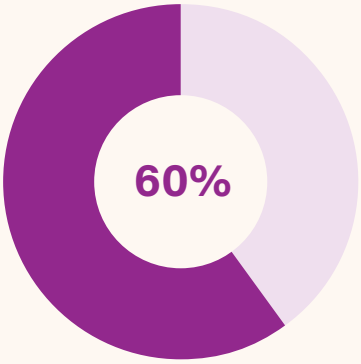
Why NURSING HOME RESEARCH MATTERS

Why conduct research in nursing homes (NHs)?
NHs provide care for a **unique, growing, and underserved population,** and there are opportunities for **practice impact** and **career development.**

A Unique, Growing, and Underserved Population

UNDERSTANDING THE SCOPE

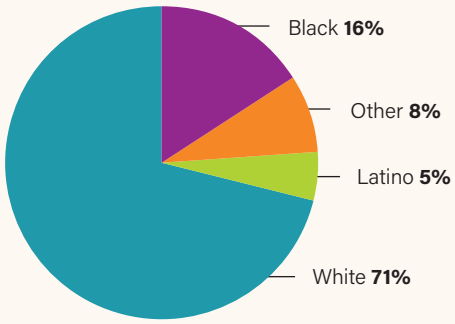
- There are more than 15,000 NHs in the US serving over 4 million people each year; 1.5 million of these individuals are long-term residents.
- Of people age 50 or older, nearly 60% spend time in a NH for short-term rehabilitation (with an average stay of two weeks) or long-term care (with an average stay of two years).



Sixty Percent of People 50 and Older Will Spend Time in a NH

Source: RAND

NH Resident Race and Ethnicity



Source: NPALS

APPRECIATING THE POPULATION

- NH residents represent a unique and increasingly racially diverse cross-section of the population. About 5% of residents are Latino, 16% non-Hispanic Black, 71% non-Hispanic white, and 8% non-Hispanic of another race.
- NHs serve people with complex needs, including individuals living with disabilities, dementia, mental health concerns, and chronic medical conditions.
- NH residents are often underserved due to limited funds, and over 60% are Medicaid beneficiaries.

SUPPORTING THE WORKFORCE

- NHs employ nearly 500,000 direct care workers — largely certified nursing assistants; the majority are people of color and women, many are immigrants, and many live at or near poverty.
- Direct care workers have demanding, low-paying jobs and often experience stress and burnout.
- There is need for interventions focused on staff training and well-being to improve their skills and own quality of life.

NH Direct Care Workers: Socioeconomic Status and Wellbeing



Nearly 6 out of 10 direct care workers in NHs live at or near poverty.

Source: PHI



Nearly 8 out of 10 direct care workers in NHs report high stress at work.

Source: NAHCA

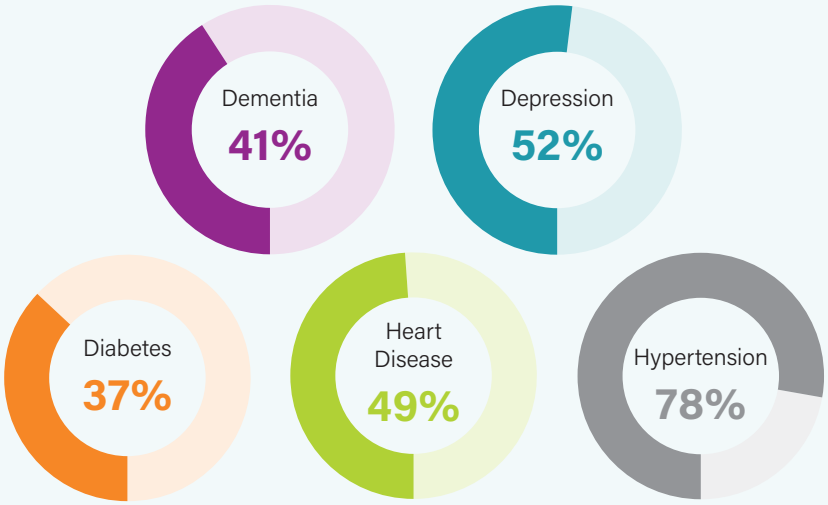
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Practice Impact

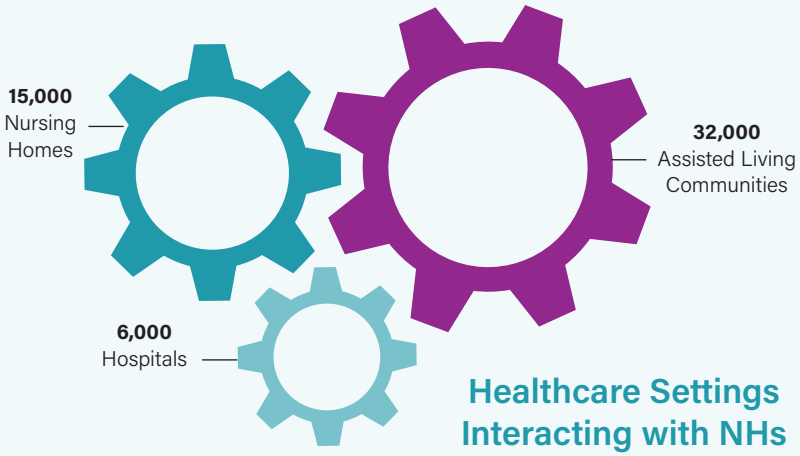
IMPROVING CARE AND OUTCOMES

- Research can address:
  - Acute conditions
  - Chronic conditions
  - Supportive care and activities of daily living
  - Psychosocial care and wellbeing
  - Quality outcomes
- Research can include multiple types of participants — residents, families/care partners, staff, clinicians, organizational leaders, and others.



Common Chronic Medical Conditions among NH Residents

Source: NPALS



Healthcare Settings Interacting with NHs

IMPACTING INTERCONNECTED SETTINGS

- NH residents experience transitions between care settings.
- NH research is applicable to a variety of healthcare and supportive settings, including hospitals and assisted living.
- Clinicians with a variety of specialties, including geriatrics, palliative medicine, neurology, and others, work in and with NHs.

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Career Development

CAPITALIZING ON SCALE AND DATA AVAILABILITY

- Several types of secondary data are available for NH research, including the Minimum Data Set (MDS), the Long-Term Care Data Cooperative (LTCDC), and other electronic health records (EHRs), which are now used in over 80% of NHs. These data can be linked with Medicare and Medicaid claims and other data, constituting a rich dataset.
- New interventions can be efficiently tested at a large scale.

Common Elements in Electronic Health Records (EHRs)



Medication Administration | Vital Signs | Treatment Plans

Key Demential Research Funders, 2026

NIH Annual Funding
$3.9B

Alzheimer's Association Annual Funding
$112M

ACCESSING RESEARCH FUNDING

- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other funders support research for a key NH demographic: persons living with dementia.
- The NIH, primarily through the National Institute on Aging, has a significant dementia-related funding portfolio of up to $3.9 billion annually - nearly 8% of the total NIH budget.
- The Alzheimer's Association and other nonprofit organizations also fund biomedical and psychosocial dementia-related research conducted in NHs.

GROWING RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

- Countless research questions can be studied in NHs, and there are endless opportunities for new lines of inquiry in the field.
- The NEXT STEPs Network provides NH researchers with a variety of resources, including informational webinars, guidance documents, example study materials, experiential learning opportunities, and funding for pilot awards.



