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The Future of Healthcare Work Report 2023



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This report is the third in a series of studies conducted by Vivian Health for the purpose of better understanding the rapidly changing healthcare-workforce employment dynamics.

As in the past, Vivian Health's population for this study was the clinicians found in Vivian's proprietary healthcare talent marketplace. Each year Vivian Health conducts this study to provide clients with timely and insightful data and information to enhance their recruitment and retention efforts.

In this report, you will find 2022 data about employment settings, wages and benefits, workload, clinician mental health, desired work environment characteristics, and insight into how to attract travel clinicians to permanent employment in your organization. This year, more than 1,600 clinical and clinical-support staff shared information about their current role, future career plans, what makes for a healthy work environment, and factors they consider when evaluating whether or not to return to a permanent position.

Vivian Health's mission is to empower every professional to find their perfect job opportunity, faster and easier than ever before. The goal for this installment of our Future of Healthcare Work Report is to provide healthcare employers with actionable insights that help improve their current retention efforts, recruit travel clinicians back to permanent employment, and encourage them to make changes now to meet future healthcare workforce needs.



ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

Demographics & Methodology

Vivian Health surveyed 1,663 clinical and clinical-support staff from across the country to better understand travel versus employed clinicians' current perceptions about wages and their work environment.

Data was collected from November 15, 2022, to December 15, 2022. The survey included both multiple choice and open-ended questions to fully understand the respondents' perspectives about their desires from future employers.

Using a combination of emails to users of Vivian Health's proprietary healthcare talent marketplace, online communities, and social media tools, we surveyed nursing, advanced practice, allied health, and support clinicians. The intent was to achieve a diversified, representative sample of the non-physician clinical workforce. Respondents completed demographic questions, selected most important work factors, and replied Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree for other factors. Of the respondents, 65% (n=1,085) were registered nurses. Of all respondents (n=1,663), 36% (n=599) were employed in travel positions with 44% (n=734) employed in permanent positions. Unless noted otherwise, the following results are for all respondents.

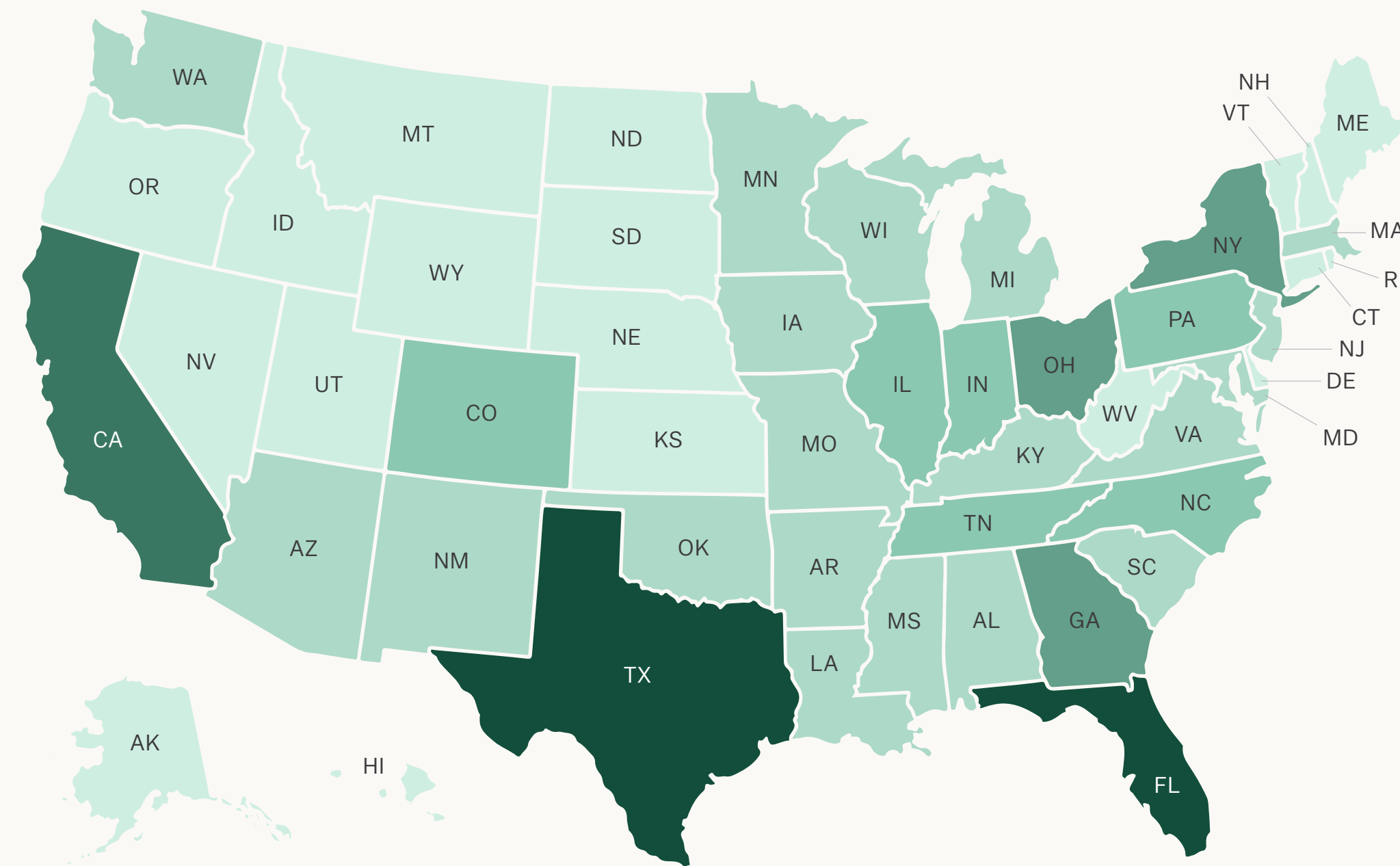
1,663

TOTAL RESPONDENTS

RESPONDENTS BY STATE

- 0-20
- 21-40
- 41-60
- 61-80
- 81-100
- 101+

DISCIPLINE		AGE		YEARS OF EXPERIENCE			
RN	65.2%	Social Work	0.8%	Under 25	2%	Less than 2	6%
Allied Health	17.3%	CMA	0.7%	25-34	18%	3-10	30.8%
LPN/LVN	6%	Other	0.4%	35-44	22%	11-24	36.7%
CNA	4.8%	Non-Healthcare	0.2%	45-54	28.9%	25+	26.5%
Therapy	2.7%	Faculty	0.1%	55 or older	28.1%		
Advanced Practice (majority NP)	1.2%			Prefer not to answer	1%		

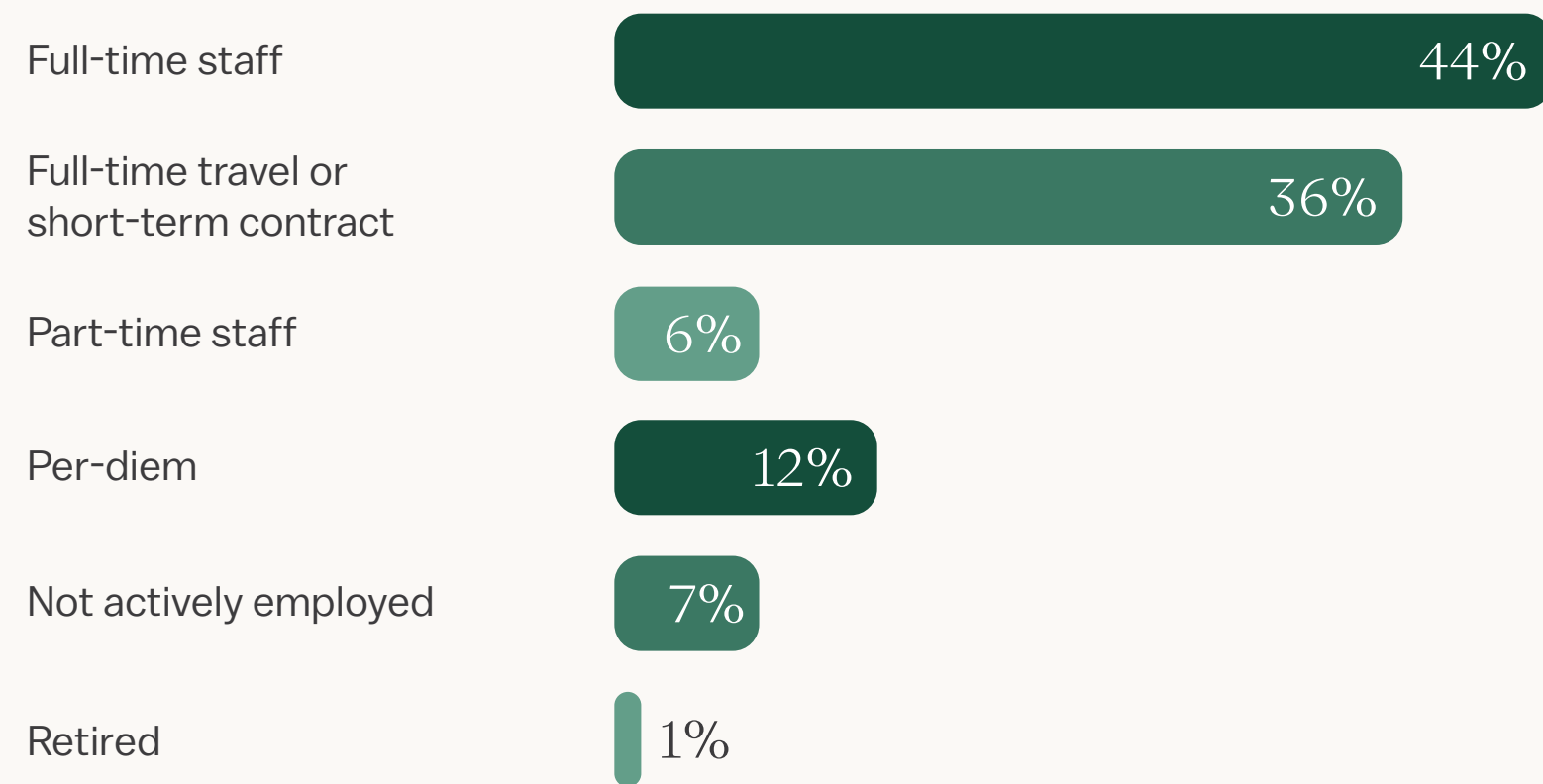


ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

Current Employment

Of those surveyed, a majority work full-time in either a travel or employed position, and 65% of respondents work in an acute care setting. These clinicians have faced personal hardships and work challenges over the course of the three-year pandemic.

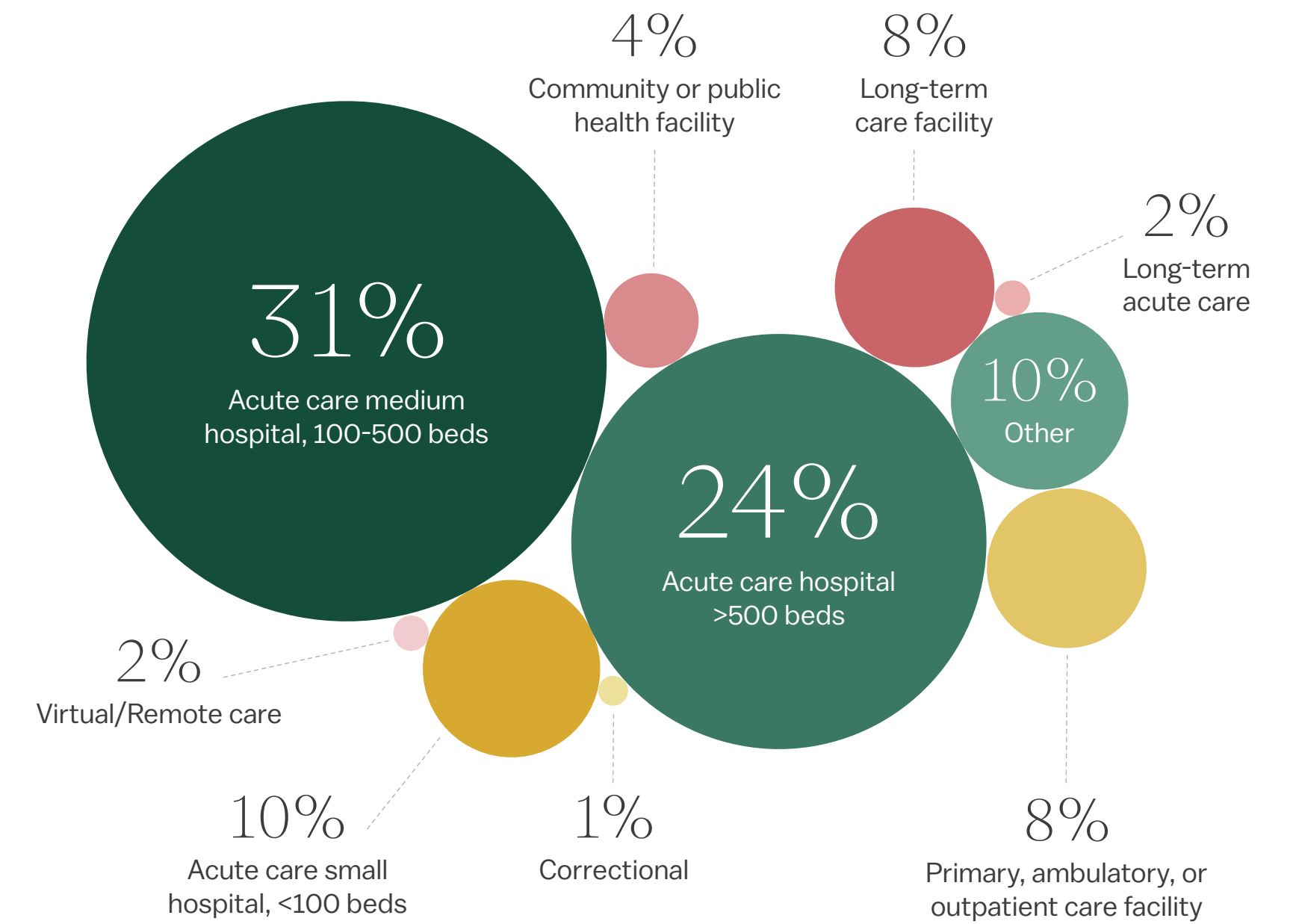
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT TYPE



The respondents are nearly evenly split between travel (36%) and employed positions (44%).

Please note: Respondents could select multiple employment types.

CURRENT PRACTICE ENVIRONMENT



I still enjoy my job as a nurse. I like the daily challenges and feeling like I make a difference in the lives of others.

Intensive Care Travel RN, California



I love what I do — the people, patients, teaching, and education are rewarding.

Medical-Surgical Per Diem RN, Florida



I left bedside for case management and I missed it too much. Now I'm going back to bedside as a travel RN.

Med Surg RN, Oklahoma



Healthcare is not the same and has become more dangerous.

ED Travel RN, Kentucky

Future Clinical Careers

The healthcare workforce, particularly professional nursing, has faced shortages over the past three decades that adversely impact our healthcare system.

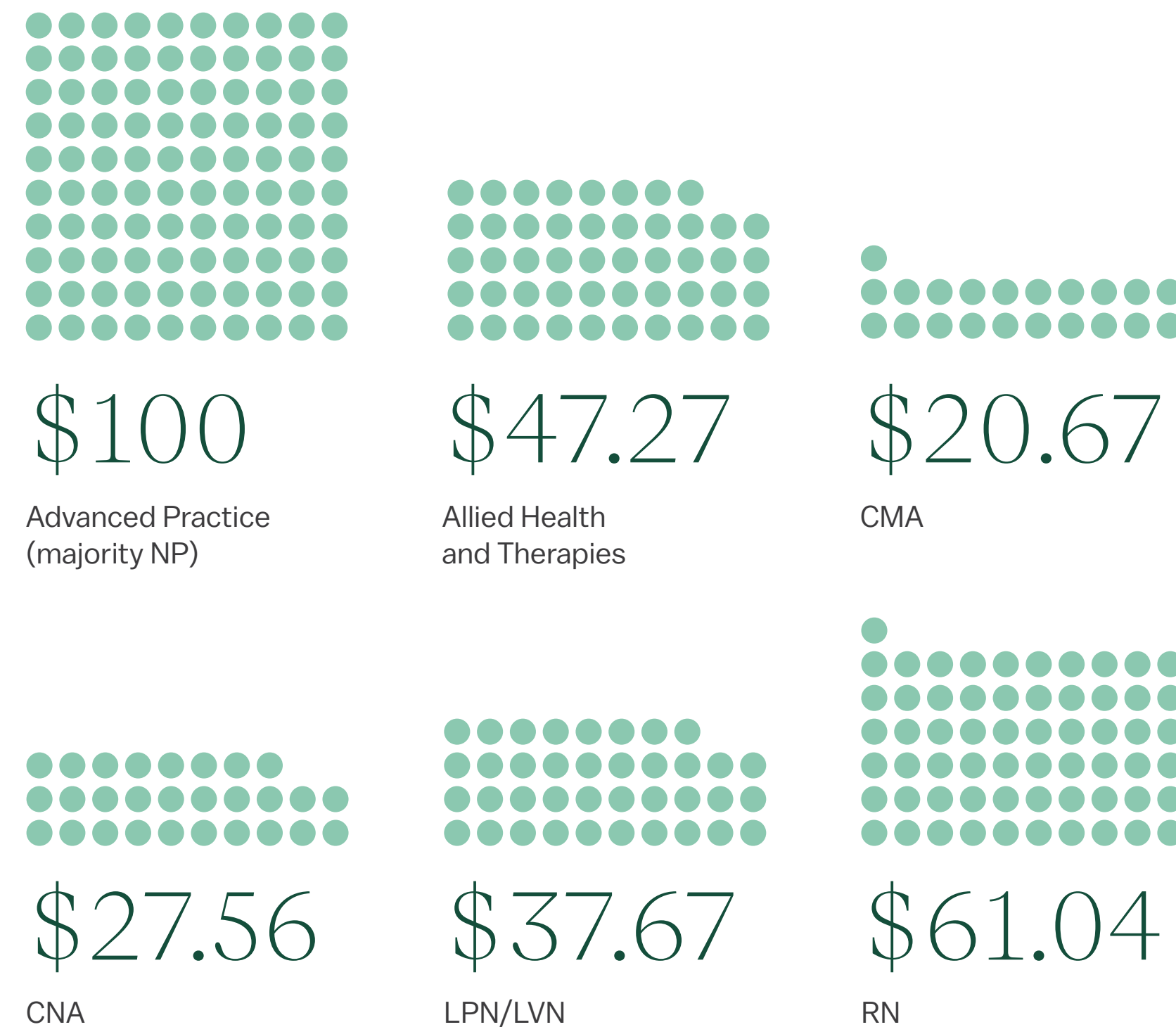
Due to the stress and fatigue they experienced over the course of the last three years, clinicians are rethinking their life priorities and relationship to work. Yet, this year's results reveal less intense negative feelings about clinical careers compared to early 2022.

This year's survey revealed that clinicians who have been on long- and short-term travel contracts are more willing to explore permanent employment in 2023. A likely result of the decrease in average travel wages are this year's findings indicating that 86% (n=520 clinicians, n=388 RNs) of clinicians under travel contracts in 2022 are open to accepting permanent employment in 2023 if offered a competitive wage.

While this is good news for employers who lost registered nurses over the past two years to more lucrative travel positions, the reality is that attracting clinicians back to permanent employment will require investments in wages, improved workloads (e.g., better staffing), flexible schedules, and healthier work environments. The remainder of this report provides insights into desired wages, benefits, and work environment improvements.

Travel Clinicians Currently on Assignments Consider Permanent Employment

Below is a breakdown of the average hourly wages sought by travel clinicians seeking to return to permanent employment.



I am *once again* looking to pivot my career, this time to another speciality, either before or after taking a sabbatical to recharge after the burnout of the last three years.

Clinical Staff RN, Ohio

The Job Search in 2023

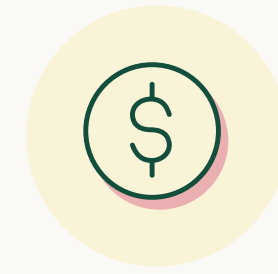
Clinicians ranked “feeling safe at work” and “the commute to work” as important in their job search.

After hourly wage and benefits, clinicians identified workload (staffing), commute time, and flexible schedules as most important. Last year, the most important factors included respect from leadership, workload (staffing), and support for mental health and well-being.

For the first time, clinicians indicate greater consideration for their work-life balance and safety. For example, interest in flexible work arrangements that fit into busy lives are important, as well as a safe and secure work environment free from incivility and violence. While these issues were found in last year’s report, this year these issues have taken on even greater importance.

46% of clinicians that took travel contracts in 2022 plan to work in a permanent role in 2023

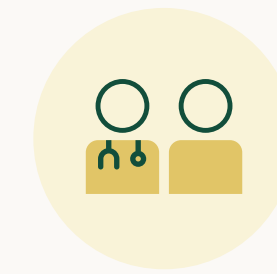
Top 5 Factors Considered in a Job Search



Hourly Wage



Benefits



Staff-to-Patient Ratios



Commute



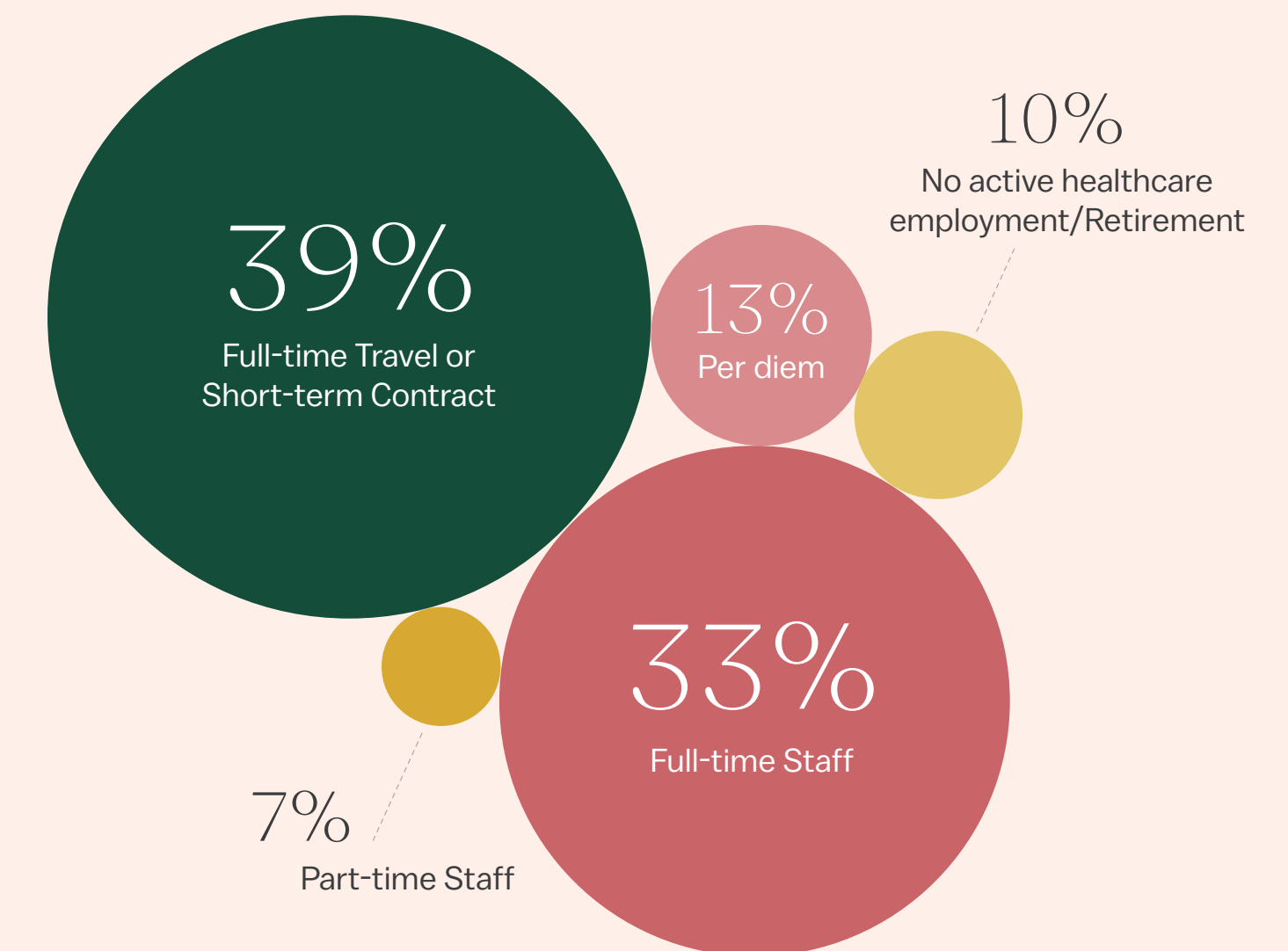
Flexible Schedule

When do you anticipate changing jobs?



What type of employment do you plan to have in 2023?

Please note: Respondents selected multiple employment types.



Attitudes Toward Current Work Environments

Healthy work environments are becoming increasingly important in a competitive job market. Personal safety, support for mental health and well-being, and burnout play a major role in retaining current staff and recruiting travel clinicians back to permanent positions.

This year's survey revealed mixed levels of satisfaction with employers related to having a healthy work environment, valuing clinician input, supporting mental health, and receiving adequate time off. There are indications that attitudes have improved from last year wherein <1% of respondents reported feeling like their unit is "never" short-staffed, to this year where 13% of clinicians reported having staff to ensure patient care 100% of the time.

Last year, 62% (n=2,207) of survey respondents indicated their intent to leave healthcare in the next five years. This year, 45% (n=759) indicated their intent to leave in the next three years, with the remainder indicating they had no plans to leave. Please note that measuring intent to leave one's position or profession is different from those clinicians who

actually leave. Rather, one might interpret intent to leave as the cumulative effect of a number of factors clinicians experience that lead them to consider leaving.

For example, in this year's survey over half of respondents (n=935) were asked every week to work overtime. In addition, half of employed clinicians (n=412) took just five to 10 days of PTO in 2022. Excessive overtime, the inability to take Paid Time Off (PTO), too many consecutive shifts worked, inadequate rest between shifts, heavy workloads, unsafe work environments, and long work commutes all contribute to clinician stress and fatigue. Taken together, these factors depicted in the next section impact work/life balance and may result in burnout.

57%

of respondents indicated their unit was adequately staffed less than

75%

of the time

“ Nurse-to-patient ratios are too high. I'm unable to give adequate care to patients and the ratios are increasing.

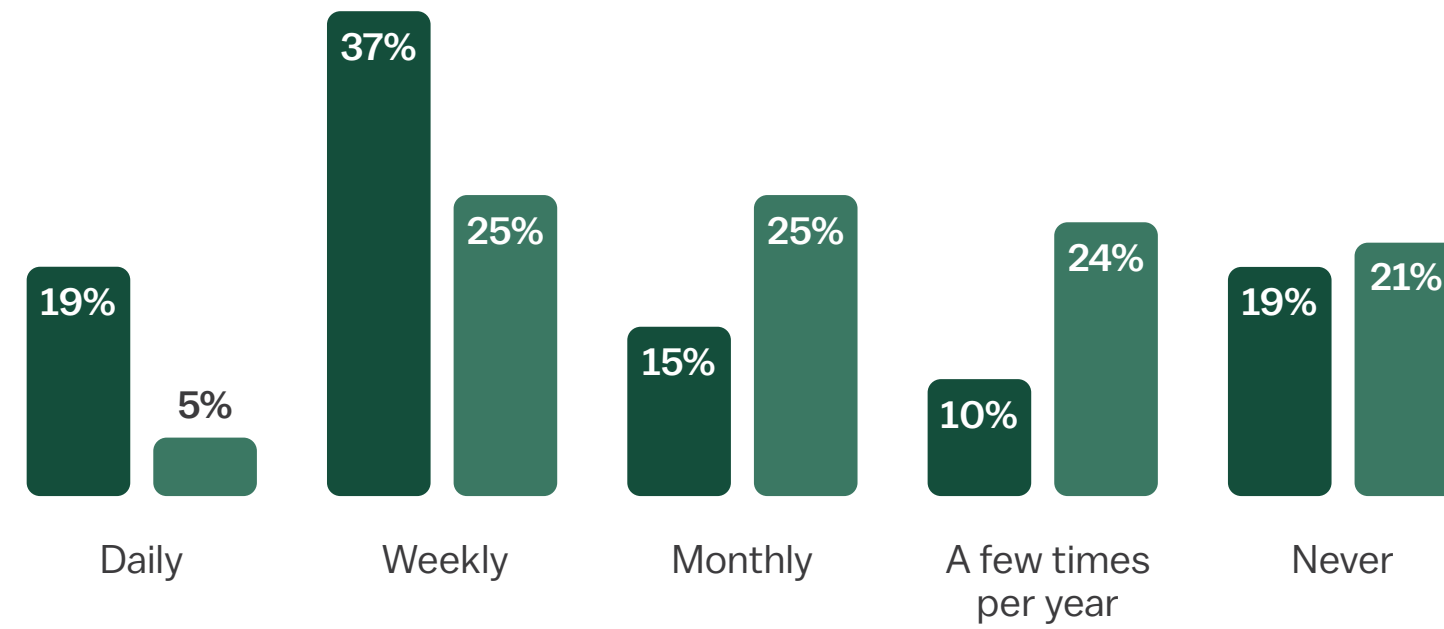
PCU Travel RN, Florida



Attitudes Toward Current Work Environments *(continued)*

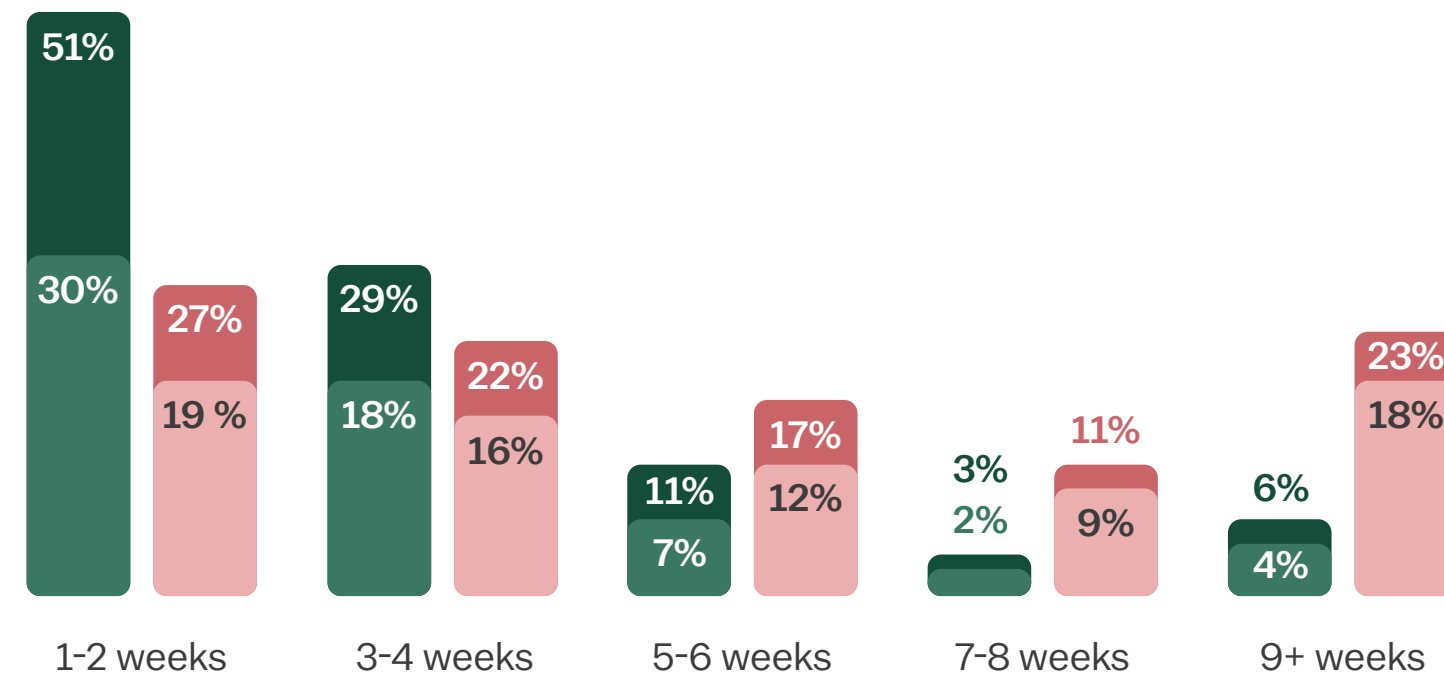
OVERTIME FREQUENCY

- How often are you asked to work extra shifts by your manager?
- How often do you agree to work extra shifts?



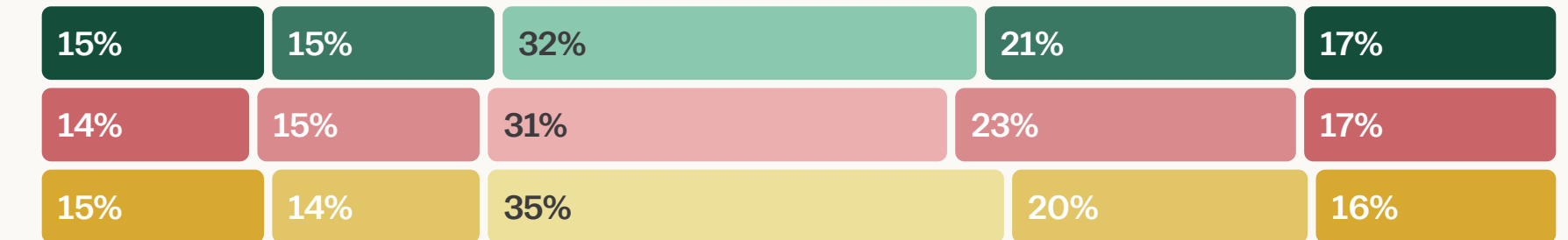
TIME TAKEN OFF IN 2022 BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE

- Staff
- Staff – RNs
- Travel
- Travel – RNs

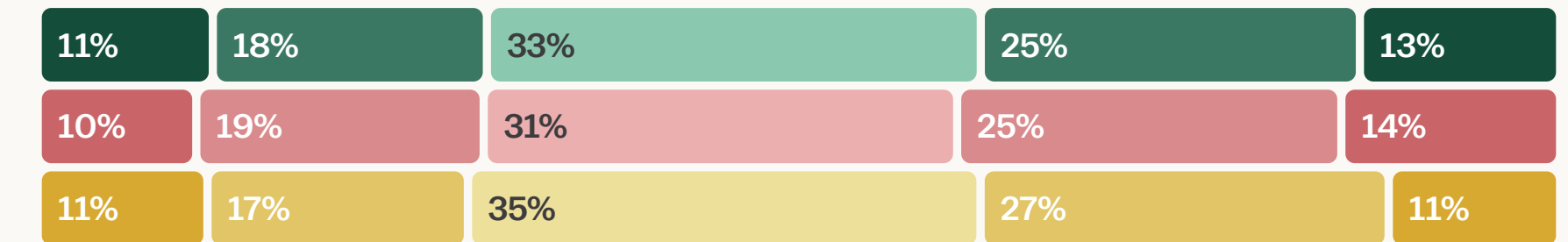


STRONGLY DISAGREE ← → STRONGLY AGREE

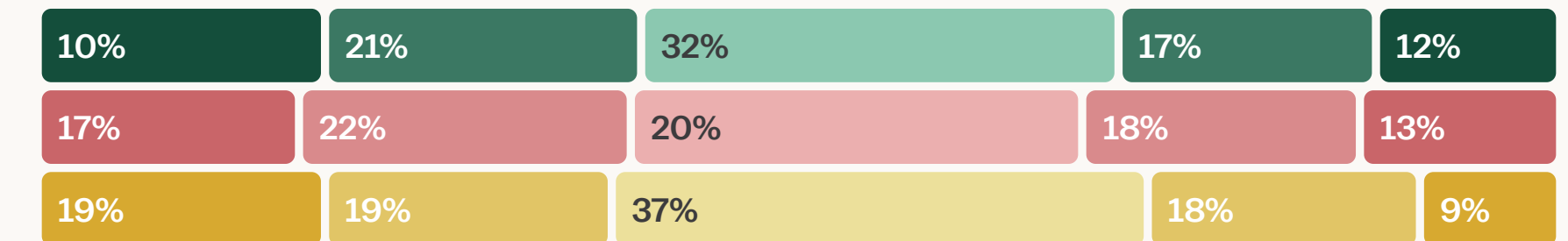
My organization allows me adequate time off



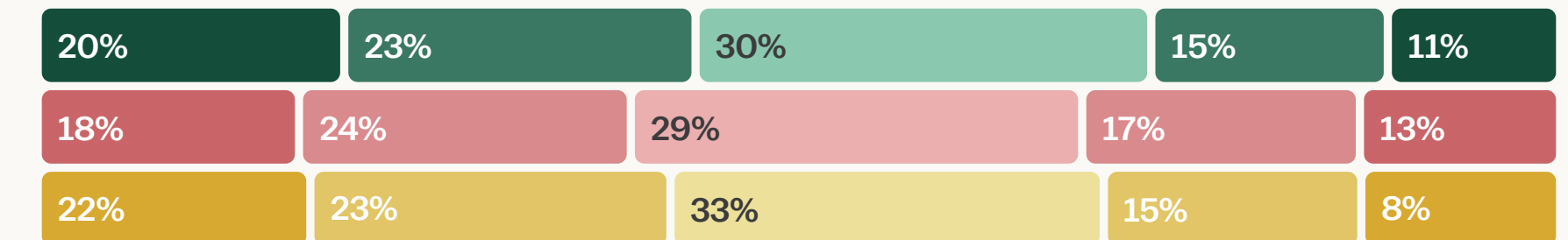
I consider my work environment to be healthy and positive



My organization supports my mental health



My organization values my input



All Staff Travel

Travel clinicians tended to have a more negative view of their current employers.

Our Recommendations for Employers

As the entire healthcare industry continues to recover from a “once in a lifetime event,” the 2023 Future of Healthcare Work Report reveals work environment trends that will likely continue; primarily demands for increased wages and better




staffing. While negative feelings related to healthcare careers are less intense in this year’s study, there remains work to do to improve healthcare work environments.

- 1 Increase Salaries**
To return to permanent employment, RNs are seeking \$61/hour, down from last year’s \$65/hour. As one option, consider offering higher hourly rates in lieu of statutory benefits.
- 2 Flexible Scheduling**
Consider using workforce optimization for nursing labor budgeting, staffing, and scheduling; offer a variety of shift lengths (4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 hours) and scheduling options (full- and part-time, per diem, travel, weekend, etc.).
- 3 Balance Workload**
Improve nursing workload by hiring additional nursing and clinical-support staff so that professional nurses provide the patient care that requires a professional license. This is the time to explore different patient care delivery models.

- 4 Seek Input**
Continue to seek nurses input into decision-making; use shared-leadership and a participatory leadership style.
- 5 Support Mental Health**
Improve and/or implement enhanced programming to support the mental health and well-being of clinicians. One simple strategy is to ensure staff have adequate time off. Monitor the number of consecutive shifts worked, time off between shifts, and the use of PTO to mitigate fatigue, stress, and burnout.

BENEFITS

Which of the following benefits are most important to you?

-  Healthcare (medical/dental)
-  Retirement benefits/pension
-  Hourly Wage
-  Vesting length for 401K
-  Short-term and long-term disability

JOB SATISFACTION

What could your employer do to increase your overall job satisfaction?

Excluding increases to wages and bonuses, the top five responses were:

-  Increase number of support staff
-  Increase number of nurses
-  Allow adequate time for meals and breaks
-  Offer more PTO
-  Offer flex scheduling

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Read the past reports

[The State of the Healthcare Workforce 2022](#)

[The State of the Healthcare Workforce 2021](#)

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