



PERFORMANCE  
MEASURE  
SURVEY

**Findings from the NCAL 2014 Assisted Living  
Performance Measures Survey**

**January 2015**

**NCAL**<sup>®</sup>  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR ASSISTED LIVING

## INTRODUCTION

In order to collect data to determine the progress of improving quality in assisted living communities (ALCs), the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) conducted its fifth annual Assisted Living Performance Measures Survey in 2014. NCAL plans to continue its data collection efforts in coming years to generate valuable data that will show the performance measure trends and patterns for the assisted living profession.

The survey for this study was posted online via Survey Monkey and sent out to NCAL members in the mail. The survey was designed to collect data on performance measures that fit all states' current regulatory frameworks. The 10 domains included in this survey are:

1. resident and family satisfaction,
2. employee satisfaction,
3. census/occupancy rates,
4. resident councils,
5. family councils,
6. strategic plan to support mission and vision statements,
7. safety programs,
8. nurse availability,
9. staff retention, and
10. state criminal background checks.

These domains are important to improving the quality of care delivered to residents and strengthening the assisted living workforce. Data on employee vacancy, retention and turnover, is collected in a separate profession-wide survey. Many of these questions relate directly to the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative for Assisted Living. The Quality Initiative has four goals: safely reduce hospital readmissions, safely reduce off-label use of antipsychotics, improve customer satisfaction, and improve staff stability. To learn more about the Quality Initiative for Assisted Living visit <http://qualityinitiative.ncal.org>.

Participation in this survey was limited to member communities of NCAL. The response rate of this survey was approximately 23.1 percent of NCAL's membership, down slightly from 26.3 percent in 2013. The number of participants in this study is limited due to the nature of online and mail surveys. Despite the size limitation of the survey, this study still reveals some positive information about efforts to improve the quality of care for residents in assisted living communities nationwide.

## RESPONDENTS

There were 786 respondents, with the majority of respondents from the Midwest region (44.8 percent) (see Table 1). Select results are presented in the report by regions used by the United States Census Bureau: Midwest, Northeast, West, and South (see Figure 1). In the West, South, and Northeast regions the majority of ALCs have 51-100 beds. In the Midwest region the majority of respondents were from ALCs with 50 or less beds (see Figure 2 and Table 2). Over half of the respondents had occupancy rates above 90 percent and less than 20 percent of respondents had occupancy rates below 85 percent (see Table 3). Analyses were conducted using STATA Version 11 (StataCorp, 2009).

Table 1. Respondents by U.S. census region

Region	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total Respondents
Midwest	344	44.8%
Northeast	183	23.3
South	82	10.4
West	159	20.2
Missing State	18	2.3
Total	786	100.0*

\*Actual total may be over 100 percent due to rounding

Figure 1. Census regions of the United States

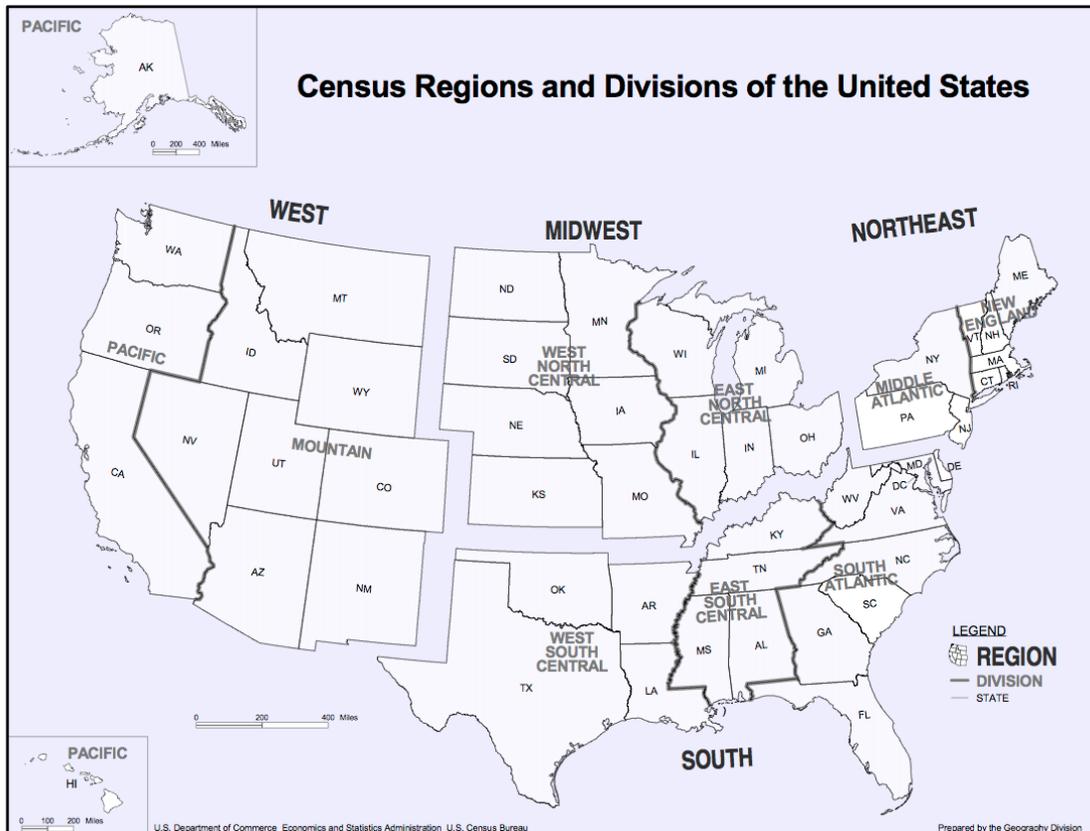


Figure 2. Size of ALCs by region

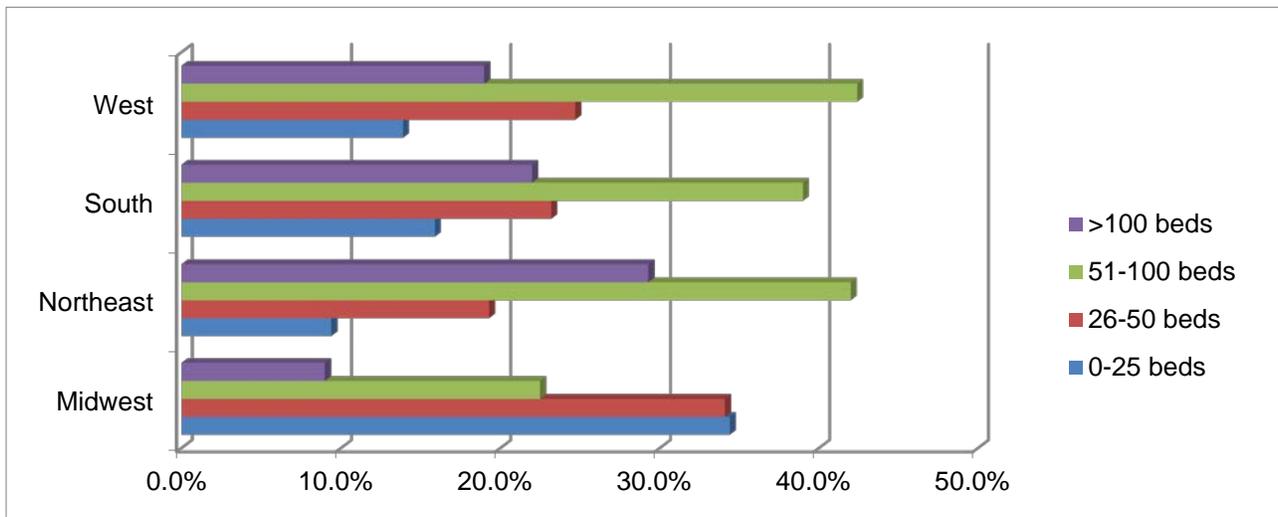


Table 2. Size of ALCs by region

Size of ALC	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
0-25 beds	34.4%	9.4%	15.8%	13.9%
26-50 beds	34.1	19.3	23.2	24.7
51 -100 beds	22.5	42.0	39.0	42.4
> 100 beds	9.0	29.3	22.0	19.0

Table 3. Occupancy rate for respondents

Occupancy Rate	Percentage of ALCs in this Study <sup>1</sup>
96-100%	43.0%
91-95%	25.0
85-90%	14.3
80-84%	7.3
Less than 80%	10.5

Note: <sup>1</sup>14 respondents were missing census data and excluded from this count

## RESIDENTS

Improving resident and family satisfaction is one of the four goals of the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative for Assisted Living. Overall 89.7 percent of respondents measured resident and family satisfaction (see Table 4). Resident satisfaction is an important outcome that can impact an organization and has been shown to be associated with higher staff satisfaction (Sikorska-Simmons, 2006). Almost 89 percent of communities reported having a resident council, which one study found was associated with quality of life (Mitchell & Kemp, 2000).

Table 4. Resident and family measures

	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Measures resident and family satisfaction	699	89.7%
Community has resident council	687	88.7
Community leadership meets with leaders of the resident council	640	82.7
Family council	230	29.7
Community leadership meets with leaders of the family council	214	29.2

## EMPLOYEES

Staff stability is important to quality care and is one of the four goals of the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative for Assisted Living. Ninety percent of respondents report tracking retention and turnover of employees. Measuring employee satisfaction is another critical element to staff stability along with recognition programs. Of the respondents, 82.5 percent measured employee satisfaction utilizing either an internal survey or outside organization (see Table 5). Almost 100 percent of respondents provide formal on-going training for all employees and a formal orientation program for new employees (see Table 5).

Table 5. Assisted living community employee measures

	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Measures employee satisfaction	639	82.5%
Formal orientation program for new employees	769	99.0
Tracks retention and turnover of employees	698	90.2
Formal on-going training program for all employees	749	97.2
Formal employee recognition program	899	77.6
Career ladders/lattices available	466	60.4
Mentoring program available	414	53.2
Employee assistance programs available	464	60.0
Exit interviews conducted for quality improvement	546	70.3

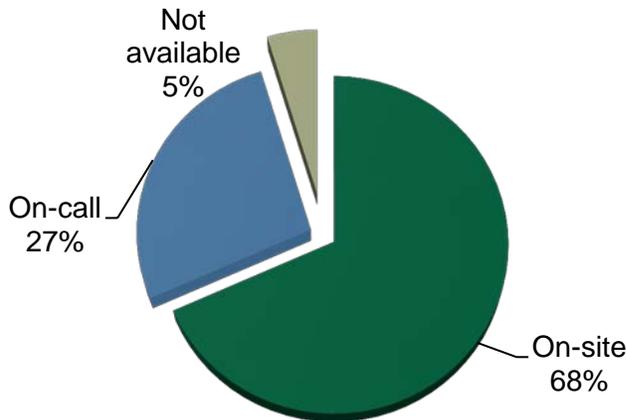
## ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY OPERATIONS

Assisted living operations are vital to quality of care and life for residents. Almost 95 percent of respondents had a licensed nurse available to both staff and residents 24 hours a day (see Table 6). Of the communities with a licensed nurse available, 68 percent had a nurse on-site and 27 percent had a nurse on-call (see Figure 6). The majority of respondents indicated safety as a priority, including monitoring and tracking employee safety; reviewing incident reports for staff, family members, and residents; and conducting training based on a safety committee’s findings (see Table 6). Respondents appear to not only recognize the importance of having a mission statement, but also training employees on the mission statement (see Table 6).

Table 6. Assisted living community operation measures

	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Has a mission statement	735	94.5%
Staff trained on mission statement	706	94.5
Has a vision statement	564	72.8
Staff trained on vision statement	534	83.4
Strategic plan that incorporates mission and vision statements	507	66.6
Strategic plan incorporates performance data collected by community	420	71.0
Staff trained on strategic plan	413	73.8
Reviews incident reports for residents	761	97.7
Monitors and tracks employee safety	752	97.2
Community reviews incident reports for staff	758	98.1
Tracks incident reports for family members and/or volunteers	677	87.5
Has a safety committee	685	87.7
Safety committee meets at least quarterly to review data	672	94.5
Staff training conducted on results of safety committee’s findings	658	93.5
Licensed nurse available to the staff and residents 24 hours a day	738	94.9
Criminal background checks conducted on all new employees	770	99.2

Figure 6. Availability of a nurse 24 hours a day



## DISCUSSION

This is an exciting time for quality in assisted living with the continued implementation of the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative for Assisted Living and the collection of clinical performance measures with the National Patient Safety Organization for Assisted Living (PSO). Results in this study support the dedication to quality by NCAL members. As respondents have demonstrated, quality improvement does not end at implementation of a program, but is continued through measuring the results of the implementation of the program for continuous quality improvement.

## REFERENCES

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