

ISSUE 2 2020

ARGENTUM QUARTERLY

THE NEW SENIOR LIVING WORKER

Shaping the post-COVID-19
future of workforce, culture,
engagement, and leadership

STATE OF THE SENIOR LIVING WORKFORCE

Workforce data and
the effect of COVID-19

Jobs, Hours, and Wages
2020 Q1

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ARGENTUM AND ONSHIFT PARTNERSHIP

The Argentum and OnShift partnership began in 2016 to advance the development of data-driven research, innovative resources, and best practices to give senior living providers new tools and insights to improve workforce strategies. This report is a result of that relationship.

ABOUT ONSHIFT

OnShift's next-generation human capital management platform fundamentally transforms the relationship between healthcare organizations and their employees. Our innovative approach to recruitment, hiring, scheduling, and engagement fosters a culture where people want to work. That's why thousands of healthcare organizations rely on OnShift's integrated suite of software and services to dramatically reduce turnover rates, decrease costs, and improve the quality and continuity of care. For more information, visit onshift.com.

ABOUT ARGENTUM

Argentum is the leading national association exclusively dedicated to supporting companies operating professionally managed, resident-centered senior living communities and the older adults and families they serve. Since 1990, Argentum has advocated for choice, independence, dignity, and quality of life for all older adults. Argentum member companies operate senior living communities offering assisted living, independent living, continuing care, and memory care services. Along with its state partners, Argentum's membership represents approximately 75 percent of the senior living industry—an industry with a national economic impact of nearly a quarter of a trillion dollars and responsible for providing over 1.6 million jobs. These numbers will continue to grow as the U.S. population ages. Argentum's programs and initiatives are driven by its membership. For more information about joining Argentum, please visit argentum.org/membership. Learn more at argentum.org.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

From the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, while doing all the minute-by-minute work the crisis demands, leaders also have been identifying what's temporary, what's a signal of future changes, and what endures. To move toward some clarity, in this *Argentum Quarterly* we've collected insights and information—based on what experts say and data indicate—to begin to form a composite profile of the new senior living worker, what they want, what they need, and how to hire and lead them.

The flexibility and responsiveness to their real-life needs that workers sought before the crisis have zoomed up in demand. It may be hard to put that genie back in the bottle—and there may be no need to. OnShift looks at flexible scheduling as a win-win worth cultivating, and smart reasons to use real-time earnings programs, on pages 4 through 6.

Help with education, already prized by these workers, may become an even bigger draw if there are continued hardships with the economic recovery. Trilogy Health Services outlines its leading work in this area on page 7.

An extraordinary result of the crisis was how quickly senior living reached out to new and displaced workers, encouraging exploration of the industry through programs such as FastMatch, a collaboration among Arena, Argentum, ASHA, and OnShift (page 9).

To make the best of this environment takes thinking beyond typical job skill sets and Burning Glass Technologies provides a framework (page 11). Morrison Living learned that culture makes job changes work (page 13). And demographics tell us more new workers will be age 50+; Boston College's Cal Halvorsen provides a preview of what we'll need (page 17).

Finally, the pandemic has put leadership to the test. Executive recruiters at MedBest give a look at their challenges (page 18).

"The good news is, every crisis does have an end," says Eric McNulty, associate director of Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative, interviewed on page 19.

"As leaders, we should be thinking not just about today but about two months, six months, a year down the road. That's part of leading, versus managing the crisis. The tools you have at your disposal are information and empathy."

Here's wishing us all an abundance of both.

Sara Wildberger
Editor

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Argentum Quarterly welcomes submissions of research, analysis, thought leadership, and insights from upper-level executives from our industry, peers in other industries, consultants, academics, and other subject matter experts. We also welcome proposals for short book and article reviews. **Please contact the editor directly at swildberger@argentum.org** to determine its suitability. Some articles are commissioned by invitation. Editorial contributors are not paid, nor do they pay for inclusion.



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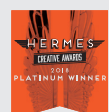
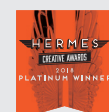
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STAFFING LESSONS LEARNED IN UNPRECEDENTED TIME

Communication, flexibility, and visibility are critical, today and tomorrow



By Mark Woodka
CEO
OnShift

"Being challenged in life is inevitable; being defeated is optional."

This quote from Roger Crawford, one of the most accomplished physically challenged athletes in history, is what I think about after every call I have had with senior living providers.

With the COVID-19 pandemic comes ever-changing daily staffing issues. As the disease spread and states shut down, the fear of getting infected led employees to quit, while changing home dynamics increased employee call-offs by as much as 50 percent.

However, even in these unprecedented times, what sets senior living providers apart from other industries is a shared and unwavering commitment to the safety and needs of their residents and employees. It is more than work—it's a mission, it's a family.

The level of support the senior living industry is providing their workforce during this difficult time provides inspiring examples: The provider who, after schools and daycares closed, created an in-house daycare so parents could continue to work. Or the community that began providing staff with take-home meals so they could avoid grocery stores and cooking at the end of the day. And the many organizations that implemented staff-only pantries, stocked with essential but hard-to-find goods such as toilet paper and disinfectants.

The caring spirit and resilient nature of this industry shines brightest in times of crisis. However, no crisis will be as impactful on the relationships with employees than COVID-19.

Some experts believe this virus will continue to impact our lives in some way for over the next two years. In response, the industry will be forced to create a new normal. In order to be successful, we must recognize how critical communication, flexibility, and visibility are—today and in the future.

COMMUNICATION: FEEDBACK INCREASES

For staff to feel safe, they need to feel informed. Many providers have made this a priority; this is demonstrated by a 27.5 percent increase in employee messages sent through OnShift from February to March.

This ability to communicate in real-time has also helped corporate leadership stay connected to their communities by providing vital real-time updates on important safety changes and policy updates, as well as much-deserved appreciation for the amazing work their employees are doing day in and day out.

In addition, many providers have committed to getting more consistent feedback from their staff members to address any concerns they may have. In March alone, we've seen an astounding 300 percent increase in the number of surveys sent.

A flexible approach is obviously vital during a crisis, but it's also something we need to be serious about expanding as our new normal takes shape...and the industry looks to recruit from the newly created talent pool of displaced workers.



27.5%

Increase in employee
messages sent from
February to March

300%

Increase in number
of surveys
sent in March

7.7M

Travel and leisure
jobs lost*

*Source: CNBC as of May 8, 2020

These surveys have been used to ensure employees feel safe and to get insight into the personal challenges their employees are facing. Providers are stepping up to help however they can and becoming more flexible to their employees' needs.

In other words, they're not just measuring—they're proactively supporting their employees.

FLEXIBILITY: HERE TO STAY

This support includes expanding leave policies and implementing new programs to support their staff. Providers are thinking beyond traditional 8-hour shifts and moving to flexible shift times of 2, 4, or even 12 hours to accommodate schedules. They're continuously documenting availability and shift preferences to help create staff schedules that meet the ever-changing needs.

This empathetic nature and flexible approach are obviously vital during a crisis, but it's also something we need to be serious about expanding as our new normal takes shape. Flexible scheduling has been an expectation of the workforce for years. And as the industry looks to recruit from the newly created talent pool of displaced workers, we must be ready to accommodate this need.

VISIBILITY: AN ENGAGEMENT BOOSTER

In order to balance and effectively execute this expectation, managers need real-time visibility into staffing not just today, but tomorrow and the next day. They need to understand who is available in the event of a last-minute shift opening. They need the ability to monitor occupancy levels and resident care needs to effectively align staffing. They also need the ability to monitor overtime, not just to control costs, but reduce employee burnout.

Visibility must be extended to staff as well. Having real-time access to view their schedules can help staff better balance work and life responsibilities and quickly communicate when the two are in conflict. This helps make the scheduling process more collaborative and boosts engagement by giving a staff a much desired say in when they work.

At the start of this crisis, many thought leaders within the industry began echoing the same sentiment: The providers that come out of this successfully will be the ones who best supported their staff. But I believe that it's those who continue to support their staff well after this crisis that can truly call themselves successful.

Communication, flexibility, and visibility need to continue to be a part of the employee experience. With a focus on these three key elements providers will never be defeated, no matter what challenges lie ahead.

MYTHBUSTING: WHY MORE OPTIONS FOR MORE FREQUENT PAY MAKE MORE SENSE NOW

By Mark Woodka, CEO, OnShift

Today more than ever before, senior living employees are feeling an immense amount of stress. Not only are they concerned about the health and safety of the residents they serve, but also about the well-being of their families.

Unemployment has grown at an unprecedented rate, shifting the financial dynamics of many families of those that work within senior living. This, along with a growing trend of other industries providing their employees more frequent wages access, has many within senior living evaluating this as an option to help their staff today and into the future.

But there are still some common misconceptions and concerns among those considering these options. Here are some of our findings, to help determine if this type of program is right for your organization.

We already have an employee assistance program. I'm not sure our employees need or will use this.

Providing access to wages between paychecks is an added perk for employees and is often used to supplement their current EAP programs. We have found that employees use it often. So far this year, employees of providers that use OnShift Wallet have accessed in excess of \$15 million, and more than 90 percent of users would recommend it to a friend or colleague.

I worry that giving employees this type of access to wages doesn't promote financial responsibility.

The fact of the matter is that many senior living employees are living paycheck to paycheck. And as unexpected expenses arise—as they have during the current COVID-19 crisis—employees might otherwise be forced to rely on costly alternatives. In fact, 73 percent of users say that having access to their wages has helped them avoid a bank overdraft, late payment, payday loan, or other fee.

We don't have time to take on this process.

The process is surprisingly simple. Employees can access their wages between paychecks using a mobile app. For organizations, it is executed through an integration with your current time and attendance and payroll system. There is no change to your existing processes and wages are processed and distributed as normal.

EARNED-WAGE ACCESS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

PayActiv is one of the largest providers of employer-sponsored earned-wage access. An online survey of more than 12,000 of their users, conducted March 17 to March 18 through their app, got the following results:

- 82 percent of workers were more worried about financial issues than their health
- 67 percent of workers were concerned about seeking payday lenders and accessing credit to meet their daily needs
- 60 percent of workers had no paid sick leave, employee insurance, or coverage
- 58 percent of workers have seen their expenses increase during this time

PAYMENT EXPECTATIONS CHANGING

Between 2019 and 2024, real-time payments are anticipated to go up (at compound annual growth rate) 23 percent worldwide and 42 percent in the United States, according to the ACI report “Prime Time for Real Time.”

“As individuals around the world have either refused or been unable to use cash, checks, and even PIN payments, we’ve seen more people, governments, and businesses embracing digital payments—a behavior change likely to continue once the crisis is over,” writes Jeremy Wilmot, group president of ACI Worldwide, in the foreword.

“It’s not hard to imagine a future in which everyone expects real-time payments all the time. Individuals already expect real-time in almost every other part of their daily lives, and payments need to keep up with that expectation.”

EDUCATION: A MAGNET FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE

As learning becomes more expensive and more valuable, offering scholarships and student-loan help becomes a culture-boosting benefit

Maintaining a skilled, engaged, and compassionate workforce is the most critical component to the success of any senior living community. Fostering and retaining that kind of team ensures better care, better service, and personal relationships with residents that enrich lives and contribute to a family-like culture.

But as every senior living leader knows, recruitment and retention are an ongoing challenge—with some campuses experiencing turnover rates as high as 70 percent, as employees move to competing providers, different health care settings, or other business sectors.

Investing in employee education and development is an effective strategy to not only reduce turnover, but to help build and shape a team that delivers on an organization's mission and promise to its residents and families. According to the 2019 LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report, 94 percent of employees say they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their learning and development. Additional research cited in the *Harvard Business Review* shows a satisfied workforce is associated with happier customers, particularly in industries like health care.

For those who may be considering adding or expanding education-related resources for their workforce, here are a few ideas to consider.

APPRENTICESHIPS: POWERFUL DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Apprenticeship programs can help full- and part-time employees build career-relevant skills while they're on the job. These programs give employees an opportunity to grow within their position and, with each step, gain more expertise, more earning potential, professional certifications, and even college credit.

In nursing, apprenticeship programs might enable employees to earn their nurse aide certification, dementia certification, and specialty certifications like advanced CNA, geriatric, safety, qualified medication aid (QMA), and preceptor certifications. Beyond clinical positions, senior living organizations can make available apprenticeships with nationally recognized certifications for their culinary, hospitality, and life enrichment teams, as well.

At Trilogy Health Services, apprenticeships have been a powerful workforce development tool. Since launching the Fast Track Apprenticeship program three years ago, more than 6,000 employees have completed more than 7,000 certifications in the program, earning pay increases of \$0.25 to \$1 per hour for each certification. We're proud to have an 84 percent retention rate among employees completing at least one certification with us.

Given the success of our apprenticeships, in 2019 we developed the Trilogy Scholar Program to partner with area high schools and create a



By Todd Schmiedeler
Senior vice president
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Trilogy has found its repayment program to be very popular among employees. More than 1,200 employees participate, and those who receive student loan repayment assistance stay with the company nearly 2.5 years longer.

WHAT NEW WORKERS WANT

workforce pipeline. Interested juniors and seniors complete an externship before beginning a paid position where they gain on-the-job experience and can earn college credit, certifications, paid college tuition, and scholarship opportunities. The goal is to develop a pipeline of skilled staff members to meet local health care workforce needs.

Trilogy has joined Argentum's Health Care Apprenticeship Expansion Program, a four-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Labor to build and expand apprenticeships in senior living nationwide.

TUITION SUPPORT: A PROVEN VALUE

Tuition support programs empower employees to expand their education, thereby achieving a higher level of personal fulfillment and increased job satisfaction. For some organizations, these programs might focus on coursework related to an employee's job, such as nursing or culinary work. Or the program might allow coursework in any field, understanding that the investment in employees' educational interests is an investment in job satisfaction and retention.

What does tuition support look like? It could be scholarships for employees, and potentially their dependents, as they pursue academic degrees. Tuition reimbursement is another option—offering financial assistance to employees who have paid out of pocket for college tuition while they are working.

Organizations in health care and beyond have proven the value of these programs. A 2016 study by Cigna showed that every dollar the company put into its education reimbursement program was returned and generated an additional \$1.29 in savings thanks to lower talent management and recruitment costs. The results led the company to increase its investment in tuition assistance.

At Trilogy Health Services, there was an 83.8 percent retention rate among almost 3,000 employees who were awarded scholarships in 2019.

Providing free online education programs is another, flexible option to help employees advance their education, and one that may become more important now and in the immediate future. In 2019, Trilogy Health Services began offering free tuition through Purdue Global's online program. While it's still early to determine the workforce impacts, it's telling that within just nine months there were more than 500 employees enrolled in the program.

LOAN REPAYMENT: A RETENTION-BUILDER

Senior living organizations might also look at repaying employees' existing student loan debt as a way to foster satisfaction and retention. According to the National Student Nurses' Association,



Trilogy staff celebrate scholarships, dependent scholarships, and student loan help.

more than 70 percent of nursing students use loans to help pay for their education. In 2020, national student loan debt reached nearly \$1.6 trillion.

A repayment program allows organizations to make regular contributions to help pay down a student's principal loan balance. These programs are becoming more popular nationwide, with Society for Human Resource Management reporting the number of companies offering student loan repayment doubled from 4 percent to 8 percent between 2018 and 2019.

Trilogy has found its repayment program to be very popular among employees. More than 1,200 employees participate, and those who receive student loan repayment assistance stay with the company nearly 2.5 years longer.

LOOKING AHEAD

Investing in employee education and training means investing in a skilled and satisfied workforce, which ultimately leads to better care for America's seniors. We will continue to look for innovative ways to serve our employees, including direct admission to nursing schools and developing stackable apprentice programs for long-term career advancement. Research shows these programs work and can give an organization an edge over the competition in recruitment and retention, particularly in a tight market for talent.

Todd Schmiedeler is senior vice president, foundation and workforce development, for Trilogy Health Services, which offers a full range of personalized senior living services, from independent and assisted living to skilled nursing and rehabilitative services, in over 110 senior living communities throughout Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan.

HOW TO BUILD IT WHILE FLYING IT

What qualities and capabilities prepare an organization for fast, innovative, and purposeful action?

In the middle of the COVID-19 crisis, an industry collaboration stood up a job-matching site to help displaced workers explore senior living jobs, in the space of a few days. What kinds of qualities and capabilities can prepare an organization for fast, innovative, and useful action?

As COVID-19 disrupted operations across the country, members pointed to significant staffing needs, for caregivers, servers, security, house-keeping, and more. Argentum put in action a plan to reach furloughed and laid-off hospitality, retail, and restaurant workers who share many of the skills and competencies we need in senior living. Senior Living FastMatch, a talent matching platform, was created in a few days by adapting Arena's Talent Discovery product.

FastMatch is open to all and free through September 2020. The FastMatch link and instructions live on the Senior Living Works website (**seniorliving.works**), which is open to the public. Instructions for job seekers and employers, a concise toolkit for employers created by OnShift, and Senior Living Works' description of the different types of jobs and careers in senior living also live there.

Since its launch, on April 7, over 900 communities are using FastMatch, with an additional 1,500 communities in line to come onto the platform. The platform is experiencing more than 2,000 applicants per day, and that number is expected to increase to 10,000 or more a day over the next few weeks.

Responding quickly with actionable solutions is a valuable skill set, one that requires a company culture infrastructure to thrive. In a phone interview, Arena CEO Michael Rosenbaum breaks it down, looking at some of the tactics the company encourages to stay innovative and nimble.

START WITH A NEED

The technology that sits behind FastMatch was a product we had in beta, being used by a handful of clients who knew that the product wasn't fully baked. Part of their role as a "beta customer" was to talk to us and give some feedback and recognize that we were going to tweak it to make it work better.

We had deployed the original product back in 2019, because some clients were asking for it. We had a handful of clients come to us and say, *is there any way that we could point this idea at folks who might not even know about senior living?* It was being used primarily for licensed clinicians.

The other thing that had happened last year is that we had expanded into restaurants, hiring about 100,000 people a year at places like Taco Bell or Applebee's.

When the coronavirus crisis started happening, senior living clients told us we needed to ramp up—serving meals in rooms, for instance, was going to require a lot more folks in that job function. We were hearing that consistently across assisted living, skilled nursing, and hospitals, actually.



Michael Rosenbaum
Founder and CEO
Arena

The assumptions about the way the world worked even 90 days ago don't hold true anymore and might not hold true again. The question is, can you recognize that your initial assumptions are wrong? And how long does it take you to do it?

In mid-March, everything sort of exploded. We wanted to be part of the solution—to do our civic and patriotic duty to help. So we said, *we're not going to charge for this; we're going to offer it for free.*

COLLABORATE WITH THE RIGHT PARTNERS

Having sort of an ecosystem of many organizational relationships makes it a little easier to figure out who could be a good partner. We had a preexisting relationship with the Argentum team. It's harder for a trade organization to be as nimble as a tech company, but we knew Argentum was on the positive end of that spectrum and could be nimble and creative. It made it easier to invest the time, brand, and reputational capital in that relationship.

KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING, LONG-TERM

We've always had a pretty clear view of what Arena is looking to do long-term: In aspirational terms, we want to rewire how the labor market works, how hiring decisions get made, how people apply to jobs, how people get promoted, how people get transferred—so it's not just a guessing game anymore.

When the motivation meets up with your long-term strategy—and it also plugs into something you already had on hand that could be modified or adapted—it makes decisions easier.

DEFINE YOUR ASSETS EXPANSIVELY

This goes beyond a tech idea. I'm not a senior living provider, so take it for what it's worth, but for an assisted living provider, one of the key assets could be the relationships with the families and residents. That relationship is incredibly valuable. It would allow that provider to utilize the passions and talents of the families much more effectively if they were seeking face masks, for instance—they might help make them.

Another asset might be the actual physical real estate, a beautiful building in an attractive location. That creates financial options. The brand and all the employees can be a massive asset. It's thinking about existing assets creatively and also looking at the intangibles.

QUESTION ASSUMPTIONS

One thing that certain organizations have that's very helpful is a culture that allows questioning of assumptions. The assumptions about the way the world worked even 90 days ago don't hold true anymore and might not hold true again. The question is, can you recognize that your initial assumptions are wrong? And how long does it take you to do it?

Basically, if anyone had any reasonable idea, we would give them time and money. Not a lot, but a little bit. Then we would look at what happened. The stuff that works, we would do more of, and the stuff that didn't work, we would stop doing. We just did it very fast. It lets Arena pivot very quickly and respond to changes.

And allow yourself enough intellectual humility to recognize that you need to do something different. A lot of times you rely on your past experience to make judgments about what you should do. And given how dramatically things have changed and how dramatically they're likely to change over the next couple of years, that experience may or may not inform what the right call is. What we do is use data, not so much as the answer, but to raise questions and to allow us to challenge assumptions we may have had last week. It's not only intellectual humility, but humility in the face of data.

PRACTICE POSITIVE TRANSPARENCY

No matter how intellectually humble each of us may be, it's very hard to not be somewhat wedded to what you're working on. So departments can see each other's data. To have someone who isn't in the weeds of what you're doing look at your numbers and ask—not in a critical way—but to say: *In your last report you said X, and these numbers look a little off from that. Do you know why?* Again, that level of internal quantitative transparency allows us to question assumptions.

THREE PRIMARY PRACTICES

First, leaders set the tone in so many ways, so it's important they feel comfortable with the culture and, frankly, are incentivized to support that culture.

The second is the data: Making sure that the data is transparent and visible across the organization so that there are systems in place that are collecting the data, reporting the data, and can be accessed by not just the direct users, but others in the organization that may be more tangential to it.

Third is communication. Particularly in this environment. We probably over-report, but now we're doing an all-hands call with various report-outs and using the ability for anyone to ask a question anonymously. By creating that space, it creates an environment where asking a question isn't the exception. It's normal.

BUILDING A SUPPLY CHAIN FOR THE SKILLS YOU'LL NEED TOMORROW

A look at the New Foundational Skills approach and how it can increase resiliency

In 2018, Burning Glass Technologies formulated the New Foundational Skills for the Digital Economy with the Business-Higher Education Forum. Based on an analysis of 56 million resumes and more than 150 unique job postings, the project identified 14 skills that increase in value over time, and shared the information with educators, employers, and employees. Not everyone will need all the skills, and some of the skills such as “managing data” or “analyzing data” are done routinely in the digital environment of health care, such as tracking vital statistics and managing health records, and even in culinary and environmental services more often than one might think.

The company divided the 14 skills into three categories: Human, digital, and business. Workers who have skills from all three groups had a significant advantage in salaries and job titles. Yet only about one-fifth of workers have skills in all three categories. Growth in demand for “human skills” increased from 2012 to 2017: Communication by 27 percent; critical thinking by 31 percent; and collaboration by 46 percent.

This email Q&A with Burning Glass CEO Matt Sigelman gives ideas on how the skills approach can widen opportunities.

Q. Can you give us the basics on the 14 foundational skills? Have they changed?

A. The best source on the New Foundational Skills is the report created with the Business-Higher Education Forum, at burning-glass.com/research.

They fall into three categories:

- **Human Skills** apply social, creative, and critical intelligence to problems. These skills—critical thinking, creativity, communication, analytical skills, collaboration, and relationship building—are traditionally considered “soft skills.”
- **Digital Building Block Skills** include analyzing data, managing data, software development, computer programming, and digital security and privacy. Importantly, these are increasingly useful well beyond the kinds of jobs that traditionally would have been considered digitally intensive. These skills are especially important for anyone whose scope of responsibility involves data-driven decision making or analysis.
- **Business Enabler Skills** allow the other skills to be put to work in practical situations and include project management, business process, communicating data, and digital design.

The methodology in the report details how these skills were identified, but, overall, these are skills in high demand, common to “digitally intensive” roles, and rapidly spreading to sectors not usually viewed as technology driven.

I don’t believe the specific New Foundational Skills we identified would be any different today from those we identified two years ago, but I do think their importance has grown. The economic shock from the coronavirus pandemic is likely to accelerate the trends toward automation and digitalization that were already under way.



Matt Sigelman
CEO
*Burning Glass
Technologies*

One of the advantages of the New Foundational Skills, particularly the human skills, but also business skills such as project management and the ability to communicate data, is that they’re useful in a crisis. I’ve never heard of a crisis where communication, collaboration, and critical thinking weren’t essential.

Q: What are some benefits and obstacles to taking this approach—is it easy to implement, does it involve culture change?

A. It does involve an element of culture change. Historically, companies get their talent on the spot market: they have an opening, they advertise it, and choose from the candidates who apply. If they are dissatisfied with the choices available to them, they may hire a recruiter. But rarely do they think about what skills their organizations will need in the long run or how they build a supply chain now for the skills they will need tomorrow.

In our work with companies, we find more and more of them are thinking in terms of talent strategy, instead of just filling openings. In other words, employers are thinking carefully about the skills they will need, whether their current workforce has them, and if not, where they will get those skills.

That said, a great many companies still don't have a clear view of their own workforce, in terms of understanding what skills they really have. So it is difficult for them to know how to advance. Forward-thinking firms are starting to use data analysis to find this out.

Another encumbrance is the availability of effective credentialing and assessment vehicles. An applicant may have accrued a skill that is much-needed for a company, but if there aren't good indicators that the applicant has that skill, it will be hard for the employer to know.

There is a significant opportunity for industry associations to develop common credentialing mechanisms that work at the skill-level, not just the occupational level. The senior living industry is no exception.

Q. With the pandemic, senior living has put in many restrictions to protect older adults' health—that is, interviewing and training can't be done on-site. Does skills matching make virtual onboarding and training faster and smoother?

A. It certainly should. Using skills adjacencies allows an employer to measure the distance that needs to be covered in terms of training and to precisely identify what new employees need to know. That allows the employer to make more precise, more cost-effective choices in its learning and development programs.

Q. Do you think crisis situations such as the current pandemic can advance the foundational skills concepts and approaches? How far into the future do you see its utility extending?

A. One of the criteria we used in selecting the skills was their durability: that they are useful to a worker throughout their careers.

One of the advantages of the New Foundational Skills, particularly the human skills, but also business skills such as project management and the ability to communicate data, is that they're useful in a crisis. I've never heard of a crisis where communication, collaboration, and critical thinking weren't essential.

But overall, I think the pandemic is going to accelerate existing trends in the workforce, which are the same trends that raised the New Foundational Skills in the first place.

Q. One immediate industry challenge is helping workers from culinary, housekeeping, food services, and the hotel industry to move to senior living, taking on comparable roles. Do you have any advice on using skill sets in this process?

A. I'm glad to hear the senior living industry is taking such a farsighted approach. The good news is that there is a lot more overlap in skill sets than many people expect.

A lot of people don't even think about changing industries—just as many employers don't think about recruiting people from other industries—because they don't know the opportunities are there. So just by recognizing the opportunity, the senior living industry is ahead of the game.

One thing that should help is thinking about what roles in these other industries are closest, in the skills required, to the roles you're recruiting for in the senior living industry.

For example, if you need culinary aides, it's logical to recruit from kitchen staff in the hospitality sector. But there is also a fair amount of skills overlap with housekeeping staff. So, with some investment, housekeepers could potentially be trained into culinary aides. It's all about finding the shortest, easiest steps between two jobs.

In addition, our [report on hybrid jobs](#) documents the way in which more and more jobs combine skill sets from different disciplines. It's a key trend in the job market and something senior living executives should consider in their planning.

MORE BENCH STRENGTH, MORE ENGAGEMENT

Commitment to mission helps in times of constant change

By Sara Wildberger

Food service was hard-hit by the pandemic shutdown. The restaurant industry has suffered the most significant losses in jobs and sales in the nation, according to a National Restaurant Association survey, with more than 8 million workers laid off or furloughed since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. School closures and events cancellations have also taken a toll. At the same time, hospital food service and senior living culinary are hit by greater needs for both top-quality food and rigorous infection control.

This shift in needs caused a similar shift in staff and skills—and in the job market.

CEO Barbara Conn of Morrison Living, a hub for senior living well-being services from culinary to environmental and design, recalls the culinary environment before the pandemic, one most in senior living will recognize: unemployment at historic lows, staffing the biggest challenge, and constant vying for entry-level candidates with restaurants, fast-food, and retail.

Companies that wanted to compete had to continually recruit, “often hiring and nurturing a continuous stream of temporary, on-call workers, who were motivated to earn promotion into part- and full-time positions.”

The view of the future is difficult to see clearly and constantly changing. Yet there are some bright spots in the picture.

A POSITIVE SURPRISE

While it would be expected that the COVID-19 pandemic could lead to higher turnover, that’s not necessarily the case with Morrison Living: “Surprisingly, our turnover in the last few months has actually been lower than it was in Q1—and lower than it was over the same period last year,” Conn says.

The reason? “We believe that reflects an unbelievably high commitment to the mission,” Conn says. Across the country, she says, the Morrison team is seeing skyrocketing engagement as they race to introduce

new service models and share in the responsibility of keeping residents—and each other—safe.

“Now the team is focusing their energies on boosting resident morale and engagement,” Conn says. “That’s bringing out a whole new wave of excitement and creativity.”

Morrison has been involved in food donation projects; had chefs give virtual cooking lessons; held poster-waving “courtyard parades” of culinary staff to cheer residents; brought “happy hour carts” door-to-door; and made “smile cards” with motivational quotes and jokes for the food trays delivered to residents’ rooms.

FORECAST STILL CLOUDY

But as this sprint morphs into marathon, maintaining engagement will get more challenging, Conn points out. Challenges of illness, childcare, caring for parents, limited transportation options, and many more special circumstances can all deplete employee resources.

The situation can also reveal new sources of talent, and an opportunity to build bench strength—workers who have a grounding in attention to detail, solving problems, and skills in culinary or housekeeping, for instance.

Morrison Living is able to tap into a rich labor pool through its parent company, Compass Group, where temporary closings of sports venues, schools and universities, and corporate dining venues offered screened associates who wanted to keep working.

While the competitive environment has shifted, it’s not entirely gone, Conn points out. Grocery stores and delivery services are looking for more workers.

Several have pointed out that employers are also in competition with stimulus package money or unemployment, which gives workers a chance to catch their breath and take a look around for a job that really fits.



Barbara Conn
CEO
Morrison Living



Mary Platt
Regional vice president
Morrison Living



Service projects such as delivering healthy food to low-income seniors helps keep the Morrison Living teams strong during uncertain times.

The key, several industry and provider sources say, is not to put on the brakes on reaching out and recruiting, and to emphasize the value- and mission-driven nature of the work.

PULLING THEM INTO THE GAME

According to Mary Platt, regional vice president for Morrison Living, introducing new hospitality workers to the dining team can be beneficial for the whole community. An appropriate training plan and a consistent company culture can ease the transition from serving hot dogs at a ball game to preparing meals for special diets and tastes.

“Candidates from hotels are given a quick-start training plan that introduces them to the aspects that are unique to our communities and the possibility of new career paths,” Platt says. “We’re providing a restaurant-quality experience in a setting that also has an at-home feel and is different from anything they may have experienced.”

The specialized training program exposes the newcomers to care-partner roles, special diets, and varied levels of feeding assistance, among other things.

Meanwhile, existing staff are ready to move into other roles as the new hires become acclimated, also critical in this time. “When a quick-starter joins the team, it can free us up to meet other community needs,” Platt says. “For example, a server on the dining team might then be available to become a resident assistant.”

The pool workers have been with the company exclusively and for the long term; they’re not moving back and forth to other companies and jobs. This presents a safer environment. The experience of taking on new roles in itself can increase engagement, as staff and associates changing roles see new possibilities, and new employees are introduced to senior living career pathways. But at the center of the cycle is mission—what those who stay have in common.

LABOR POOLING AT MORRISON LIVING

- Compass national HR team helps match supply/demand for cooks, servers, etc. by geography across sectors
- A specialized Talent Share team helps available managers fill open positions across the Compass Healthcare sectors
- A mobile app allows Compass hourly associates to get alerts on open shifts or positions nearby
- Workers are with Compass exclusively for the long term and stick with one account

SMOOTH TRANSITIONS WANTED

Investments in future-proof strategies and tactics now will save later

While it may seem like we've been living with COVID-19 challenges for years, the pandemic's direct impact on hiring in senior living started only a few months ago. Yet it has dramatically changed the landscape. And these changes can be seen across all types of roles, processes, and new applicants.

The reality is that no one knows what will happen over the next three months, let alone the next 18 months. It is equally true that select hiring strategies that are critical in response to coronavirus will also be game-changing in almost any future scenario. Consider the following future-proof strategies that will also immediately help you hire faster and more effectively.

INVEST IN SOURCING AND RECRUITMENT MARKETING.

While the time-to-fill improvements from sourcing and recruitment marketing investments are well-documented, COVID-19 has introduced new reasons to tap into unprecedented pools of available talent and attract displaced workers from outside—and even inside—health care.

TWEAK YOUR CAREER WEBSITE.

Your career site is your storefront, the display window that pulls people inside. It's your headline article and the primary way to communicate your brand, open opportunities, and culture. Your career website can act as brand ambassador if designed properly, answering candidate questions even when you cannot. It's also an introduction to senior living for those outside the industry.

VIRTUAL HIRING TOOLS AREN'T OPTIONAL ANYMORE.

When the doors are shut to all visitors, the paper application process is no longer viable. Tools like texting, text-to-apply, video interviewing, video-based I-9 verifications, mobile applications, remote onboarding, and eLearning-based new hire training have become essential.

DON'T STINT ON RECOGNITION.

"Praise and recognition for a job well done" was found to reduce nurse flight risk by 17 percent, according to a 2018 study. Similar studies with CNAs have had comparable results. In an environment where the entire workforce is stressed and potentially moving toward or past "burn out," reward and recognition strategies are critically important.

HAVE A PARTNER READY TO HELP.

Staffing firms that specialize in senior living and post-acute care can be especially helpful in providing an additional bench of fully trained and certified individuals. This is especially important for when employees get sick or face life challenges that require them to stay home.

Coronavirus has disrupted normal hiring volumes and metrics. While it's impossible to predict its full impact, you can act today to mitigate its effects on your hiring speed and quality. By focusing on key strategies that will drive success in this crisis while also delivering value in any post-COVID-19 scenario, you can improve your hiring efficacy today while laying the foundation for a more competitive hiring strategy for tomorrow.



David Wilkins
Chief strategy officer
HealthcareSource

COVID-19 has introduced new reasons to tap into unprecedented pools of available talent and attract displaced workers from outside—and even inside—health care.

SKILLS TRANSFERABILITY: A NARROW GAP TO BRIDGE

Senior living is well placed to recruit and onboard workers displaced during the COVID-19 slowdown. Hospitality, retail, and restaurant workers, who have been furloughed and laid-off in large numbers, have many skills and competencies in demand within senior living occupations.

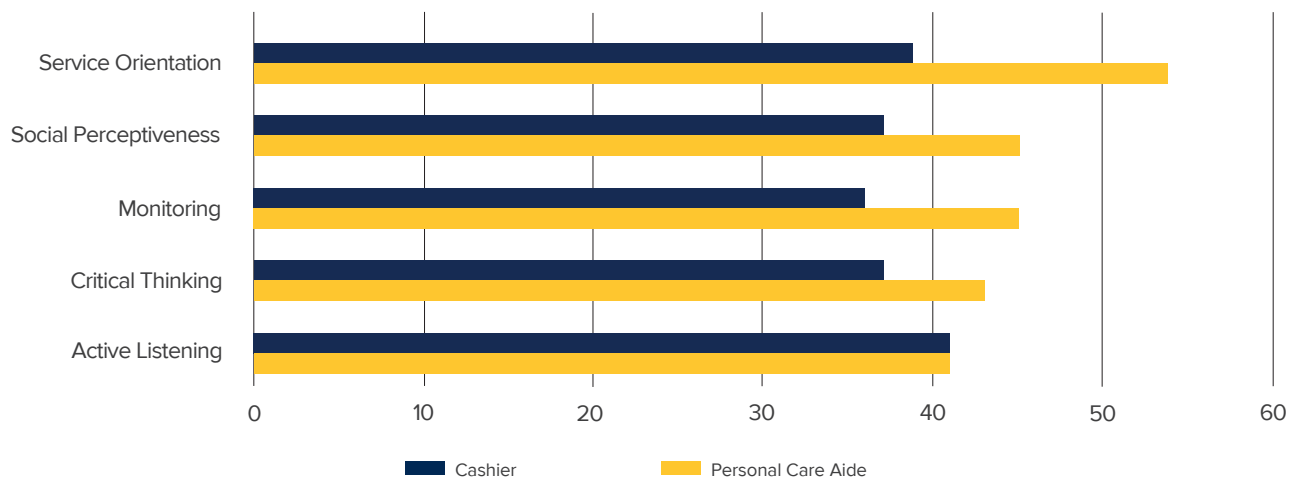
These two examples show the value of skills in occupations. Cashiers and waitstaff have **more than a 90 percent skill match** with personal care aides and nursing assistants. The largest skill

gap is for “service orientation,” which is typically learned on the job. Also of interest: this source of labor may earn lower wages on average than entry-level senior living occupations.

The skills set here comes from the Occupational Information Network, or O*NET Program, a free database of almost 1,000 occupations covering the U.S. economy, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. Specific skills and training would still be needed, but less than for many other occupations.

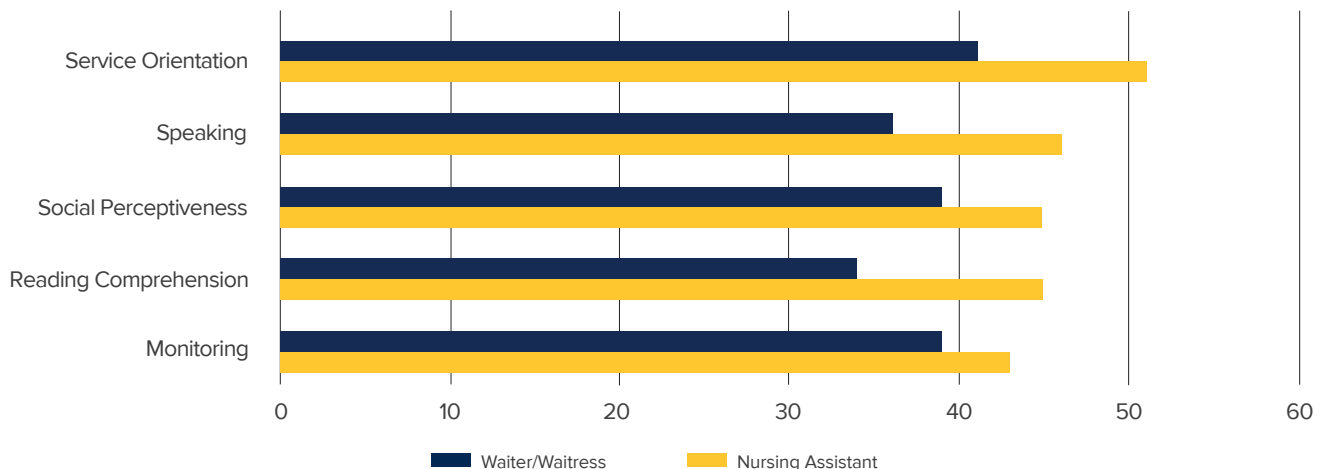
From Cashier to Personal Care Aide

Median Hourly Wage: \$10.78 vs. \$11.53



Waiter/Waitress to Nursing Assistant

Median Hourly Wage: \$10.47 vs. \$13.70



Sources: Emsi Job Posting Analytics

GETTING THE 50+ DEMOGRAPHIC TO WORK

This resource is growing in numbers and importance. What are the keys to tapping in?

Cal J. Halvorsen is an assistant professor at the Boston College School of Social Work and a faculty affiliate of the school's Center on Aging and Work. Examining longer working lives, including purposeful volunteer work and entrepreneurship, is at the heart of his research.

His recent report, "What does it mean to have a society with more older people than younger ones?" is available at encore.org/halvorsen-report. *This is excerpted from a longer conversation.*

"Older workers" are an incredibly diverse group. In a lot of the research, you're looking at people 50 and older, and 50 is quite young. Within this group, you have workers who range from 50 to 60 to 70. The needs differ. And we know that chronological age itself is not the best indicator of health status later in life—overall mental health, physical health. So with that caveat, we definitely do see more older people entering the workforce. This has been on an upward trend for the past a few decades.

People want the opportunity to do good work that is meaningful to them. There's also a growing inequality in this country; a lot of people just frankly cannot afford to retire.

We need to think about how we can reshape the workplace. For example, at BMW, in Germany, they made modifications to the assembly line so people of any age could do their jobs.

One of the key concerns I have through this pandemic—but it existed far before—is ageism. There's a ton of ageism out there. It's hard to prove; it's technically illegal, but it is hard to prove. With so much tech now, there are a lot of stereotypes around older people not being tech-savvy. And I can say

from my personal experience that by and large, they are—we just have to create new opportunities for them to use their skills. Older workers can be just as capable of moving online as younger workers.

In one study, we found some hesitancy to hire older workers or give them advancement opportunities and training, because [managers] felt younger workers would stay around longer. But older workers want to be there for the long haul as well: In other research, we asked older workers interested in new careers how long they expected to be on the job, and they said 10 years. It's definitely worth investing in training and leadership opportunities for them, too.

We did a survey last year and, in the responses, older people also want training and advancement opportunities, but feel they're being pushed aside. Just remind yourself to be as equitable as possible when you are designing these opportunities for training and advancement.

There's been a lot written about how older people can be phenomenal mentors for younger workers. This is absolutely true. But I've even talked to some older workers who have said that they're tired of always being considered the mentors. They also want to learn new things. People want to learn and engage their minds throughout their lives.

One of the best things I've seen is called "reverse mentorship," where younger workers have their own unique experience and skills they can share with older workers. I'd like to think of [mentorship] as reciprocal.



Cal Halvorsen, PhD, MSW

Assistant professor and faculty affiliate
Center on Aging and Work
Boston College

It's worth investing in training and leadership opportunities for older workers as well as for younger ones.

NEW CHALLENGES IN EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Demand for top talent remains strong



Julie Rupenski
CEO
MedBest

Leadership may be the most important asset to a community or company during a crisis. But senior living demands a different kind of leader—one with understanding of concepts such as servant leadership, for instance, and different community cultures.

MedBest is a national executive search firm exclusive to the senior living industry. CEO Julie Rupenski founded the firm in 2001 and is indefatigable in keeping up with changes in the industry. Senior executive Melanie Ginter has among many areas of expertise C-level executive and executive director recruiting. *This is excerpted from a longer conversation.*



Melanie Ginter
Senior executive
recruiter
MedBest

JULIE RUPENSKI: When we call people who would otherwise be open to a change, they may not be during this time—which is admirable. Also, they may be unhappy where they are, but they're nervous about making a job change in this time. If they are open to a change, it's related to what their company is going through.

All we can speak to is how people are reacting. Some are getting out because they feel like they have to, for their health. **Others are feeling more inspired than ever.**

MELANIE GINTER: It's very hard to predict or understand behaviors and actions of others during a pandemic. Things are changing constantly, and what we are seeing today can be different in upcoming weeks and months. At this moment, there definitely seems there has been a shift in mindset, and it's too soon to know if this is a temporary shift or part of our new normal. To add to Julie's point, rather than getting out of the industry, some are taking a time out. They don't necessarily want to abandon the industry or their career path. It seems they are focused on the short-term right now, whether they have concerns for their health, or have a spouse or family member [who is immunocompromised and could be put at risk]. Some are just taking it one step at a time until they figure out their next move.

What we're also kind of seeing from our vantage point is that **how engaged and satisfied employees are with their current companies seems to be strongly correlated to how their organization is handling the situation.** We're seeing some folks who are even more actively looking, and others, as Julie said, who don't want to leave their teams during a crisis. We empathize with both. One question that we asked almost every candidate that we're interviewing is: What is the greatest challenge that you've experienced in your career? And I haven't heard someone respond in any other way than something related to COVID-19.

RUPENSKI: You'll have to be able to make quick decisions, good decisions. **You have to be able to be a strategic thinker: Am I getting the supplies that I need to keep people safe? Is there some creative way I can get them? How do I keep my employees safe while still making sure we're financially sound?** That's not an easy path for anyone. So leaders have to be stronger than ever.

A great example of a strong leader is a Nursing Home Administrator who we placed with a client—he led his team during a hurricane, and he was in a small community with limited resources. He was not going to leave his team during that time. He was working seven days a week. Now he's in a different community, and once again working seven days a week alongside his team. He's a good example of the kind of character you have to have during a crisis.

We're definitely seeing an uptick on our interim solutions side of the business. **More people are stepping up to take on interim positions to help out during this changing environment, and there is a demand for these interim professionals.** As a result, MedBest is beefing up our interim solutions team so that we're ready to help providers anywhere in the United States if we get a call. Our team shares our passion for senior living and are stepping up and working hard to serve during these times.

LEADING THROUGH EMERGENCIES

Lessons from Harvard's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative

The National Preparedness Leadership Initiative (NPLI) at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health offers training programs and research in crisis leadership. Associate director of the NPLI Eric McNulty is also associate director of research for the program of health care negotiation and conflict resolution, instructor at the Chan school, and co-author of several books on leadership as well as case studies of disasters including the Boston Marathon bombing, Hurricane Sandy, and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

He and the NPLI have been offering immediate crisis leadership training online since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, he gives several practices leaders from many different industries and levels can follow. *This is excerpted from a longer conversation.*

A good place to start is to acknowledge what's fairly obvious: **Everybody is operating from a fear-based position.** A big charge for leaders is to help bring people into a more hopeful place: *Yes, things are bad. But we are going to get through this. In fact, we're going to learn as we go through this, and we're going to be better on the other side.*

Be present. Let people see you. Don't hide during a crisis. If you're listening to people, hearing what they have to say and acknowledging their fear, their concerns, perhaps their suggestions—first of all, you'll learn a lot. Second, you'll make a connection that helps people know that you've got their back, that they can trust you, and that you'll be supportive.

Be grateful. Say “thank you” as many times as physically possible. Say thank you to everyone for everything. Thank the sun for shining.

There's research to show this will help keep you in a positive frame of mind. You need to do this genuinely, so people will see that you're seeing what they're doing, and you are grateful for their contributions.

You can say, *I know it's your job, but I appreciate how you do it so well. It's a better organization because you're here, and I'm grateful for that.* Yes, it is their job, but some of them can forget how special it is that they're doing that job.

Practice daily self-reflection. It doesn't have to be an hours-long exercise. It could be spending a few minutes thinking about *when was I at my best today? When was I at my worst?* You'll realize that in these difficult times, none of us are at our best all the time. Yet when you're leading, people are looking to you for a multitude of signals.

To the extent that you can maintain that positive frame of mind, you can regulate your emotions. This is basic emotional intelligence. You'll learn about yourself, but you'll also show up as the leader people need you to be right now.

These are good everyday practices that should go on even after COVID-19 is fading in the rear-view mirror. They're good basic building blocks of being the person other people want to follow, a person they trust and have confidence in.

In emergencies, people often jump to, *what should we be doing?* What you're doing is important, but who you're being is even more important.

When you're being the right person, it makes it easier for others to do the productive things: making sure you're taking care of residents, and adhering to new safety guidelines, and communicating with families.

Dwight Eisenhower quoted an old Army saying: “Plans are worthless, but planning is everything.” Your plan may not exactly fit what's happening, but **the valuable thing is the process.** You went through the process of questioning, thinking through what the challenges are going to be and how to overcome them. The people who have gone through such processes have been doing well with this.



Eric McNulty, MA
Associate director
National Preparedness
Leadership Initiative
Harvard T.H. Chan
School of Public Health

Short takes on articles, media, and books that can expand understanding in the business and practice of senior living

ADDRESSING STRESSORS DURING A TIME OF CRISIS ISN'T OPTIONAL

"Our research shows that right now 54 percent of people in this new normal report **higher stress levels since working from home. Some of the reasons people attribute to their increased stress include more difficulty communicating, pressure to work all the time, and unclear expectation.**

By asking first how employees are doing, you can empathize, gauge stress levels, and use their responses to help solve their immediate health, financial, and emotional needs.

Two major lessons we're learning: You can't communicate too much and people need social times with their teams to foster connection.

As CEO, I didn't think people wanted to hear from me. I thought they needed their direct managers or their department heads to take the lead. To my surprise, internal data taught me the exact opposite. People have questions about the larger environment; they want to know what the company is doing. **I learned that if you feel like you are overcommunicating, you are probably doing the right amount of communicating."**

Qualtrics CEO and co-founder Ryan Smith is [posting a three-part series on leadership](#) in the time of COVID-19, based on data the company is collecting from its pulse surveys: [forbes.com/sites/sap](https://www.forbes.com/sites/sap).

A SWOOSH-SHAPED RECOVERY?

Sharp decline, slow recovery—that's one of the survey results coming from Round 1 of a COVID-19 economic recovery poll collaboration between The Initiative on Global Markets at the Booth School of Business, The University of Chicago (IGM) and FiveThirtyEight, the numbers-crunching opinion poll website.

"Our sample of economists thought it was more likely than not—with an average probability of 54 percent—that **the next quarter to see positive real GDP growth in the United States (relative to the previous quarter) would be the third quarter of 2020.**"

The questions, charts, and information are at igmchicago.org and fivethirtyeight.com/economics.

OPERATIONALIZING VALUES THAT GO BEYOND A POSTER ON THE WALL

"One reason we roll our eyes when people start talking about values is that everyone talks a big values game but very few people actually practice one. It can be infuriating, and it's not just individuals who fall short of the talk. **In our experience, only about 10 percent of organizations have operationalized their values into teachable and observable behaviors that are used to train their employees and hold people accountable.**

Ten percent.

If you're not going to take the time to translate values from ideals to behaviors—if you're not going to teach people the skills they need to show up in a way that's aligned with those values and then create a culture in which you hold one another accountable for staying aligned with the values—it's better not to profess any values at all. They become a joke. A cat poster. Total BS."

Brene Brown's *Dare to Lead* is still at the top of the bestseller lists, and this may be the cultural moment to introduce yourself to her values-based approach to leadership—not least because her website offers online interaction suited to remote work. Join a team reading, take the leadership assessment test, or check out the workbook and podcast links: daretolead.brenebrown.com.

POSSIBLE GOOD SIDE EFFECTS TO TESTING ON THE JOB

"Recent research from [Andrew Dillon](#), clinical associate professor of development economics within Kellogg's Public-Private Interface Initiative (KPPI), suggests that testing employees for an infectious disease can have a surprising impact on their productivity.

[The research team] explored how medical testing and treatment affects job performance when people are particularly concerned about contracting an infectious disease... After learning that they were disease-free, these employees became more physically active on the job and devoted more of their work hours to higher-effort—and higher-paying—tasks."

["How Infectious-Disease Testing Can Improve Employee Performance."](#) KelloggInsight, April 7.



High Impact Hiring Practices for Senior Living Executives

With what seemed like the blink of an eye, the labor market flipped. In the last few months, the number of unemployed workers has nearly quadrupled from February (3.5%) to May (13.3%). And unlike the many industries that have endured layoffs and furloughs, senior living organizations remain in critical need of frontline workers.

This exponential growth of job seekers could provide relief to an industry where 73% of senior care professionals had cited that finding qualified

candidates was a top workforce challenge. “It might not feel like it, but current market conditions present a real opportunity for senior living providers,” says Peter Corless, EVP of OnShift and former human resources leader in senior care. “In fact, many have already found success by broadening their recruiting and hiring efforts to those recently displaced from work.”

This influx of talent has the potential to help reshape and stabilize the senior care workforce. The ability to provide exceptional care and service, control costs and foster a culture that enables future growth all starts by having the right people.

REDEFINING HIRING PROCESSES

To accomplish this, HR executives must elevate hiring to be a competitive advantage for their organization. This is critical because even with the rise in unemployment, competition remains fierce. Hiring strategies need to extend beyond recruitment efforts and include a focus on streamlining processes while prioritizing the candidate experience for best results.

Keep in mind that every interaction a candidate has with a company influences their job selection. “In my experience, you cannot overcommunicate or follow up too quickly,” says Corless. “If

4 HR IMPERATIVES FOR HIRING SUCCESS

A quick guide for human resources leadership

Reach Out To Displaced Workers

In today's labor market, HR professionals must find candidates faster than the competition. To be most effective, job openings should be promoted with a mix of community-level grassroots efforts, social postings, and job boards. To connect with displaced workers, HR leaders should contact local businesses who may have had to furlough or let go their employees. In addition, job postings should be updated to target those job seekers. OnShift's talent acquisition software helps automate job postings to hundreds of job boards and allows openings to be easily shared on social media sites.

Prioritize A Candidate-First Experience

Recent studies cite that 60% of job seekers have had a poor candidate experience. To prevent this, HR leaders should evaluate their current application processes and prioritize a mobile-friendly experience. This includes examining the steps candidates go through to complete an application and simplifying where possible. However, if candidate flow is not an issue, adding qualifying questions can help hiring managers quickly prioritize candidate follow-up.

Connect Quickly & Be Transparent

Connecting with applicants as quickly as possible is critical. Many HR leaders are finding success by text messaging their candidates. Once connected with a candidate, explain the hiring process and lay out the typical hiring timeline to set proper expectations. 58% of job seekers want companies to communicate more clearly during the hiring process, so don't be afraid to over-communicate throughout the process. To scale these efforts and provide a consistent candidate experience, OnShift's talent acquisition system can automate these communications to help keep candidates engaged throughout the process.

Streamline Screening & Hiring

Hiring processes often differ from community to community. HR leaders should provide their communities with a core hiring structure that can be modified if needed. Once established, look to automate repeatable tasks, such as forms, background checks, offer letters and reminders. Doing so will provide an effective, scalable and seamless process. Once implemented, HR leaders should routinely analyze time-to-hire and referral sources to optimize results.

"In my experience, you cannot overcommunicate or follow up too quickly."

– Peter Corless, EVP at OnShift

you're not consistently in touch with candidates, they will simply move on."

Implementing a systematic, well-defined process creates accountability for follow-up so quality candidates don't slip through the cracks, enables hiring managers to provide candidates clear next steps and helps ensure hiring processes are compliant.

OnShift is committed to helping healthcare providers redefine the employee experience. Based on our experiences working with thousands of healthcare providers, listed above are four recruiting and hiring best practices that you can share with your HR leaders. 🌱



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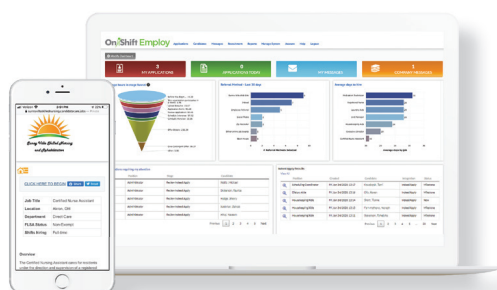
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CORONAVIRUS AND ITS IMMEDIATE EFFECTS ON THE ECONOMY

Pandemic leads to first quarterly employment decline for senior living on record

The coronavirus pandemic is having a devastating impact on the U.S. economy. With mandated closures of businesses across many industries, employers often have no choice but to lay off or furlough much of their workforce.

In March and April alone, the nation's private sector cut 20.4 million jobs, or 15.7 percent of the total employment base. This wiped out more than nine years of job growth, dropping the number of employed people back to its March 2011 level.

Even industries considered essential have experienced job losses. Senior living has reflected this trend, although to a lesser degree than many other sectors of the economy.

The senior living industry lost a net 33,600 jobs in March and April, according to preliminary data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This represented a decline of 3.4 percent, and wiped out nearly two years of job growth.

Related industries were also negatively impacted in recent months:

- Restaurants and accommodations lost 6.8 million jobs, or 47.3 percent
- Retail went down by 2.2 million jobs, or 13.7 percent
- Hospitals saw the loss of 131,000 jobs, or 2.5 percent
- Home health care lost 91,000 jobs, or 5.8 percent
- Skilled nursing declined by 49,000 jobs, or 3.1 percent

While the expectation is that many of these jobs will return as the economy reopens, the impact on household finances will certainly continue to be felt for years to come.

SENIOR LIVING SLOWING BEFORE PANDEMIC HIT

Even before the coronavirus outbreak was fully impacting the U.S. economy, job growth in the senior living industry stalled. According to preliminary figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment at senior living communities declined by a net 400 jobs in the first quarter, on a seasonally adjusted basis. This was the first quarterly decline in employment since this BLS data series began in 1990.

Overall, senior living employment increased 2.2 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, making this the slowest four-quarter job growth in a year.

Within the industry, assisted living community employment continued to rise at a steady pace, adding jobs at a 3.1 percent pace between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, marking the strongest gain in three quarters.

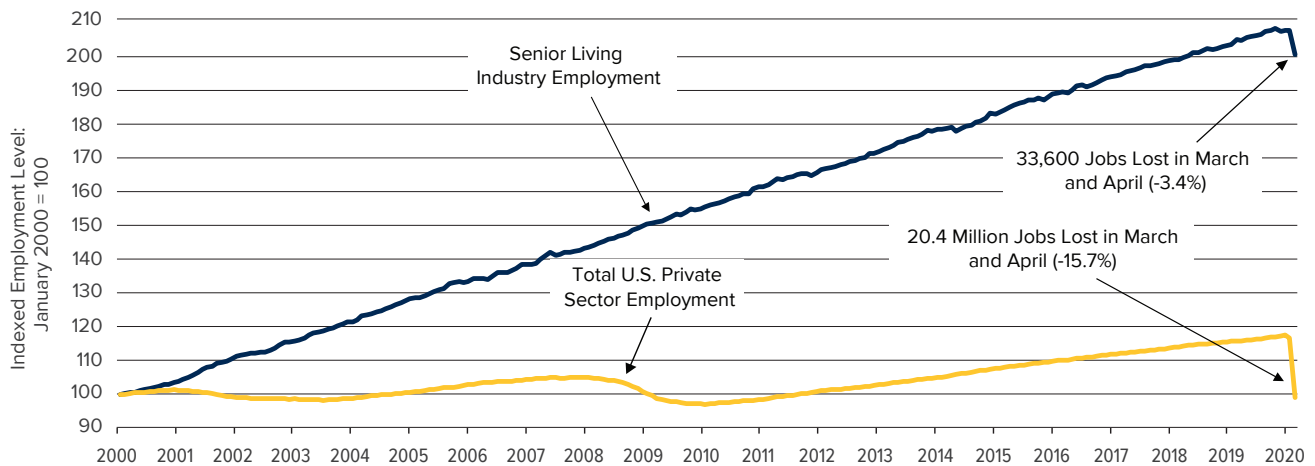
In contrast, employment growth at continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) slowed significantly in the first quarter. Between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, CCRCs expanded payrolls at a modest 1.4 percent pace—the slowest four-quarter growth since the fourth quarter of 2018.

ARGENTUM AND ONSHIFT PARTNERSHIP

The Argentum and OnShift partnership began in 2016 to support the development of data-driven research, innovative resources, and best practices to give senior living providers new tools and insights to improve workforce strategies. These quarterly workforce reports are a product of that relationship. Argentum is the leading national association exclusively dedicated to supporting companies operating professionally managed, resident-centered senior living communities and the older adults and families they serve. Learn more at [argentum.org](https://www.argentum.org). OnShift's next-generation human capital management platform fundamentally transforms the relationship between healthcare organizations and their employees. Our innovative approach to recruitment, hiring, scheduling and engagement fosters a culture where people want to work. Visit [onshift.com](https://www.onshift.com).

JOB GROWTH IN SENIOR LIVING SHOWS IMPACT OF COVID-19

January 2000 to April 2020: Senior Living Industry vs. Total U.S. Private Sector



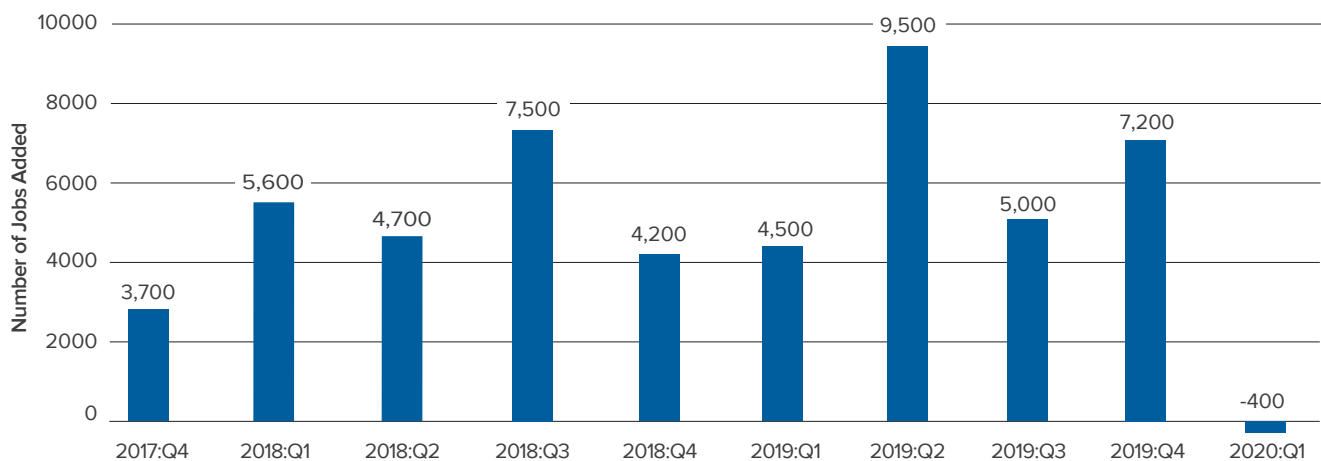
Source: Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are seasonally adjusted

Trends in Employment in Types of Communities

Sector	Average Weekly Hours: 2020: Q1	2019: Q1 to 2020: Q1	2017 to 2018	2016 to 2017
Senior Living Industry	973,300	2.2%	2.4%	2.9%
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	509,100	1.4%	1.6%	3.0%
Assisted Living Communities	464,200	3.1%	3.2%	2.8%
Total U.S. Private Sector	127.7 million	1.4%	1.8%	1.8%

Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Senior Living Industry Employment Change from the Previous Quarter



Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted.

JOB GROWTH IN RELATED INDUSTRIES STAYS ON TREND

For the most part, job growth in the related industries remained on their recent trend in the first quarter. The home health care industry continued to post the strongest gains, expanding payrolls at a healthy 4.7 percent rate between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, representing the sector's third consecutive quarter with growth above 4 percent.

Employment growth at hospitals accelerated for the third consecutive quarter. Hospitals added jobs at a 1.8 percent rate between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, the strongest in more than three years.

As the coronavirus impact widened in March, job growth in the hospitality sector slumped. The restaurants and accommodations industry added jobs at a 1.2 percent rate between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020—a full percentage point lower than the 2.2 percent gain registered in the fourth quarter.

Despite increased need, the skilled nursing sector continues to shed jobs, experiencing its 20th consecutive quarter of job losses as employment there declined 0.6 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020.

Retail continued its downward employment trend. Employers shaved payrolls by 0.2 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, which represented the 11th consecutive quarter of falling employment levels.

Trends in Employment Across Related Industries

	Number of Jobs: Q1 2020	Q1 2019 to Q1 2020	2017 to 2018	2016 to 2017
Senior Living Industry	973,300	2.2%	2.4%	2.9%
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	509,100	1.4%	1.6%	3.0%
Assisted Living Communities	464,200	3.1%	3.2%	2.8%
Skilled Nursing	1,585,00	-0.6%	-1.2%	-0.9%
Hospitals	5,255,100	1.8%	1.1%	1.1%
Home Health Care	1,563,100	4.7%	3.3%	4.0%
Retail Trade	15,469,000	-0.2%	-0.4%	0.1%
Restaurants and Accommodations	13,850,900	1.2%	1.4%	2.3%
Total U.S. Private Sector	127.7 million	1.4%	1.8%	1.8%

Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted.

AVERAGE WORKWEEK FOR SENIOR LIVING GOES UP

The average workweek of senior living employees ticked higher in the first quarter. Senior living employees worked an average of 32.8 hours per week during the first quarter of 2020, up 0.6 percent from an average workweek of 32.6 hours in the first quarter of 2019.

This represented the first time in six quarters that the average workweek increased on a four-quarter basis. This compares to the overall private sector, where the average workweek edged up 0.1 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020.

Within the senior living industry, the average employee workweek increased in both assisted living and CCRCs. At assisted living communities, employees worked at average of 33.2 hours during the first quarter of 2020, up 0.8 percent from their average workweek of 32.9 hours during the first quarter of 2019.

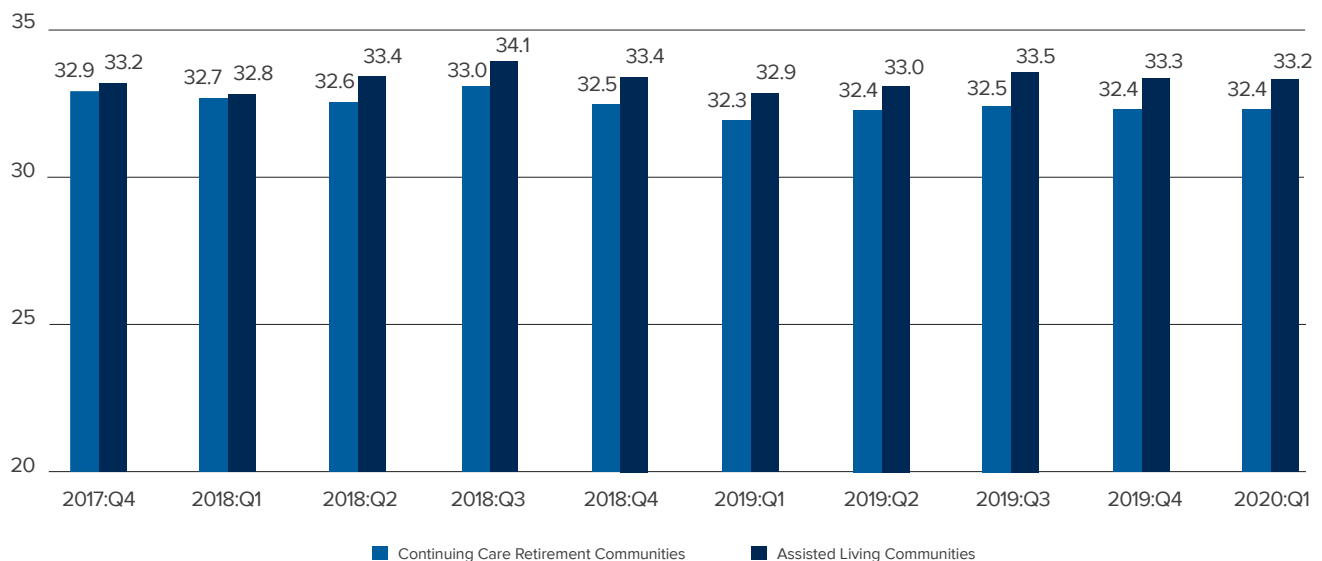
Employees at continuing care retirement communities worked an average of 32.4 hours per week during the first quarter of 2020, which was up slightly from an average workweek of 32.3 hours during the first quarter of 2019.

Trends in Average Weekly Hours

Sector	Average Weekly Hours: 2020: Q1	2019: Q1 to 2020: Q1	2017 to 2018	2016 to 2017
Senior Living Industry	32.8	0.6%	0.0%	1.8%
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	32.4	0.5%	-0.6%	0.9%
Assisted Living Communities	33.2	0.8%	0.0%	3.1%
Total U.S. Private Sector	34.2	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%

Source: Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted

Quarterly Averages of Weekly Hours of Senior Living Industry Employees



Source: Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted.

SENIOR LIVING WAGES RISE

Wage growth in the overall senior living industry continued at a steady rate in the first quarter. Average hourly earnings rose 3.2 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020. For the 12th consecutive quarter, wage gains went above 3 percent.

In the overall private sector, wage growth was also significant. Average hourly earnings of all private sector employees increased 3.5 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, the seventh consecutive quarter with growth above 3 percent.

Assisted living showed the strongest wage growth, with average hourly earnings increasing 4.8 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020 in another streak: the sixth consecutive quarter with growth above 4 percent.

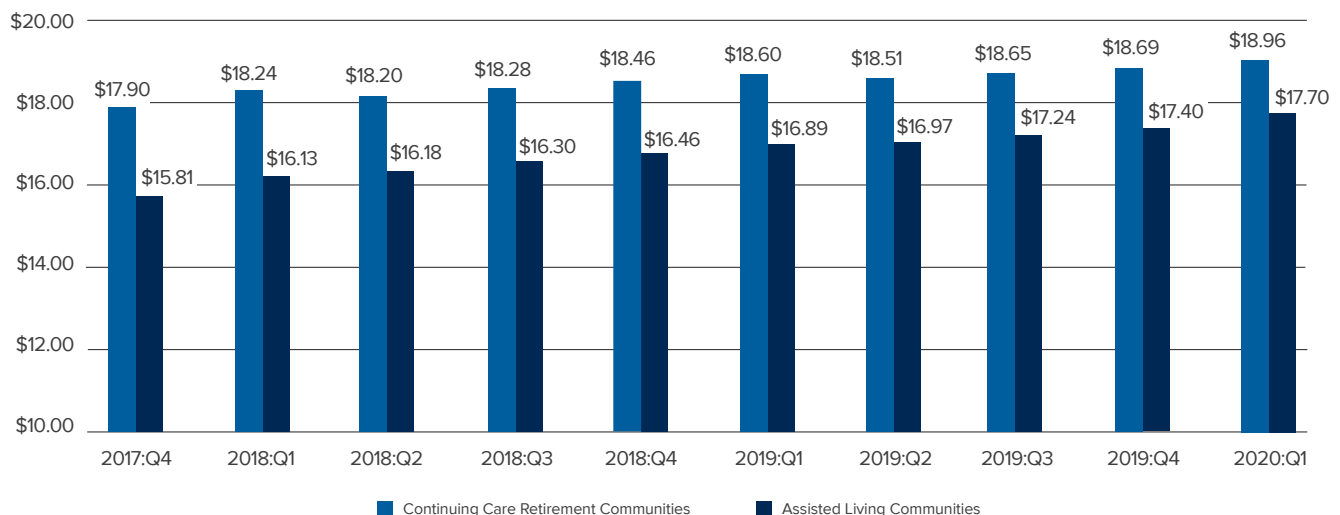
Wage gains at CCRCs were, comparatively speaking, dampened in recent quarters. Average hourly earnings of CCRC employees rose 2.0 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, which made this the fifth consecutive quarter with gains of 2 percent or less.

Trends in Average Hourly Earnings

Sector	Average Hourly Earnings: 2020: Q1	2018: Q4 to 2019: Q4	2017 to 2018	2016 to 2017
Senior Living Industry	\$18.35	3.2%	3.5%	3.1%
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	\$18.96	2.0%	3.5%	2.8%
Assisted Living Communities	\$17.24	4.8%	3.6%	3.7%
Total U.S. Private Sector	\$28.75	3.5%	3.0%	2.7%

Source: Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted

Quarterly Averages of Hourly Earnings of Senior Living Industry Employees



Source: Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted

WAGE GROWTH STRONG ACROSS RELATED INDUSTRIES

In related industries, wage growth has been solid in recent quarters. Skilled nursing employees saw the strongest gains in recent quarters: 4.3 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, another quarter with growth above 4 percent.

Average hourly earnings in the home health care sector increased 3.9 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, making for four consecutive quarters with growth above 3 percent. Hospital employees saw their average hourly earnings rise 3.3 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020, also on trend with the past quarter with earnings gains above 3 percent.

For retail employees, average hourly wage growth of 4.5 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020 marked the sixth consecutive quarter with wage gains above 4 percent. Hospitality sector wages also rose at a steady pace: Employees' average hourly earnings in restaurants and accommodations increased 3.2 percent between the first quarters of 2019 and 2020. This represented the 17th consecutive quarter with wage growth of at least 3 percent.

Trends in Average Hourly Earnings Across Related Industries

	Average Hourly Earnings Q1 2020	Q1 2019 to Q1 2020	2017 to 2018	2016 to 2017
Senior Living Industry	\$18.35	3.2%	3.5%	3.1%
Continuing Care Retirement Communities	\$18.96	2.0%	3.5%	2.8%
Assisted Living Communities	\$17.70	4.8%	3.6%	3.7%
Skilled Nursing	\$20.31	4.3%	2.2%	2.9%
Hospitals	\$34.22	3.3%	2.4%	2.1%
Home Health Care	\$20.81	3.9%	0.5%	-0.1%
Retail Trade	\$20.30	4.5%	3.4%	1.7%
Restaurants and Accommodations	\$16.00	3.2%	3.6%	3.9%
Total U.S. Private Sector	\$28.75	3.5%	3.0%	2.7%

Source: Argentum analysis of data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; figures are not seasonally adjusted

