



WHITE PAPER

Caregiver Recruitment & Retention Strategies for Home Care Agencies



AxisCare®

Introduction

In many corners of the job market, it's slim pickings these days – but not for caregivers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, demand for home health and personal care aides is projected to [grow by 22%](#) between 2022 and 2032, far outpacing the average across all occupations.

Demand booms like this one don't happen by coincidence. The Population Reference Bureau reported that the number of Americans aged 65 and up is expected to [jump by 47%](#) between 2022 and 2050, from 58 million to a whopping 82 million. With [92% of older adults](#) expressing a preference for aging in place – i.e. in their own homes – all of this translates to a major need for caregivers.

While demand continues to skyrocket, agencies are encountering an existential problem: it is exceedingly difficult to attract and retain qualified caregivers who will stay with them long-term.

Challenges in Caregiver Recruitment & Retention

The staffing challenges facing agencies today can't simply be traced back to one issue. Rather, it's a mosaic of factors working together.

Inflexible Scheduling

Anyone who prefers remote or hybrid work will not be a good fit for this type of career or will phase out very quickly. Home health services require constant in-person attendance by default, and appointments tend to be quite rigid and time-sensitive; caregivers can certainly bow out of a shift due to unforeseen events, but doing so can create a ripple effect throughout the schedule.

Challenges Cont.

Lack of Professional Development

Most of us spend decades in our chosen careers. Without the opportunity to grow and develop professionally, work can begin to feel stale, repetitive, and demotivating. The demand for specialized training and advancement options has become more pronounced among caregivers, leading them to seek other positions that will broaden their experience and bring new challenges.

Caregiver Turnover

Caregiving jobs place unique physical and emotional demands on employees. Frequently interfacing with chronically ill individuals, constantly commuting between appointments, and pulling irregular hours can all contribute to sky-high turnover rates. According to Home Care Pulse's [2023 benchmarking report](#), the median turnover rate was a whopping 77.1%.

Demographic Shifts

Caregiver retention is a challenge under regular circumstances. However, as mentioned above, the [aging population](#) is further exacerbating the shortage of caregivers and placing additional pressure on home care agencies. While the wave has already begun, it will continue to crash in the coming years, pushing agencies to reexamine their staffing strategies as soon as possible.

Factors Influencing Caregiver Job Satisfaction

Not all caregivers are at risk of burnout or turnover. In fact, many enjoy long and rewarding careers in the industry. Which side of the fence will your employees ultimately fall on? It all boils down to the following factors.

Factors Influencing Caregiver Job Satisfaction Cont.

Working Conditions

This category encompasses all the baseline elements that make up one's career. How much are they being paid, and how [does that pay stack up](#) against competitor agencies? Are they working long or irregular hours, and if so, are they being compensated for overtime? Are there opportunities for promotions and career advancement? Is the work environment conducive to positive employee relationships? If your agency falls short in any of these key categories, it is at risk of caregivers jumping ship for better conditions.

Caregiver-Client Relationships

Both directly and implicitly, clients demand a lot from their caregivers. Providing physical and, oftentimes, emotional support for patients is a taxing job, and it's up to agencies to ensure their teams are equipped. Communication tools like [mobile apps](#) are key for keeping everyone on the same page, and an overarching commitment to operational excellence will help caregivers do their jobs efficiently. By removing friction, respect and appreciation can take its place.

Organizational Support

When issues crop up on the job, do caregivers have a trusted supervisor or teammate that can help them out? Their work is largely independent throughout the day, but they will still need plenty of support from in-office staff.

Social Support & Recognition

Appreciation and recognition go a long way toward boosting motivation. Agencies must demonstrate how they value their teams; appreciation can take many forms. Additional rewards and benefits are arguably essential in addition to a regular salary, and facilitating team-wide social events can create space for caregivers to share thoughts and experiences.

Factors Influencing Caregiver Job Satisfaction Cont.

Job Security & Stability

Though agencies are often the ones scrambling to boost retention, it is still important for employees to trust in the longevity of their jobs. This may be reflected in their contract or even communicated through regular updates about the agency's financial health. Employment stability reduces stress and allows caregivers to focus on providing quality care without concerns about the uncertainty of their position.

Equipment & Resources

Few things are more frustrating than interfacing with technology that just won't work or software you don't understand. Any digital tools placed in caregivers' hands should be incredibly [easy and intuitive to use](#) – if not, they will not be able to perform their duties effectively, and their daily responsibilities will become that much more stressful as a result.

Work-Life Balance

It's important for employees to get a break in burnout-prone roles like caregiving. In the absence of a typical 9-to-5 framework, predictable and consistent shift scheduling can help caregivers plan out their personal responsibilities. Reasonable working hours—with appropriate overtime pay—are important for maintaining relationships outside of work, and plenty of opportunities for rest should be provided.



Recruitment Strategies

Even in a staffing crunch, [finding the right candidate](#) requires more than just throwing a job posting onto an online job board. There are plenty of tools and strategies at your fingertips to ensure you start off on the right foot – and stay there.

Tailored Job Descriptions

Who do you really want to fill each role? Be as specific as you can with your [job descriptions](#), from the type of employee you're looking to attract to what it's like working for your agency. These details will weed out anyone who is bound to be a mismatch before you invest time and money into onboarding and training.

Use Digital Recruitment Technology

[AI recruiting](#) is making it easier for agencies to screen large batches of candidates in less time. Intelligent algorithms can detect qualified candidates based on keyword matching, chatbots can collect basic information instead of involving your admin team, and job matching platforms can match candidates with specialized job openings, among other time-saving tools.



Consider a Paid Trial Period

Trial periods benefit all parties involved. Agencies get a feel for potential candidates without having to involve contracts and large investments, while candidates get to experience life on the job and make an informed decision about their next move. It's important for the trial to be compensated in order to avoid taking advantage of your applicants and potentially violating employment laws.

Implement Referral Programs

Employees who already know what it's like working for your agency are uniquely well-positioned to determine whether a job-seeker they know would be a good fit for an open caregiving role. **Employee referral programs** typically compensate the referrer once their contact has remained employed by the agency for a certain period of time.

Recruitment Strategies Cont.

Apply Marketing Strategies

Aside from your usual selection of job sites, think outside the box to meet recruiters where they are. Post job openings on local Facebook groups and LinkedIn, and consider allocating a small budget to social media ads that target specific demographic groups.

Retention Strategies

Once you've hired strategically, you can move on to the second part of your mission: [retaining your new talent](#). Together, these strategies will create a genuinely compelling company culture that will entice caregivers to stay with your agency for the long haul.

Competitive Compensation & Benefits

Caregiver wages should be competitive compared to other industry players; this is the easiest way for candidates to vet your agency against others. You should also offer all of the baseline [benefits one might expect from their employer](#), including extended health insurance, retirement plans, and paid time off.

Training & Development Opportunities

Caregivers will stick around for longer if they feel like they can grow within their role. That doesn't just mean aiming for a promotion – [training and development programs](#) are a great way to facilitate continuous learning and create an even more skilled team in the process.

Recognition & Appreciation Programs

Creating occasions and celebrations to mark milestones and achievements is a great way to keep morale high. Awards, appreciation events, and personalized tokens of recognition can take on many forms, from typical monetary bonuses to extra PTO, team meals, and subsidies for lifestyle items like gym memberships and gas.

Retention Strategies Cont.

Clear Career Paths

If an employee is going to stick around for the long haul, it's because they see a bright and rewarding future with their employer. Make sure your caregivers are always aware of what their next career step will be, including frequent check-ins, performance reviews, and goal-setting meetings.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

It's normal for employees in this line of work to become overwhelmed by the weight of their responsibilities. To intervene against negative feelings before they spin out of control, provide confidential counseling and support services for caregivers facing personal or work-related challenges.

Flexible Scheduling

In-home caregiving is unique in that it must work around patients' schedules. This requires agencies to be flexible with their shift assignments, which can actually work to their benefit. Not everyone is looking for a 9-to-5 job, so offering flexible scheduling can broaden your pool of candidates while giving caregivers a greater sense of autonomy.

Technology & Innovation in Caregiver Management

None of these recruitment and retention game-changers would be possible without the help of home care technology. Here's how modern solutions are swooping in to help agencies perform at their best.

Care Coordination & Communication

Centralized platforms serve as a connection point between caregivers, healthcare professionals, and families, enabling real-time communication and collaboration. Features like [HIPAA-compliant chat](#) and [user-friendly mobile apps](#) keep the flow of information seamless and secure.

Technology & Innovation Cont.

Scheduling & Workforce Management

[Automated scheduling tools](#) consider factors like route optimization, skills matching, and patient preferences to pair caregivers with open shifts. When unexpected changes occur, administrators can easily get an overview of their schedule and instantly reassign shifts.

Electronic Health Records (EHRs)

Health records are no use to mobile caregivers if they're stuck in a filing cabinet. EHR systems streamline documentation management, ensuring practitioners always have access – and can contribute – to accurate and up-to-date records.



Virtual Support & Teleconsultations

In many cases, it's not necessary for patients receiving care at home to go all the way to a hospital or clinic for a check-up. Teleconsultation services make it possible for practitioners to connect with them remotely, delivering guidance and support without the inconvenience.

Quality Assurance & Performance

Home care technology makes it easy to keep your finger on the pulse and [grow your agency](#) in the right direction. Dashboards and analytics tools help monitor caregiver performance, assess patient satisfaction, and identify areas for improvement.

Real Time Application: Recruitment & Retention Integrated With Technology

[Family Resource Home Care](#) started shopping for a home care software solution when the leadership team noticed staff dreading their daily tasks. Loading times and the sheer amount of clicks it took to accomplish routine functions were creating serious friction.

They vetted 22 different solutions, and AxisCare took the cake. Since making the switch, the agency has seen a significant increase in shift count hours per week and their caregiver census, and they feel better positioned to expand and add franchise locations. They owe this success to:

- Simplicity of [scheduling with “real-time view”](#)
- Allowing caregivers to set their preferred work hours, leading to a higher retention rate across locations and record-breaking hours billed for the company
- [Robust reporting features](#) and functionality to make informed business decisions while scaling their business
- [Custom forms](#) that save hours of data entry

Conclusion

Despite rising demand for home care, agencies are clearly facing significant attraction and retention challenges. Inflexible scheduling, lack of professional development, and high turnover rates all contribute to sparse staffing, underscoring the need for a new wave of solutions. Getting on board with technological advancements like AI recruitment, digital communication platforms, and scheduling management is the only way to overcome these existential issues.

AxisCare can perform all of these functions and more. [Book a live demo](#) to explore how our software can work for your agency.

References & Resources:

- [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)
- [Population Reference Bureau: Fact Sheet - Aging in the United States](#)
- [Forbes Health: Aging in Place Statistics and Facts In 2024](#)
- [Home Care Pulse: 2023 Benchmark Report](#)
- [Navigating the Effects of an Aging Population on Home Care](#)
- [The Impact of Caregiver Hourly Rates on Retention](#)
- [AxisCare Caregiver Mobile App](#)
- [An A-Z Guide to Finding, Recruiting, & Retaining Your Perfect Caregiver](#)
- [How to Write a Caregiver Job Description](#)
- [AI Revolution: Streamlining Caregiver Recruitment & Hiring](#)
- [7 Benefits to Attract & Retain Home Caregivers](#)
- [Tip Sheet: 7 Reason Why Caregiver Training Matters](#)
- [HIPAA Compliant Chat](#)
- [Home Care Scheduling Software](#)
- [Family Resource Home Care - AxisCare Case Study](#)
- [Home Care Software BI Tool](#)
- [Custom Forms](#)