

2022 - 2023 National Study

# The State of **The Direct Care Workforce**

By Brandi Kurtyka, CEO  
& Bill Dombi, President





## The State of The Direct Care Workforce



## Bill Dombi

### National Association for Home Care & Hospice President

As the leading member of the Home Care Workforce Action Alliance, the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) is deeply committed to solving the most pressing issue facing care in the home, the workforce crisis. For that reason, we are happy to be working with MissionCare Collective to provide stakeholders with the information they need to tackle this issue. Since March 2020, providers have seen a 23 percent decrease in home care aides working for them, and with nearly half of all direct care workers leaving the field every year, providers are reporting having to turn down as many as 50 percent of people seeking care. By 2040 there will be 81 million people in the U.S. 65 years or older, and people turning 65 today have a nearly 70 percent chance to require long-term care and support. The caregiving workforce needs to increase by 8.2 million jobs to accommodate future needs. The people in the direct care workforce are doing important, demanding jobs and they deserve respect and fair compensation. Talk is not sufficient, we need action to address this problem, but, as an industry, we cannot work within our silos. By joining together, we can succeed.

**Bill Dombi**  
President, NAHC



# Table of Contents

Changing the culture of care starts with better understanding the people delivering it. The first half of the study unveils key insights about the lifestyle and behaviors of the direct care workforce while the second half dives deep into personas. Through this research, we’ve identified seven key personas, all actively working in care today, to help inspire readers to think differently about creating benefits, messaging, and other strategies to refine recruitment and retention strategies.

- 05 Executive Summary
- 07 Demographics
  - 11 Health
  - 13 Causes
  - 15 Religion
  - 17 Education
  - 21 Income
  - 25 Hobbies
- 29 Workplace Personas

“Changing the culture of care starts with better understanding the people delivering it.”





## Executive Summary

With nearly 5 million direct care workers, this workforce is the largest workforce in the United States. Despite the high demand for caregivers, who provide essential services for older adults and people with disabilities - too few people are entering the profession, workers are leaving in droves, and companies are plagued with high turnover. This leads to home care agencies turning away cases, nursing homes unable to take patients, and individuals that need care not able to receive the care they deserve. Additionally, wages are low and reimbursement rates stagnant, leading to a unique challenge for providers to think creatively to attract, engage, and retain workers. It's time to transform our industry.

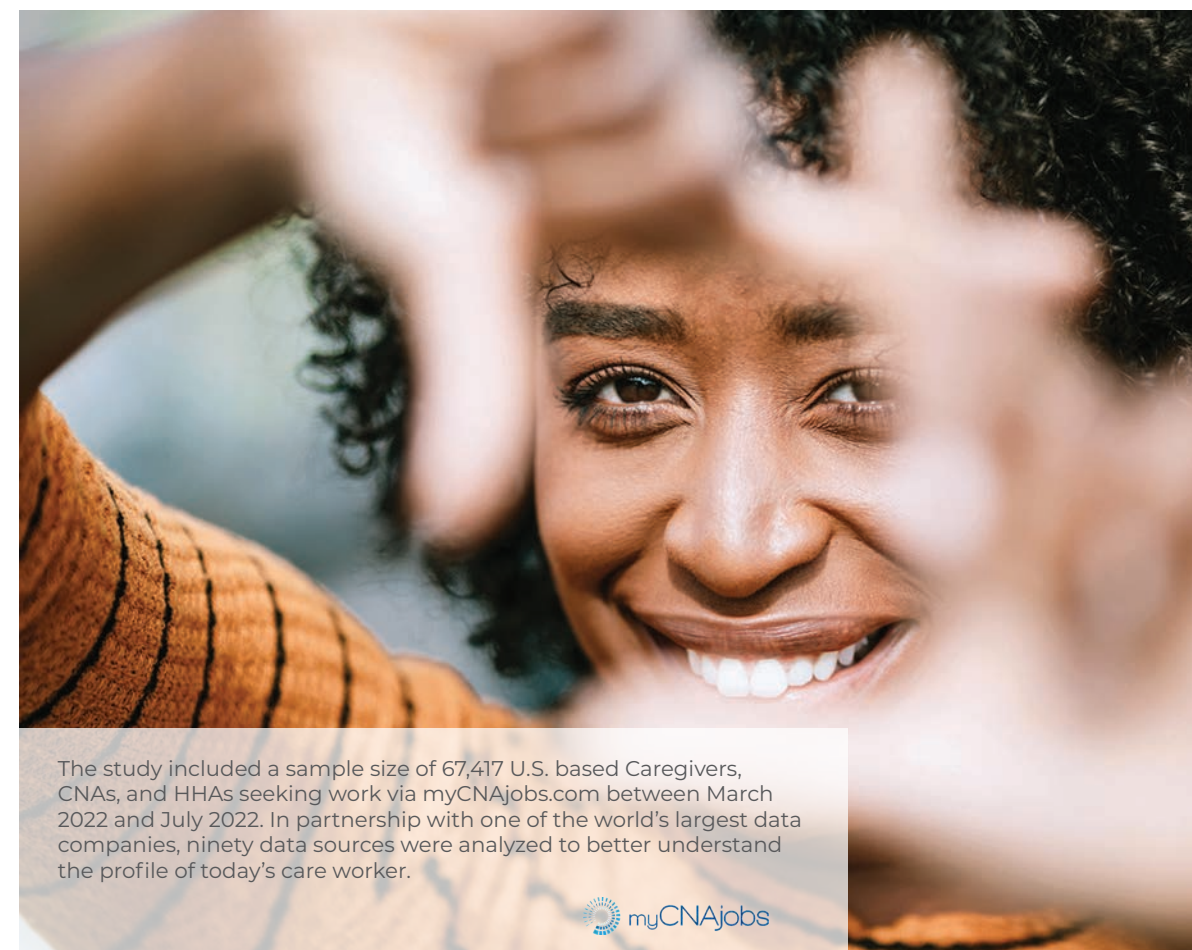
I envision a world of a changed care culture. A world in which it's attractive to become a caregiver, there's pride in the work, a respect for the profession, there are more career pathways in and upwards, turnover is stabilized leading to better patient care and outcomes, elder abuse is decimated, caregivers not only love their patients but the companies they serve, and people that need care, receive it when and where they need it from well-trained and satisfied professionals.

It's a big vision, but if the industry works together, we can get there. This study was born out of a desire to transform our industry by taking a deep dive into better understanding the amazing people behind the profession.

**Brandi Kurtyka**  
CEO, MissionCare Collective



## Changing the **Culture of Care**



The study included a sample size of 67,417 U.S. based Caregivers, CNAs, and HHAs seeking work via myCNAjobs.com between March 2022 and July 2022. In partnership with one of the world's largest data companies, ninety data sources were analyzed to better understand the profile of today's care worker.



# Demographic

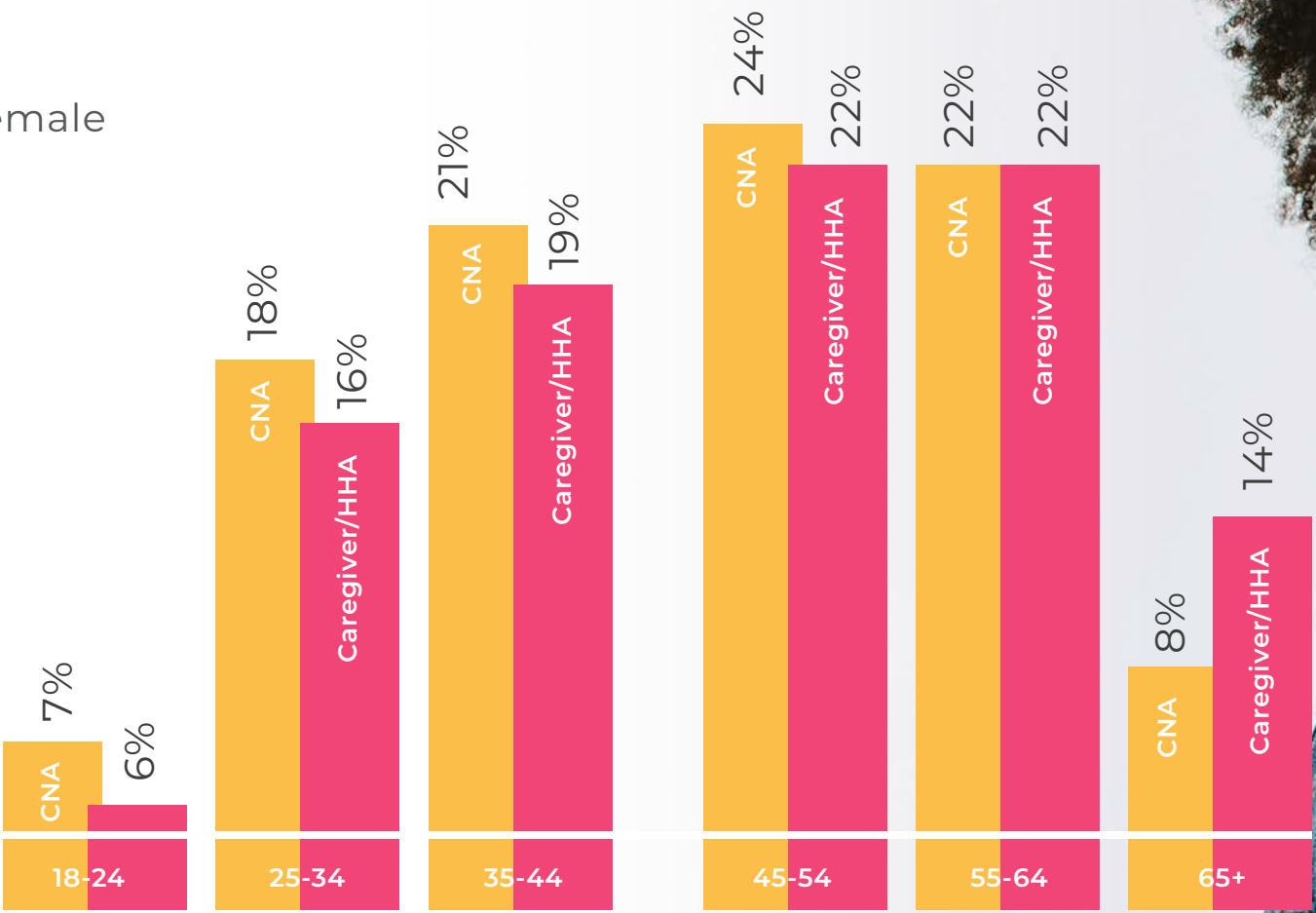
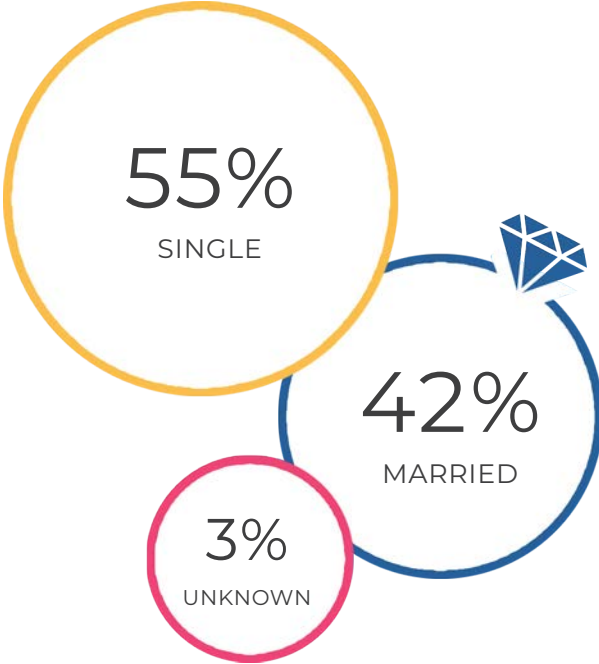
90% of CNAs are female



85% of Caregivers/HHA are female



The majority of caregivers in the United States are Black, followed by Caucasian and Hispanic.

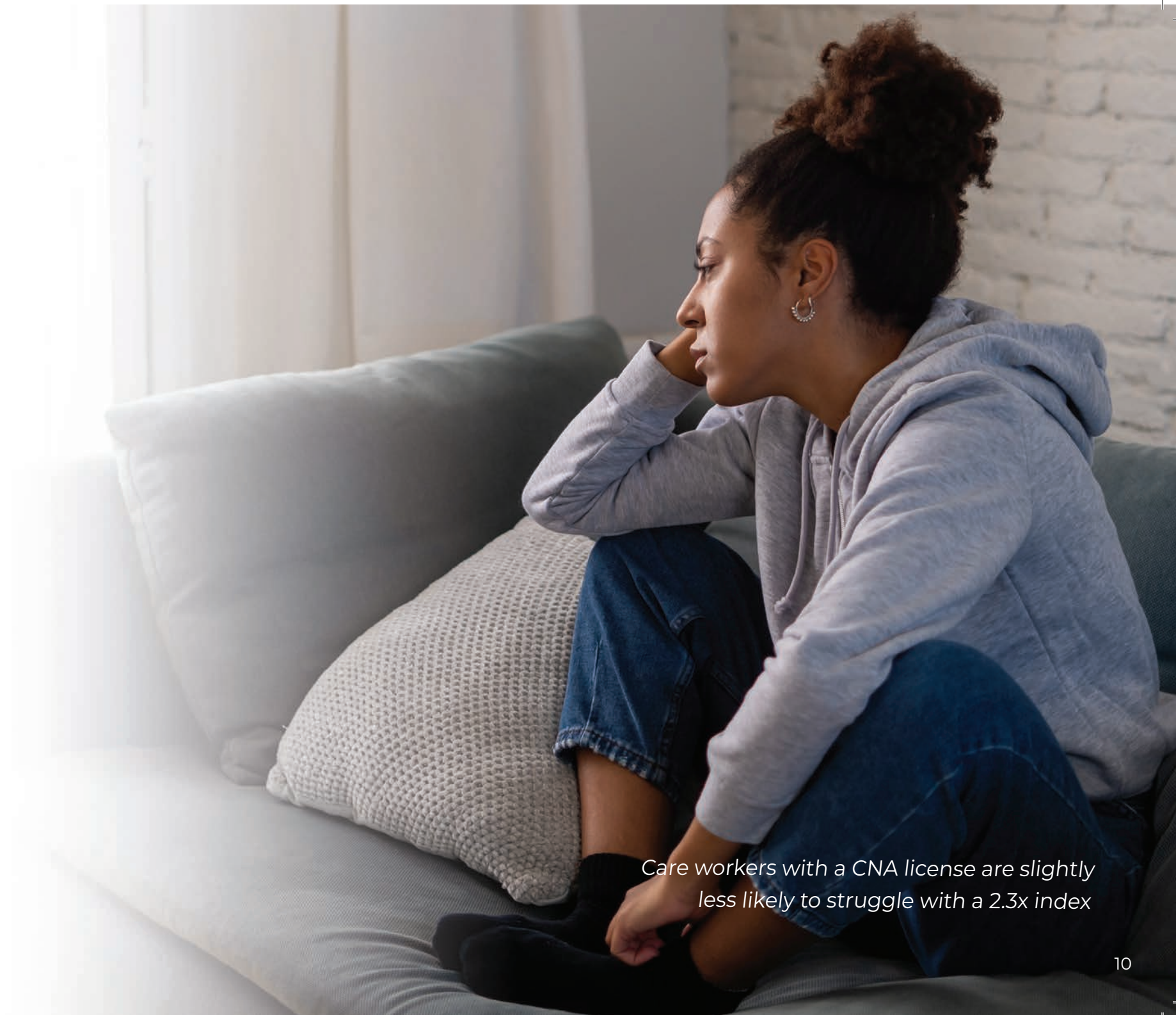


Population by Age



# 3X

Caregivers and Home Health Aides are three times more likely to struggle with anxiety and depression versus the average U.S. population.



*Care workers with a CNA license are slightly less likely to struggle with a 2.3x index*

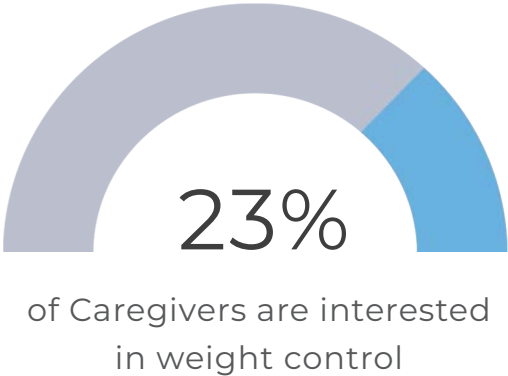
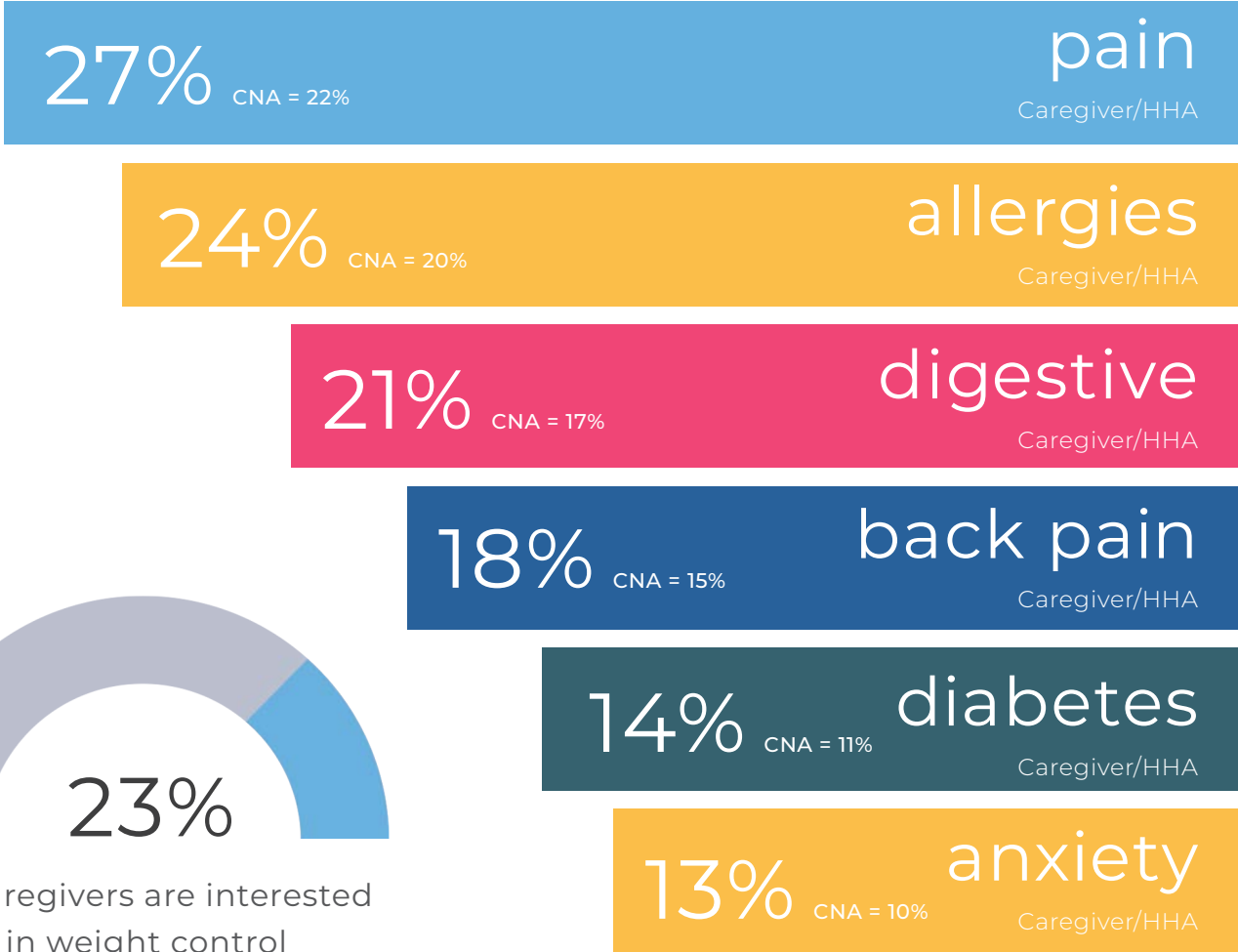


Caregiving can be physically and emotionally exhausting. Over time, caregiver stress can lead to burnout, a condition marked by irritability, fatigue, problems with sleep, weight gain, feelings of helplessness or hopelessness, and social isolation.

Many caregivers struggle with their own ailments and one of their biggest challenges is finding time to care for their own health.

# Health

Caregivers and Home Health Aides have more Self Reported Ailments than Certified Nursing Assistants





Top Support Causes

# Charity and Donation

Caregivers are **2x** more likely than the average US population to donate to causes they care about



Children Affairs



Cancer



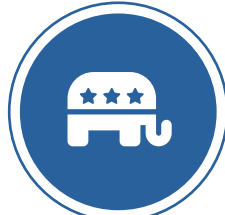
Environmental



Veteran



Political Liberal



Political Conservative



Military



Religious



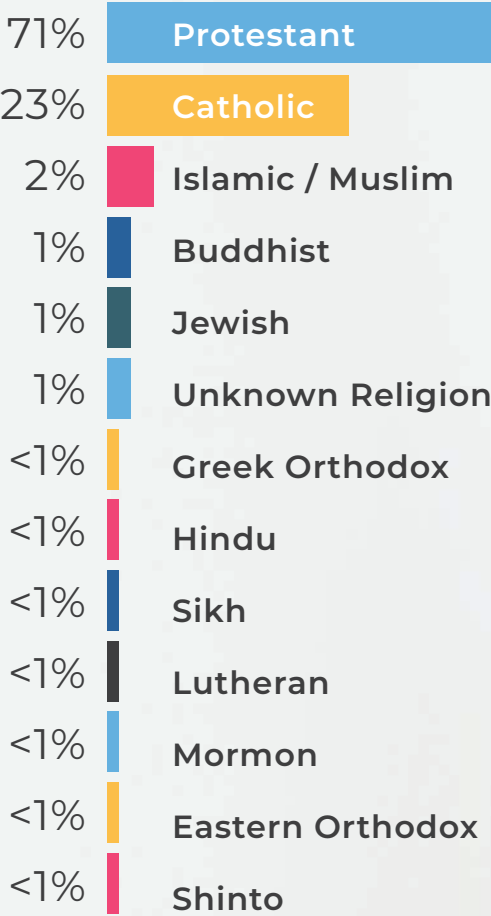
Alzheimer's



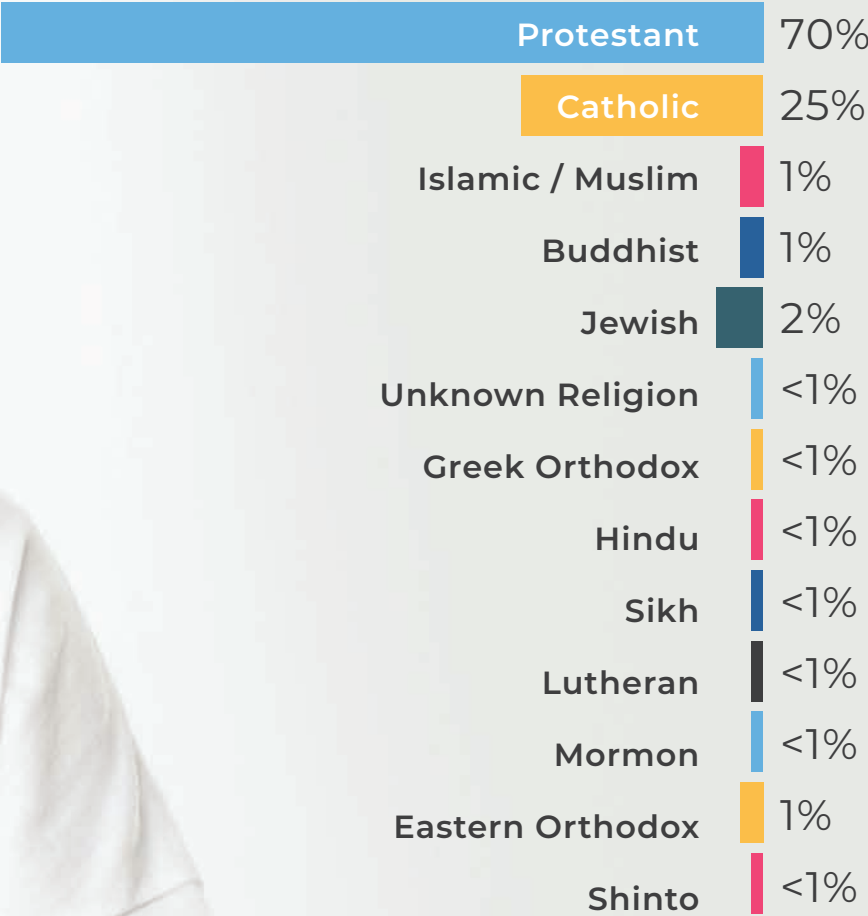
Animal Welfare

# Religion in the Caregiving Community

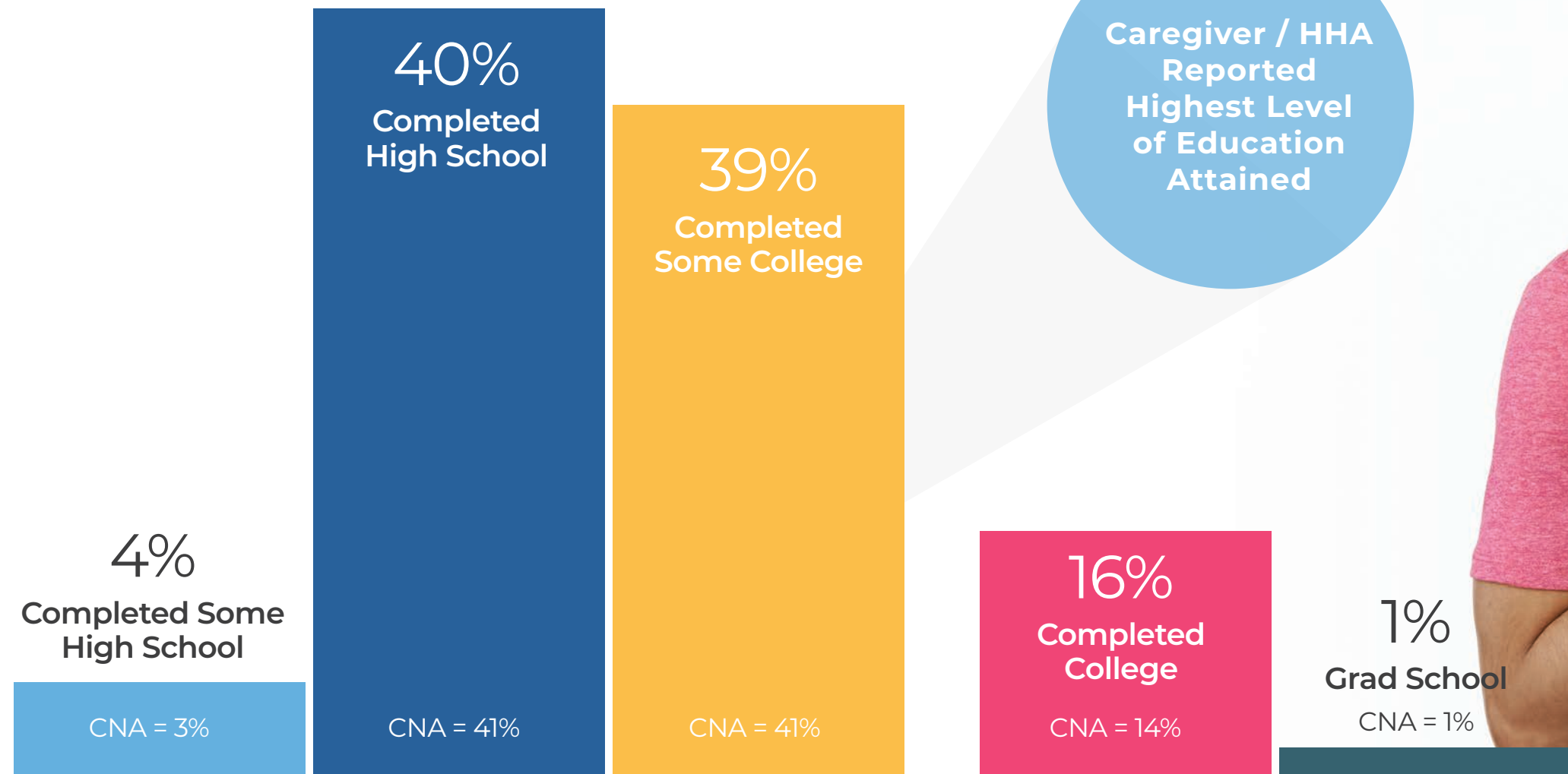
## CNA



## Caregiver/HHA



# Education



**70%**  
of caregivers express interest in pursuing more education, but education doesn't always mean earning a degree: it's often skill-based.



# 7X

Caregivers are seven times more likely to live in the poorest income category versus the average U.S. population.



# Income

America's fastest growing job pays poverty wages

## The Reality

63%

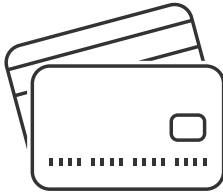
of CNAs and 59% of Caregivers / HHAs have a net worth of less than \$24,999.

61%

of CNAs and 59% of Caregivers / HHAs have \$0 in discretionary income.

54%

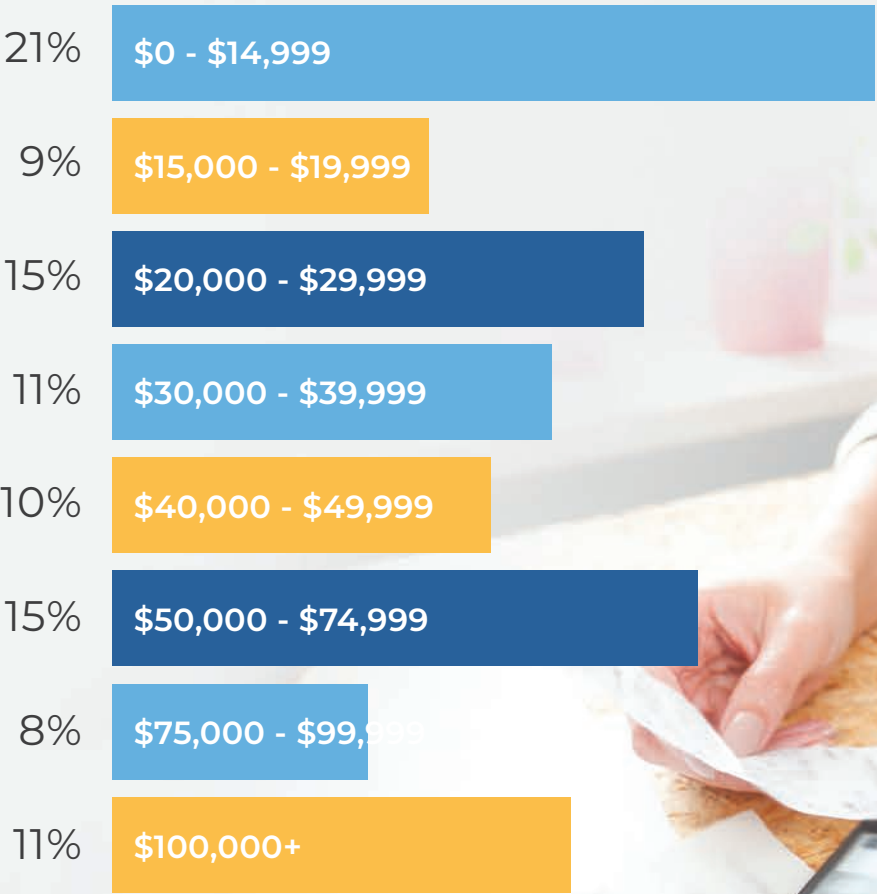
of homecare workers and 36% of CNAs rely on some form of public assistance.



90% of caregivers do not have an active credit card.

# Annual Reported Income

## CNA



## Caregiver/HHA

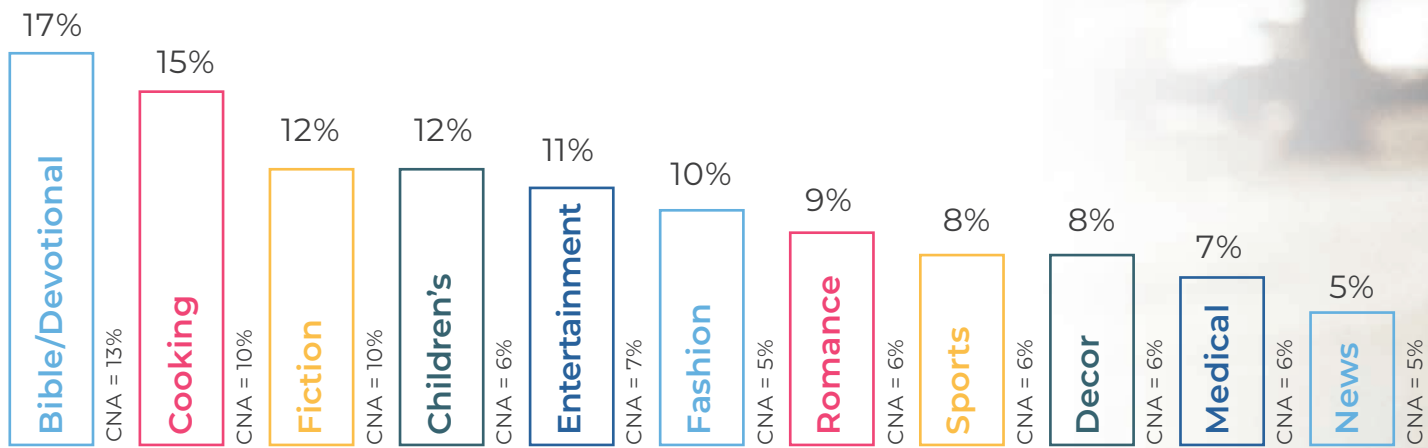


# Hobbies

## What's on the Radio?

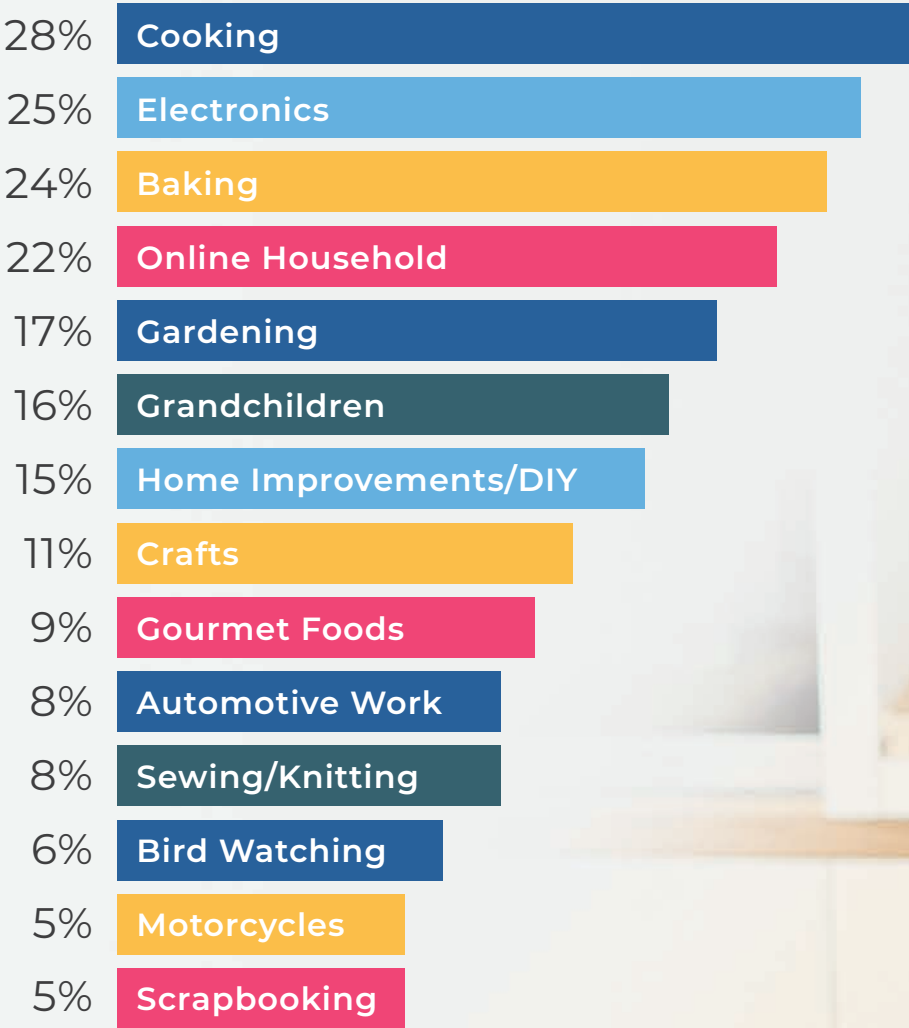
| CNA                     | Caregiver/HHA           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 🎧 1. R & B              | 🎧 1. R & B              |
| 🙏 2. Christian & Gospel | 🎸 2. Country            |
| 🎸 3. Country            | 🎵 3. Rock'n Roll        |
| 🎵 4. Rock'n Roll        | 🙏 4. Christian & Gospel |

## What are Caregivers reading?

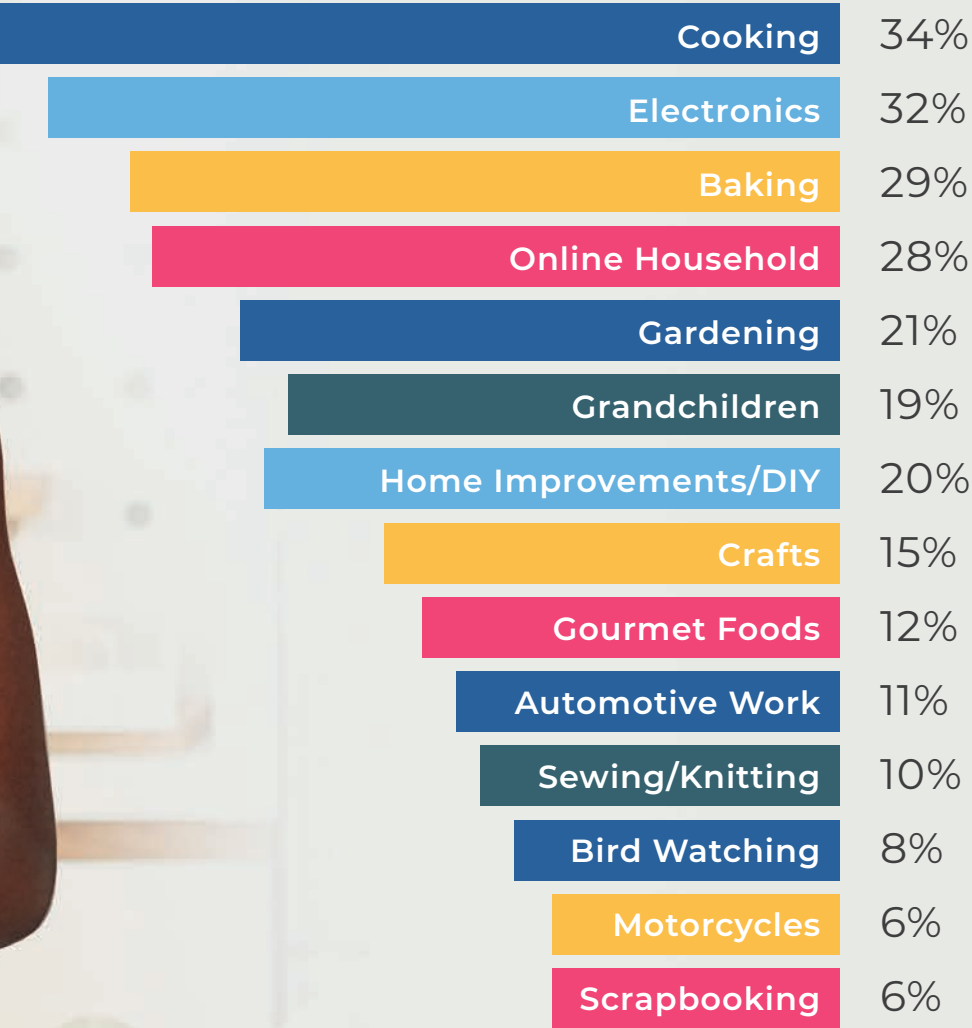


# Top Hobbies

## CNA



## Caregiver/HHA



# Workforce Personas

per·so·na

/ˌpərˈsōnə/

*noun*

the aspect of someone's character that is represented to or by others.  
“her public persona”

Personas are the foundation for building your recruitment and retention strategy. They help you understand who to target, how, when, and inspire fresh thinking to create strategies that are most likely to align with various groups of people.





# Career Caregiver



**Turnover Risk**  
Bad Client Match



**Recognition Tips**  
Great Care They Deliver



**Incentivize**  
Time Off  
& Public Praise

Age varies for Career Caregivers and their defining trait is having worked in the profession for 3+ years. They most likely don't hold jobs outside of care and desire full-time hours. Client match is of utmost importance.

## Key Benefits

Stability and client match are two of the biggest drivers and benefits, followed by training and continued growth focused on meeting client needs, and earning enough money to avoid working jobs outside of care.

## Where to Recruit

Career caregivers are most often found on niche, care-related recruitment websites (e.g. myCNAjobs), via referrals, and through local CNA programs.

## How to Entice

During an interview focus on the care that goes into matching each caregiver with the right patients. To keep employees warm before their first shift, consider floating client match ideas by the caregiver to maintain engagement.

## Tips to Engage

Career caregivers are concerned about losing clients, not having hours, and being forced to work jobs outside of care. To connect and build trust, be transparent in scheduling and ensure if a caregiver is working with a sick or dying patient, they understand you'll work together to maintain their schedule.

## Pathway Considerations

Career growth focused on delivering better care is generally of interest. Many career caregivers are content in their current role, but enjoy learning new skills to better care for the patients they are serving.



# Caring on the Siders



**Turnover Risk**  
Schedule conflict with  
higher-paying job



**Recognition Tips**  
Picking up extra shifts



**Incentivize**  
Money & Public Praise

Middle-aged women not likely to have children that tend to work in hourly jobs ranging from care to call centers to retail and fast food. Transient in work, heavy internet users, and enjoy donating to liberal and cultural causes, and R&B music.

## Key Benefits

Wages and flexibility are the biggest driving factors in accepting and keeping a job. This cohort is more transient in work than other personas, but appreciates the opportunity to make a difference.

## Where to Recruit

Caring On The Siders are heavy internet users and are most often recruited via major job boards and social media, the opportunity needs to catch their eye. Additionally, you can find this group working other retail and restaurant jobs (hint: carry recruitment cards with you!)

## How to Entice

During an interview, focus on helping a potential employee build a schedule that works to accommodate other jobs that may pay more while still being able to make a difference. Keep a tight pulse on schedule preferences as they may change often.

## Tips to Engage

To connect, consider donating to causes they care about. Although this persona is more transient and may work multiple jobs, they work in care because they have a heart for people. The way to their heart is backing causes they are about.

## Pathway Considerations

Focus on individualized career paths that align with the life skills they are hoping to build, which may or may not be in care.



# Young and on the Move



**Turnover Risk**  
No growth opportunities



**Recognition Tips**  
Hitting goals



**Incentivize**  
Gift cards & public praise

Young adults aged 18-24 that are a mix of students and working professionals. Unlikely to have children and live on a limited income. They have a hunger to grow and enjoy connecting with brands and working jobs that don't get in the way of life.

**Key Benefits**

Job flexibility and the opportunity to work and do good in the community are major drivers. This cohort is hungry and wants to work, wants to learn, but also has the mentality that work should enhance life. They "work to live".

**Where to Recruit**

You'll find this persona online via niche job boards, major board boards, and social media. Additionally, you can connect with students via University recruitment strategies. They may not be aware of jobs in care so the opportunity needs to catch their eye.

**How to Entice**

During an interview focus on flexibility of schedules and the investment in career pathways, training, and growth. This group wants to grow, learn, and earn more money as they gain more experience.

**Tips to Engage**

Set short-term milestones and goals and drive home your company mission, vision, and values. This group appreciates a connection to the purpose behind their work.

**Pathway Considerations**

Continued growth is critical whether big or small. Mentorships, apprenticeships, and training programs that allow individuals to learn on their own time based on skills they are interested in gaining are key.

# Oodles of Offspring



**Turnover Risk**  
Money & Better  
Schedule



**Recognition Tips**  
Moving Up



**Incentivize**  
Wage tiers for skills  
attainment

Young female households, often with multiple children. A mix of renters and homeowners with limited income, they enjoy spending money on their kids and put family before work.

## Key Benefits

Wages, flexibility, and the opportunity to move up in life are the biggest drivers for this very active persona. They are juggling multiple kids, struggling to make ends meet, and value people.

## Where to Recruit

Oodles of Offspring are heavy internet users and can be recruited via online job boards, social media, kids related groups, and offline via churches and community events.

## How to Entice

During an interview focus on your family-oriented culture and desire to work with your team to build a schedule that works well with their life. This persona is drawn to companies that have a supportive, family-like atmosphere and will place a big emphasis on choosing to work someplace based on their experience with the recruiter.

## Tips to Engage

Get to know them, their story, and the families they serve at home. Invest in family-related events and social outings.

## Pathway Considerations

Maintain momentum and excitement by building micro pathways to learn, grow, and gain more skills.



# Single Moving Mommas



**Turnover Risk**  
Lack of empathy



**Recognition Tips**  
Doing it all



**Incentivize**  
Public Praise &  
Discount Programs

Single moms that move around frequently, have below average discretionary income, and are most likely a renter. They value connecting with brands, discount stores, and worry about making ends meet to support their kid(s).

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## Key Benefits

Wage progression, client relationship, and flexibility in schedule are paramount.

## Where to Recruit

Single moving mommas are online, but have less time to browse the internet than other personas. During an active job search, you'll find them online via job boards and social media, but you'll find them out in the community frequenting local community and church based events with their kids on an everyday basis.

## How to Entice

During an interview focus on your family-oriented culture and desire to work with your team to build a schedule that works well with their life. This persona is drawn to companies that have a supportive, family-like atmosphere and will place a big emphasis on choosing to work someplace based on their experience with the recruiter.

## Tips to Engage

Single moving mommas are highly motivated by coupons, discounts, and access to special programs. They value connecting with their employers, coworkers, brands, and causes they support.

## Pathway Considerations

Wage progression is often more important than starting wage. Consider small pathway programs that can lead to immediate wage incentives.

# Empty Nesters



**Turnover Risk**  
Bad Client Match



**Recognition Tips**  
Daily difference



**Incentivize**  
Formal award  
& bonuses

Young retirees or near-retirees that enjoy spending time with their grandchildren, day time television, and sewing. Living on limited income, they also enjoy getting out of the house and shopping for personal care and apparel items.

## Key Benefits

Empty Nesters care about a great client match, a consistent schedule, and earning extra income to generate play money to spoil their grandchildren.

## Where to Recruit

Empty Nesters are likely familiar with what a caregiver is, but unlikely to understand what a job in care can mean for them. You can find this persona online, TV, and in the community at grocery stores, hobby shops, and churches.

## How to Entice

Educate Empty Nesters on the opportunity to help someone in the community, get out of the house, and earn extra income. They care deeply about a good client match so walk through your process to match and orient them to the right person.

## Tips to Engage

Nothing motivates this group more than learning about and getting to know the client's they have the opportunity to work with and the mission behind their work. Keep a tight pulse on the caregiver and patient relationship and focus on the impact they are making in their day-to-day service.

## Pathway Considerations

Pathways are often centered around hours, location, and ensuring they have the skills to serve their assigned client's needs. They are content working as a caregiver, but it's important work doesn't get in the way of time with their grandkids.



# Still Going Strong Retirees



## Turnover Risk

Lack of training for specific client



## Recognition Tips

Daily difference



## Incentivize

Formal award & bonuses

Females in their 60s that enjoy spending time with their grandchildren and getting out of the house. Living on limited discretionary income, they are somewhat concerned about having enough money to retire.

## Key Benefits

Still Going Strong Retirees are attracted to the idea of earning more money while they can, and the opportunity to serve other people, do good, and work a schedule that won't interfere with their family-time. Client match is very important.

## Where to Recruit

They are likely familiar with what a caregiver is, but unlikely to understand what a job in care can mean for them. You can find this persona online, TV, and in the community at grocery stores, hobby shops, and churches.

## How to Entice

Educate Retirees on the opportunity to help someone in the community and earn extra income. Drive home the importance of not only matching them with the right clients, but ensuring they are trained to meet the needs of each client they serve.

## Tips to Engage

Nothing motivates this group more than learning about and getting to know the clients they have the opportunity to work with, and the mission behind their work. Keep a tight pulse on the caregiver and patient relationship and focus on the impact they are making in their day-to-day service.

## Pathway Considerations

This persona worries about not having the skills to do a good job to deliver the care a client or patient deserves. Tailor training to meet the needs of their specific clients as their care needs change.



# Let's Change the **Culture of Care**

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2022 - 2023 National Study



MissionCare  
COLLECTIVE



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For media inquiries or to schedule a network presentation, contact Emily Fagan.

✉ [emily.fagan@missioncare.com](mailto:emily.fagan@missioncare.com)

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