

# Decreasing Your Home Healthcare Workforce Turnover



# Contents

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Introduction	03
Home Healthcare Today	04
Ways to Retain Home Health Workers	05
Using Mobile Workforce Management to Improve Retention	08
Retain Home Health Workers: A Mobile Workforce Management Solution	10

# Introduction

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Retaining caregivers is turning out to be one of the key challenges for the booming home healthcare industry. A [recent study by Home Care Pulse](#) estimates it costs an average of \$2,600 to replace one caregiver. Compound this with increasing attrition rates—currently estimated to be in the range of 66%—for a home care agency that employs 100 caregivers, the cost of losing 66% of your workplace per annum results in \$171,600 in additional operating expenses for your organization.

Caregiver retention should be a main focus for home healthcare organizations that want to remain competitive today and in the future. Here's a closer look into the problem and possible solutions to address it.



# Home Healthcare Today

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The challenge in retaining in-home caregivers is compounded by the fact that there is an unprecedented demand for this workforce category. [The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports](#) that between 2016 and 2026, there will be 1.2 million new home health aides that need to be recruited.

Why this sudden demand for caregivers?

The baby boomer generation is growing older, with the number of people who are 65 or older expected to reach 55 million by 2020. An estimated [10,000 retire every day](#). A significant share of this population can be expected to use home care because of the familiarity and independence that living at home can provide.

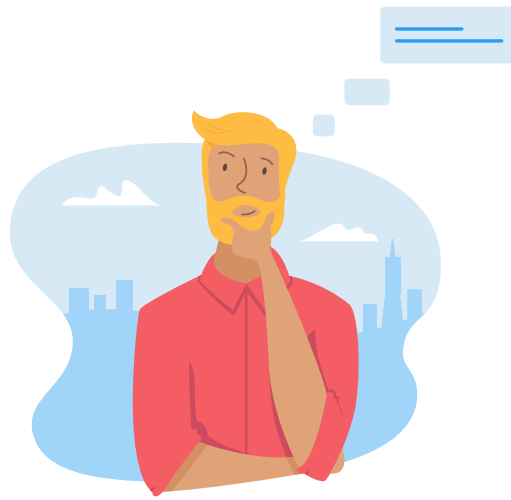
The industry itself is [on a steep growth curve](#). What was once a fledgling market is now expanding due to revised insurance policies, government regulations, an aging population, increased awareness in patients, and efforts from homecare providers to offer customers reliable options.

## Roadblocks to Caregiver Retention

This has not been an easy challenge to tackle for home healthcare providers. For one, paid wages have to align with shifting market forces. Currently, a home aide in the US is paid [\\$10.56 per hour on average](#). Meanwhile, other industries, such as retail, have increased hourly wages to [\\$15 per hour](#) in the US, which has put the pressure on homecare businesses to step up as well.

Home health providers also have higher expectations for employers today. They want employee engagement, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and good pay.

Many of these roadblocks can be solved through technology, but home health businesses have traditionally had to play catchup in the tech space. A [recent study on digital maturity](#) across industries showed that healthcare lagged by almost a decade in adopting the latest technologies. Plus, the focus of most healthcare solutions has remained primarily on regulatory compliance but not on innovation.



# Ways to Retain Home Health Workers

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Here are a few methods to motivate home health workers to stay with the business in the long run. In each of these methods, the use of mobile workforce management solutions can be a game-changer.

## 1 Make home health workers feel connected

Most of the work that home health workers do is mobile in nature. Unlike regular office setups, they tend to go to where patients are – mostly working from their homes.

While, in a traditional environment, employees get a sense of belonging by means of a common company culture, a home health setup is completely different. For example, it may not give employees enough chances to communicate with peers for support or morale boosts which could make them feel disconnected from their organization and can lead to increased turnover rates.

Companies can use a two-pronged approach to solve this. Firstly, provide opportunities for employees to come together at frequent intervals, such as seminars or weekly meetings. Secondly, use a mobile workforce management platform that can help them communicate and coordinate with coworkers and the office effectively on a daily basis. By connecting home health workers with one another, companies can create a sense of community among workers that don't work in the same location.

## 2 Intelligently match patients with the right home health worker

Managing a huge mobile workforce is an operational challenge for most healthcare organizations. For example, if organizations don't succeed in matching their caregivers and patients correctly, it can lead to frustration for both people.

There are many factors to consider here. These include the caregiver's skillset and the patient's needs and preferences, commute time for the caregiver as they move from one patient to another, the optimal number of patients to interact with per day, and so on.

A [well-rounded mobile workforce management solution](#) with scheduling features can help organizations with this. By increasing visibility into your caregiver's availability, your schedulers can ensure that the caregiver's time is used efficiently. Additionally, a mobile workforce management platform not only increases the productivity of the overall organization, but it also increases caregiver utilization, and job satisfaction.





### 3 Offer training programs to engage workers

According to a 2018 poll by the Korn Ferry Institute, [33% of employees left their organization](#) because they wanted a new challenge. In other words, a third of the people who moved jobs did it because they were bored. Although employees come into an organization because they are looking for a job, they continue to stay because they foresee a career. They stay due to the possibility of opportunities to grow, learn something new, create influence, and add more value.

This applies to home care workers, too. Organizations need to provide them with specialized training in order to help improve upon workers' existing skill sets. When home health workers observe that organizations are ready to invest in them, it's more likely they will reciprocate with commitment and engagement.

## **4 Provide recognition and competitive compensation**

In a typical office environment, there are many interaction points that give managers the opportunity to recognize employees and the work that they do. But, as the mobile workforce remains invisible most of the time, deskless employees can easily feel underappreciated.

Home healthcare organizations need to find structured ways to overcome this. For example, a robust mobile workforce management platform helps to track customer feedback and metrics. This gives employee performance insight that is difficult to otherwise observe in a remote environment, making it possible to grant employee recognition and promotions accordingly.

Healthcare industries are vying with other industries for talent. Therefore, providing competitive compensation is crucial. Here again, using mobile workforce management software can indirectly help as companies can gain efficiencies in scheduling and labor costs, which opens up finances to award bonuses or increase salaries.

## **5 Empower home health workers to feel ownership over their work and time**

Employees who feel empowered at work perform better and enjoy their work more. Empowerment at work can take many forms, but it generally means that employees feel they have a say in the decisions made that impact them and in the work they do. An employee feels empowered at work when they understand how their job impacts others and the broader organization. Empowerment is a combination of ownership, accountability, and engagement. This is what mobile workforce management solutions help achieve.

Whether it's training home health workers to represent the company and its culture out on the field, ensuring provider-patient compatibility, or giving employees opportunities to provide input on their work, the fundamental objective is to give employees sufficient autonomy and make them feel involved in the decision-making process.



# Using Mobile Workforce Management to Improve Retention

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[Easterseals Bay Area \(ESBA\)](#) is an excellent example of how a mobile workforce management solution can make a huge difference in the retention of home health talent. ESBA provides services such as behavioral and occupational therapy, as well as daycare and in-home care support for children, adults, and families with special needs.

ESBA adopted a meticulous approach—they took the challenges they faced and divvied them up into multiple focus areas. Then they analyzed what solution would be effective in solving their specific needs. Let's take a look at two problems that they were trying to counter:

## CHALLENGE #1

### Managing utilization of mobile caregivers

In just a span of five years from 2012 to 2017, ESBA experienced a 340% increase in their client volume. In 2017 alone, they clocked one million treatment hours.

This sudden growth meant that they had to rely on their mobile workforce more than ever before. At that point, 70% of their workforce was mobile, consisting of caregivers and medical practitioners who worked in patients' homes or communities. 20% of the workforce was partially mobile, and only the remaining 10% strictly worked from offices.

## CHALLENGE #2

### Balancing needs of multiple stakeholders in home healthcare

ESBA was aware of the varying dynamics in [managing the expectations of their clients](#) and providers. While the client families expected the right kind of provider who could support them through a difficult time, it was important to ensure that providers had the appropriate work-life balance and felt satisfied with their jobs. And, these goals had to be achieved with minimal impact on costs and efficiencies.

## SOLUTION

### A mobile workforce management tool focused on client care

ESBA decided to use a mobile workforce management system with emphasis on the client care cycle. The client care cycle refers to functions that focus on providing the best care to the client, such as matching them with the right practitioner, allocating the preferred time for intervention, providing families with additional coaching and support as necessary, and more.

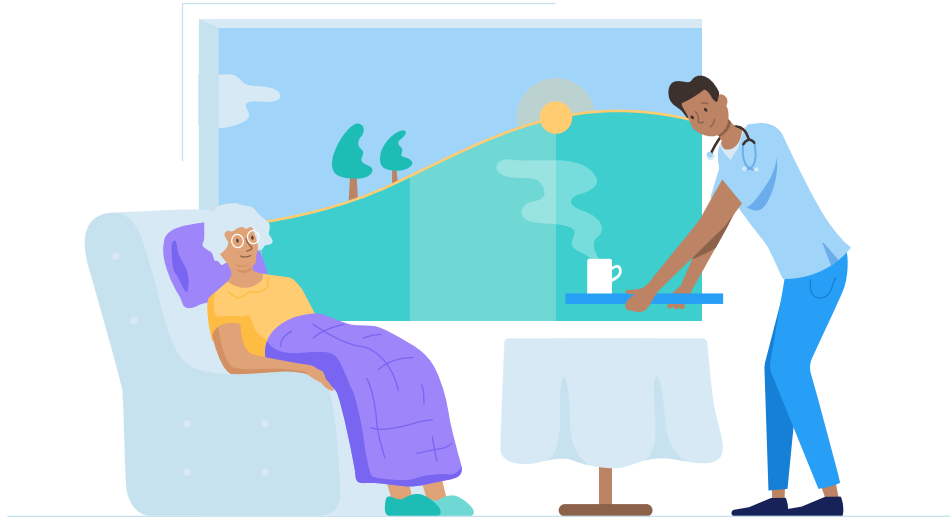
The rationale behind focusing on the client care cycle was that it allowed both providers and patients to concentrate on providing and receiving care rather than being involved in routine logistics, such as paperwork.

In particular, ESBA leveraged the mobile workforce management solution for:

- **Client placement management:** ensure client/caregiver compatibility considering travel time, location, language, skills, experience, etc.
- **Scheduling and capacity management:** minimize paperwork by replacing spreadsheets and flipcharts with automated scheduling systems, ensure caregivers are not overworked or underworked, track hours accurately, etc.

In comparison to a typical [EHR system](#), a comprehensive mobile workforce management solution like Skedulo enabled ESBA to manage their caseload and schedule a large, dynamic workforce effectively.

By implementing a mobile workforce solution, [ESBA demonstrated incredible results](#)—they were able to manage 25,000+ appointments with 6,000 clients per month using 10,000 health practitioners. ESBA recorded \$250 million revenue and gained a competitive edge through its technology offerings.



# Retain Home Health Workers: A Mobile Workforce Management Solution

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Most home health agencies understand the need to revamp their business models to serve their stakeholders. However, they struggle to make the shift due to many factors, such as the financial investment required and the difficulty in implementing change to existing processes.

Hence, agencies are choosing to invest in mobile workforce management solutions—these have the ability to address the actual problems faced on the ground, help gain efficiencies and save costs, make the lives of caregivers easier through smart scheduling, help manage capacities, and provide patients with the best care.

To partner with Skedulo to increase your home health talent retention and remain competitive, [request a demo](#) today!

# About Skedulo

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Reduced time to  
schedule

**-48%**

Increased visibility in  
on-site job execution

**+28%**

Increased resource  
utilization per day

**+21%**

Increased customer  
satisfaction

**+8%**

Skedulo is the solution for intelligent mobile workforce management. Skedulo helps enterprises intelligently manage, schedule, dispatch, and support mobile workers on the go, whether they are full-time, part-time, or contract employees. Skedulo offers enterprises and mid-market companies a mobile workforce management solution with robust integration capabilities, including native integrations to Salesforce. With Skedulo, enterprises can unify their tech stacks and move trustworthy data across the organization with ease.

Founded in 2013, headquartered in San Francisco and with offices in Australia, Vietnam, and the United Kingdom, Skedulo has enabled over 140 companies, including Easterseals Bay Area, Achieve3000, and Area Wide Protective, to seamlessly schedule and service more than 5 million appointments around the globe. The company has secured over \$40 million in funding to date, led by M12, Costanoa Ventures, and Blackbird Ventures. For more information, please visit [www.skedulo.com](http://www.skedulo.com), or our blog, @Skedulo, Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

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