning to other occupations



The rural direct care workforce

- Older population, greater need for direct care services
- Smaller proportion of younger workers in rural areas
- LTC infrastructure in rural areas

The rural direct care workforce cont'd

	Rural areas	Urban areas
Home health aides per 1000 older adults	32.8 (n=133)	50.4 (n=395)
Nursing assistants per 1000 older adults	20.9 (n=134)	25.3 (n=389)

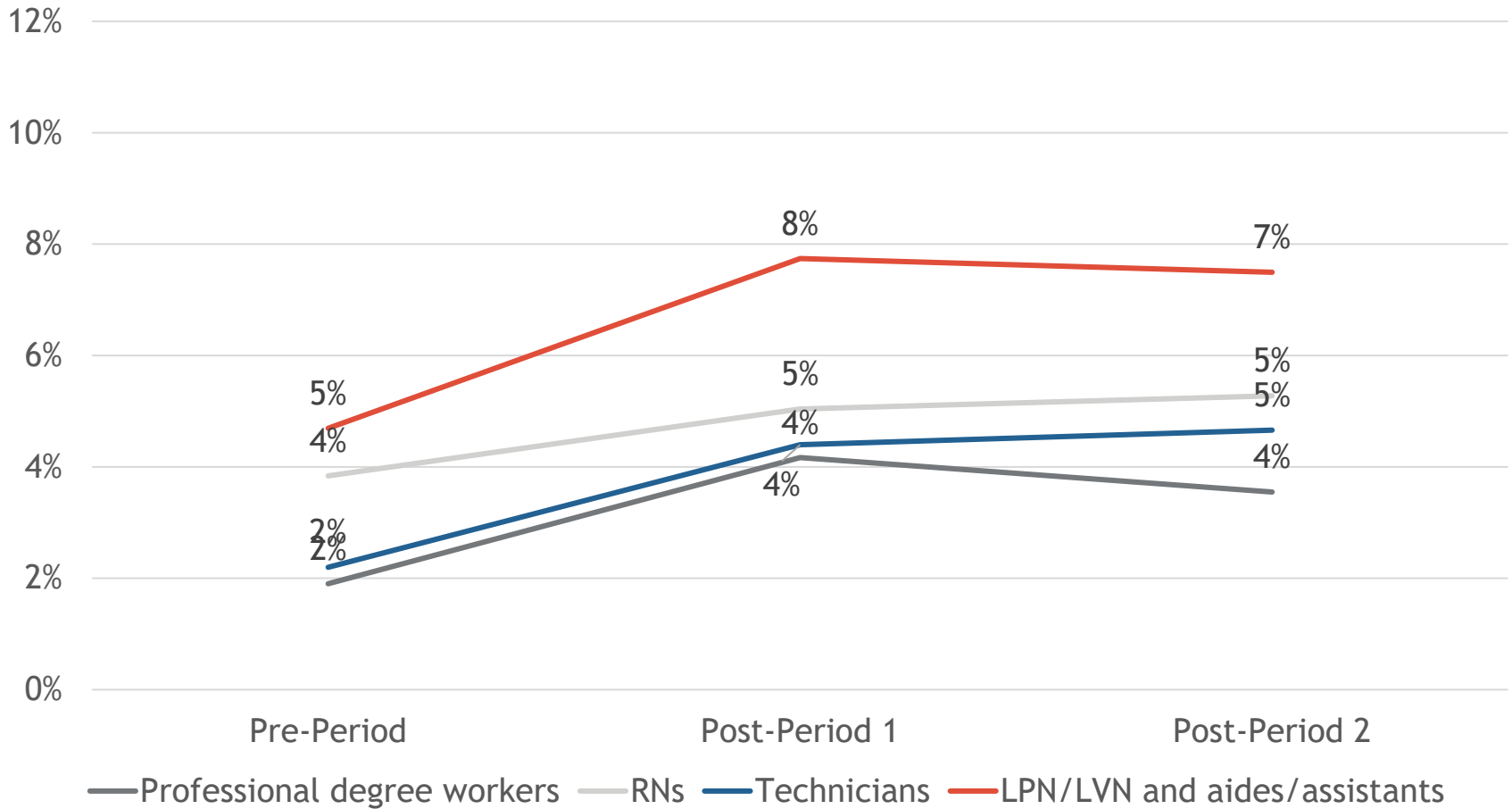
Source: OEWS and AHRF

The rural direct care workforce

		Home health aides		Nursing assistants	
New England	Rural	14.2	(n=9)	10.2	(n=9)
	Urban	26.6	(n=21)	13.1	(n=21)
Middle Atlantic	Rural	55.7	(n=6)	18.3	(n=6)
	Urban	60.9	(n=34)	26.7	(n=35)
East North Central	Rural	30.2	(n=19)	22.2	(n=19)
	Urban	47.2	(n=58)	27.7	(n=57)
West North Central	Rural	40.9	(n=20)	33.5	(n=20)
	Urban	61.1	(n=33)	45.1	(n=33)
South Atlantic	Rural	26.2	(n=20)	19.5	(n=20)
	Urban	27.4	(n=83)	24.7	(n=83)
East South Central	Rural	22.0	(n=16)	21.0	(n=16)
	Urban	31.9	(n=29)	25.6	(n=29)
West South Central	Rural	43.3	(n=17)	22.8	(n=17)
	Urban	77.4	(n=43)	25.3	(n=42)
Mountain	Rural	34.4	(n=16)	17.3	(n=16)
	Urban	53.0	(n=37)	23.0	(n=37)
Pacific	Rural	38.4	(n=5)	11.4	(n=10)
	Urban	80.4	(n=49)	17.3	(n=48)



Rural health care workers exiting the labor force



Strategies for addressing direct care worker challenges

- Credentialing
- Unionization
- Wage pass-throughs, support for rural home health agencies



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