Why Senior Care is Falling Short

Survey Report, November 2022

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Introduction and methodology

## Introduction

We wanted to understand and unpack the challenges facing senior care providers in the current climate.

Everyone in the industry is acutely aware that the staffing crisis has worsened over the past few years.

This survey set out to analyze the issues facing frontline staff, to reveal the impact on care delivery, and to discover whether technology can offer meaningful solutions.
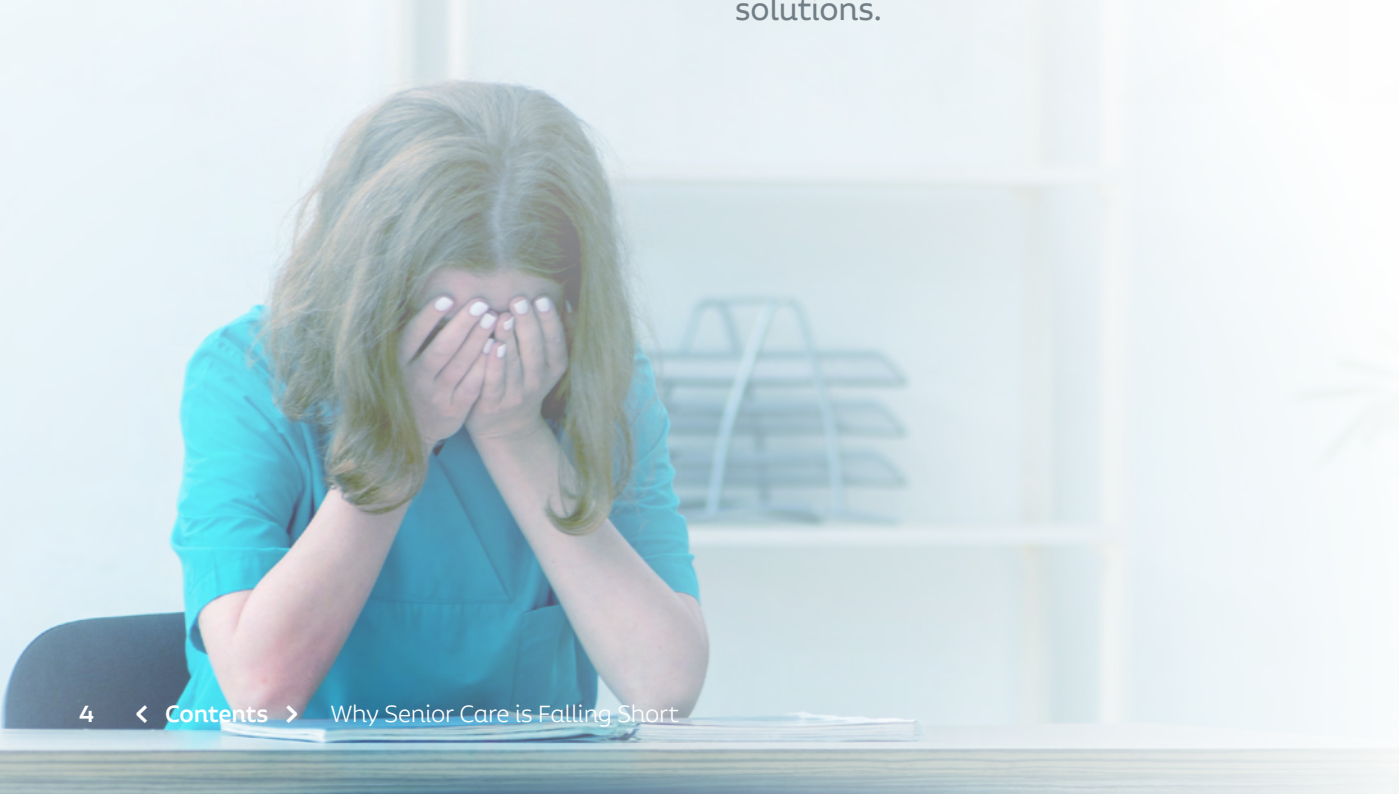
Methodology

To understand more about both the challenges and solutions for senior care organizations, we surveyed both C-level executives and frontline caregivers. 50% of our respondents hold positions such as CEO, CFO, COO, and Chief Asset Developer, and 50% are nurses and nursing managers.

This report was administered online by Global Surveyz Research, a global research firm. The respondents were recruited through a global B2B research panel and invited via email to complete the survey. The average length of time spent on the survey was 5 minutes and 19 seconds. The answers to the majority of the non-numerical questions were randomized, in order to prevent order bias in the answers.

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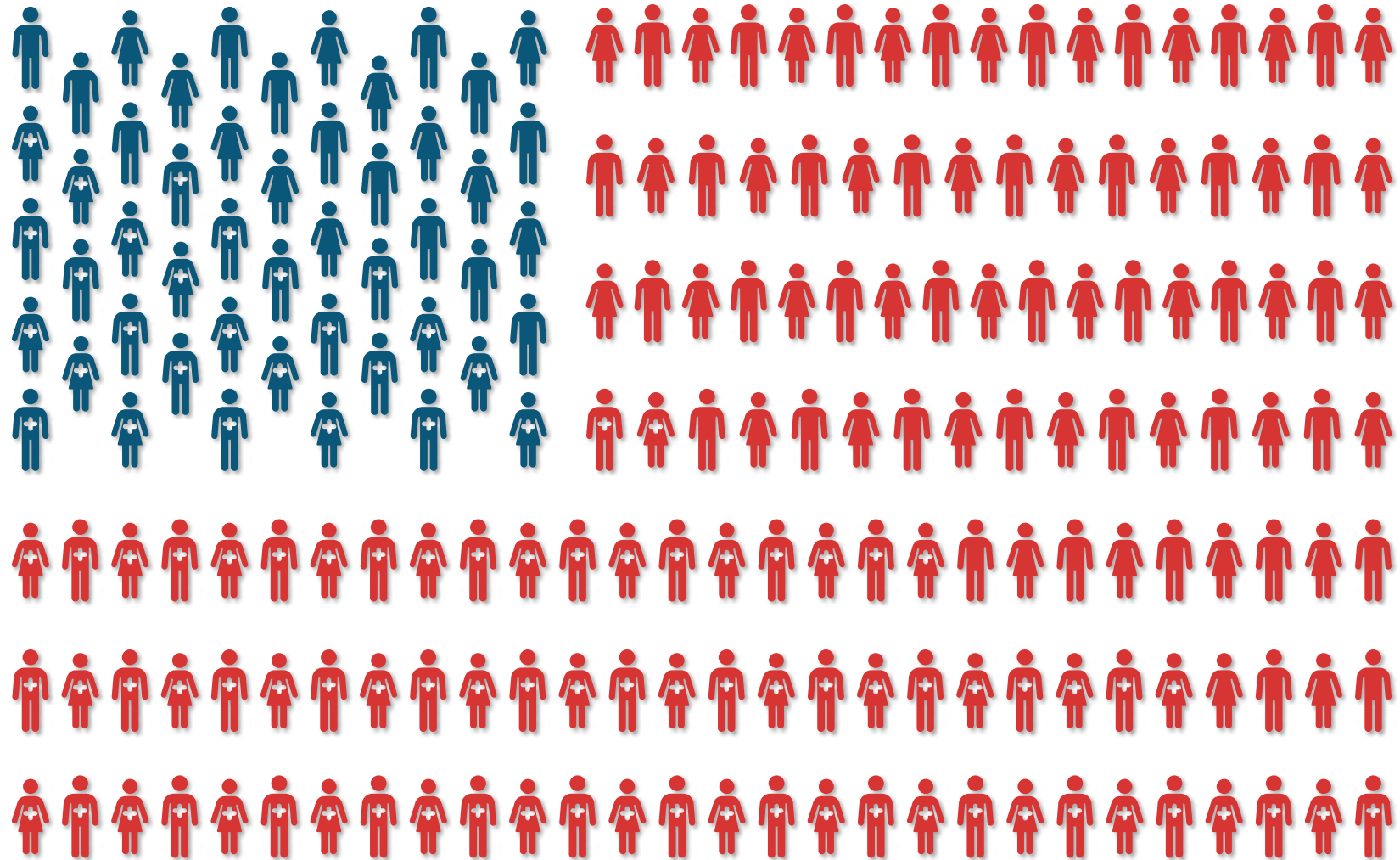
Key findings

1.
Staffing and safety are two sides of the same coin

41% of senior care organizations name staff retention as their top challenge, outranking even low occupancy **(30%)**.

Staffing issues impact resident safety. False alarms remain a core issue, with almost half of care workers admitting to direct experience of delayed response to residents who overuse nurse call systems. This is a key reason why fall detection is ranked as the second-biggest challenge, reported by **37%** of senior care professionals.

With fewer frontline caregivers available to carry out routine room visits, as well as the limitations of standard fall alert solutions, it's clear that the status quo puts residents at risk.

2.
Staff are struggling with workload, pay, hours and paperwork

In addition to the well-known issues of heavy workload, low pay and long shifts, our survey revealed that frontline staff are spending an average of **8.2 hours** per week on admin, such as end-of-shift reports and fall risk assessments.

This also impacts residents. **49%** of respondents stated that lack of time to document or update care plans is a key obstacle to person-centered care delivery.

Senior care's biggest challenges
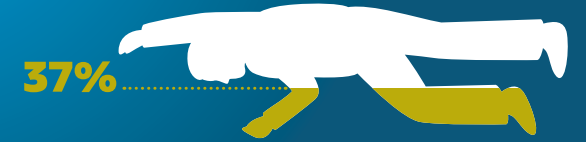
41%
Staff retention

37%
Fall detection

30%
Low occupancy

33%
Delivering person-centered care

29%
Rising costs

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3.
Residents overuse nurse call alarms, impacting quality of care

64% of senior care staff state that over half of nurse call alerts are non-emergencies, representing both a huge drain on resources and a threat to residents' safety.

For the first time, we asked senior care professionals to reveal how nurse call overuse affects response time, with a shocking **45%** admitting that they or a colleague have responded more slowly to a resident with a history of such behavior.

4.
Senior care staff demand better resident data

Staff report that they currently rely on conversations and observations to create resident care plans, methods which are inevitably imprecise, time-consuming and which place a huge burden of responsibility on caregivers themselves.

When asked about the benefits that new technology ought to deliver, respondents identified two clear priorities: technology that reduces workload **(44%)** and collects more data on resident activity, and falls **(44%)**.

False alarms and delayed response

64%
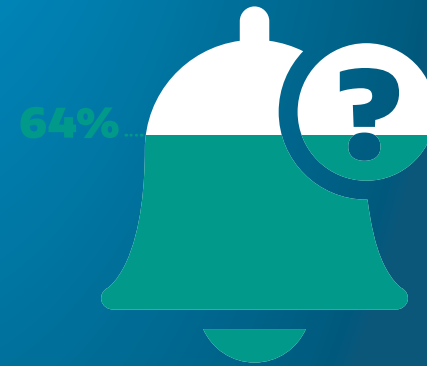
Nurse call alerts that turn out to be false alarms

45%
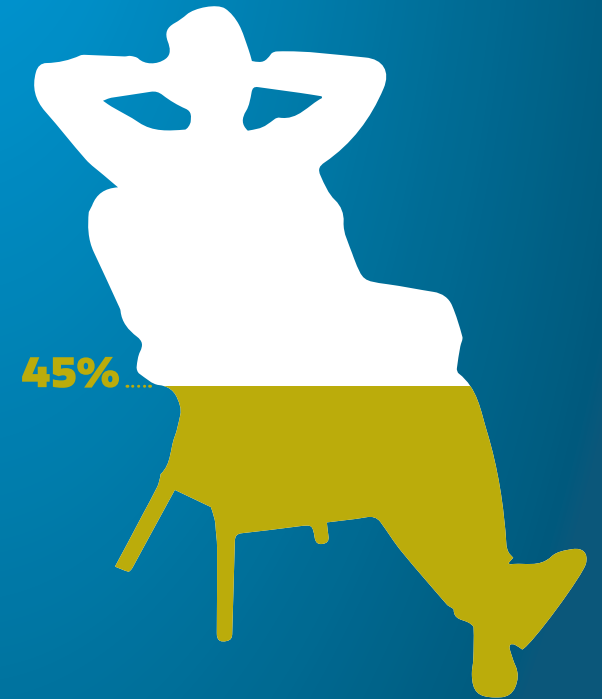
Senior care staff with direct experience of alarm fatigue that delays response

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5.

Caregivers know what data they need

Our survey showed that senior care staff have a very clear idea of the insights that would both enhance care delivery and reduce workload.

They want data on bathroom usage **(80%)**, confirmation of staff visiting rooms **(80%)** and accurate fall detection alerts **(75%)**.

Most demanded data

80%

Room visit confirmation

80%

Bathroom visits

75%

Fall detection

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Challenges

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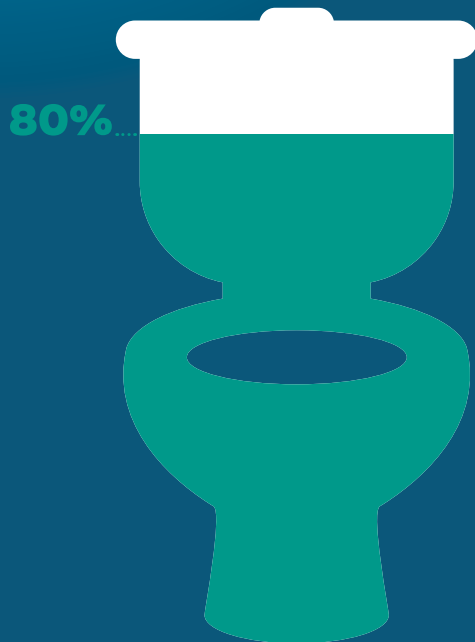
Staff retention and fall detection: senior care's two biggest pain points

The two most significant challenges for senior care organizations are staff retention **(41%)** and fall detection **(37%)**.

High staff turnover damages profitability due to recruitment and training costs as well as knowledge loss.

Attrition also impacts residents. When a staff member leaves, it takes time for their replacement to learn each resident's needs and habits, as well as their unique indicators of fall risk.
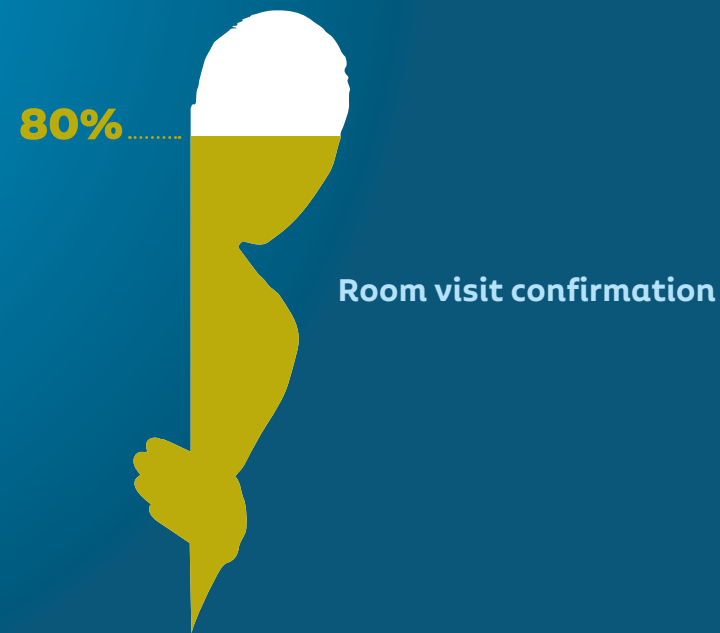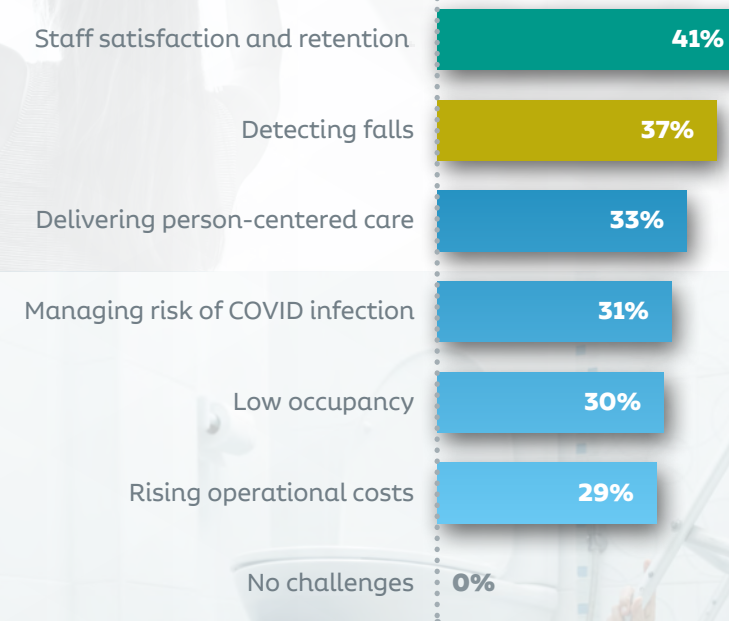
Overstretched staff may struggle to carry out routine room visits, increasing the risk of a long lie if a standard fall alert device fails to summon help.

The fact that fall detection remains such a significant challenge suggests that most mainstream solutions, from buttons and cords to mats and wearable devices are failing to ensure resident safety.

Falls directly impact the bottom line. Facilities need to consider reputational damage and reduced resident lifetime value as well as fines and litigation.

Figure 1: *Today's top challenges for senior care organizations*

Challenge	%
Staff satisfaction and retention	41%
Detecting falls	37%
Delivering person-centered care	33%
Managing risk of COVID infection	31%
Low occupancy	30%
Rising operational costs	29%
No challenges	0%

*Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%

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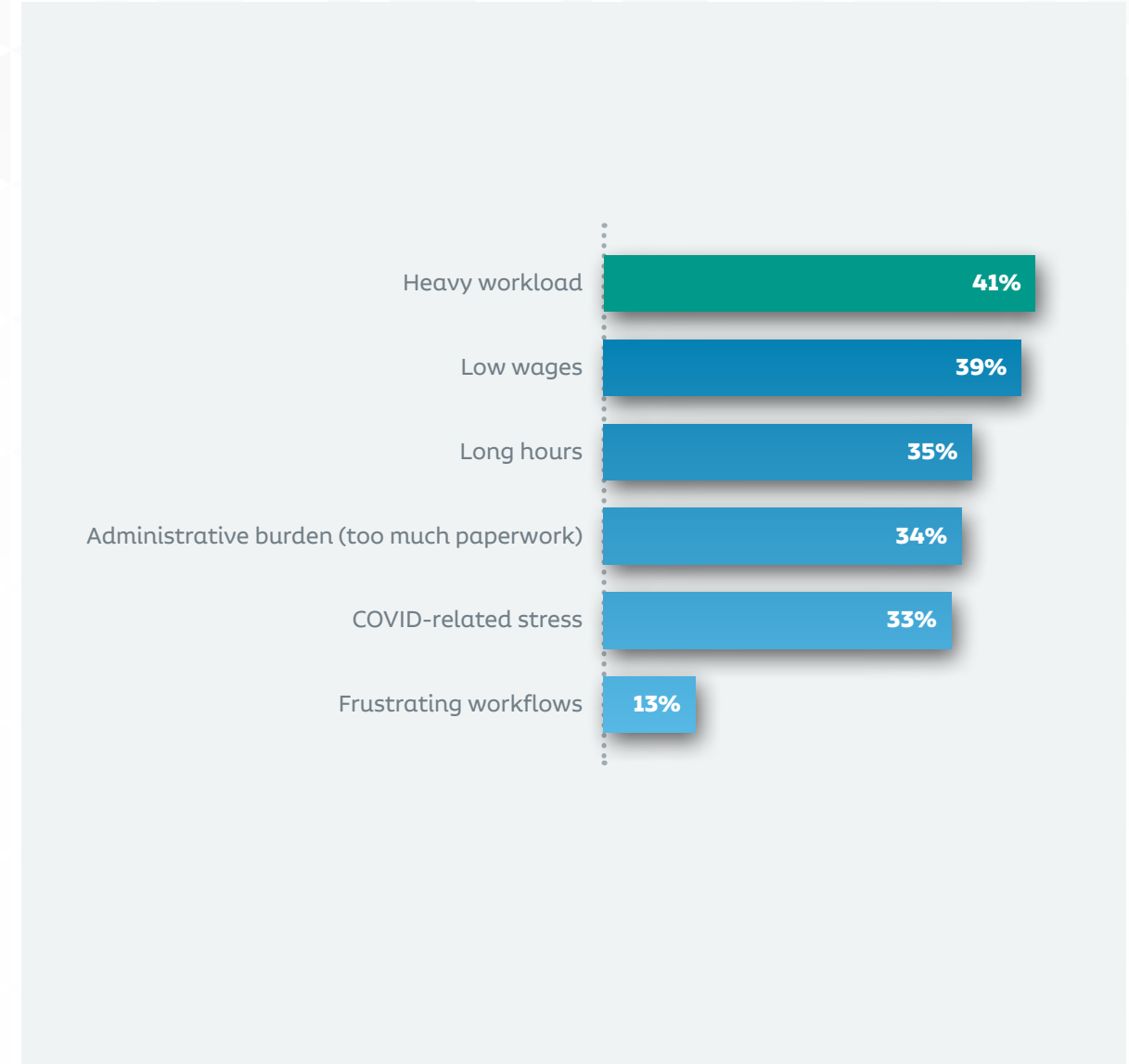# Heavy workload and low wages accelerate attrition

Respondents indicated that the main reasons for the staffing crisis in senior care are heavy workload **(41%)** and low wages **(39%)**.

While one employee should be responsible for around eight residents, a recent study by the US Department of Health and Human Services found that in a quarter of AL facilities, each caregiver is looking after as many as 23.

Overburdened caregivers simply don't have the time to observe or document the warning signs of failing health and heightened fall risk such as reduced mobility and increased bathroom usage.

Putting additional responsibilities such as these on their shoulders will only make them more likely to quit.

Figure 2: *Leading reasons for staffing crisis*

Heavy workload	**41%**
Low wages	**39%**
Long hours	**35%**
Administrative burden (too much paperwork)	**34%**
COVID-related stress	**33%**
Frustrating workflows	**13%**

*Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%

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Frontline staff are drowning in paperwork

We asked all survey respondents how long frontline staff spend per week on administrative duties such as:

▶ **updating care plans**
▶ **completing reports on resident falls**
▶ **risk assessments**

On average, respondents estimate frontline staff are spending **8.2 hours** a week on administrative duties.

However, managers and executive managers tend to assume that frontline staff spend less time on paperwork than they actually do.

This makes it harder for them to anticipate burnout and mitigate attrition, exacerbating the retention problem and the senior care skills shortage.

Figure 3: *Frontline staff time spent on administrative duties*

% of respondents

Weighted average: 8.2 hours per week

| 7% | 70% | 23% |
| 3–5 hours per week | 6–10 hours per week | 10+ hours per week |
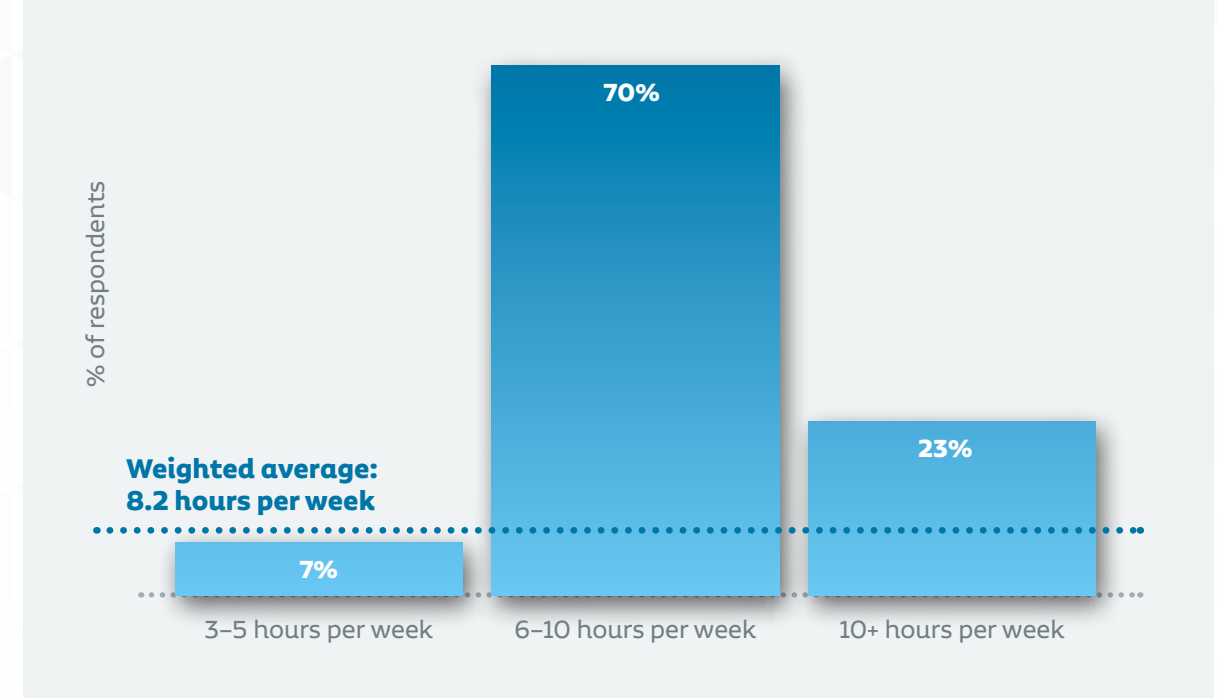
Figure 4: *Varying perceptions that frontline staff spend 6-10 hours per week on admin*

Team Member — 80%
Manager — 70%
Executive Manager — 55%

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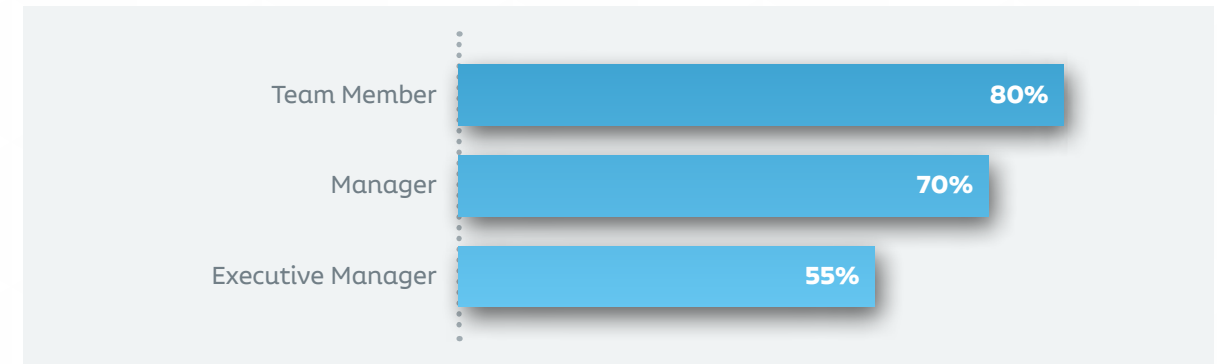
Staff are feeling their way in the dark

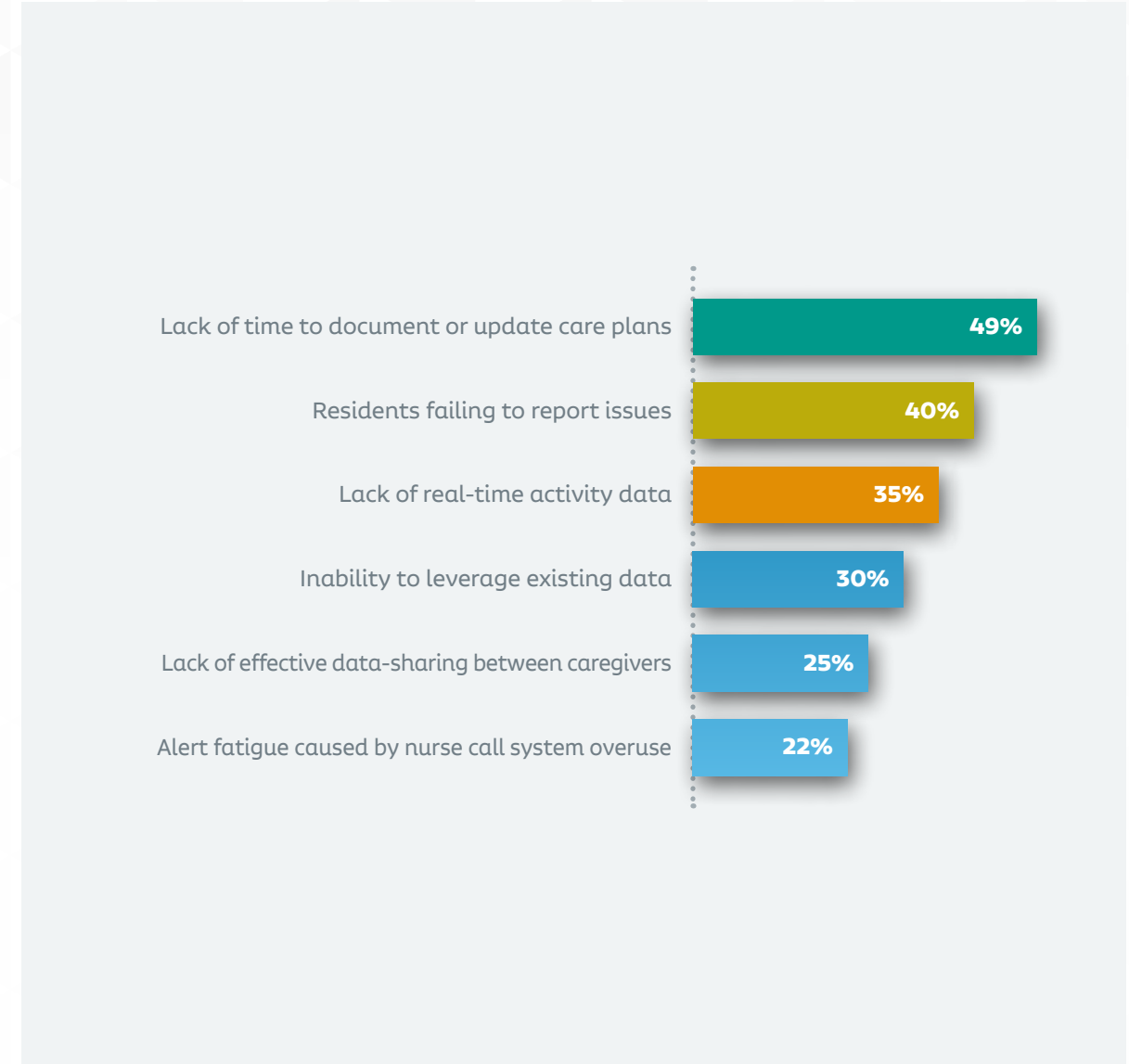Respondents stated that their biggest obstacles to delivering person-centered care are:

▶ lack of time for care planning **(49%)**,

▶ residents failing to report issues **(40%)**,

▶ and lack of real-time activity data **(35%)**.

It's not only residents who suffer. Other caregivers are unable to leverage their colleagues' insights.

Residents themselves are frequently reticent. Some are too proud or afraid to admit issues. Others have cognitive impairments that prevent them from recalling or explaining their issues.

The lack of real-time resident activity data is also significant. Most nurse call systems and single-purpose technologies such as bed mats aren't designed to gather activity data that would provide insights into residents' health, wellbeing, and mobility.

Figure 5: Biggest obstacles to creating person-centred care plans

Obstacle	Percentage
Lack of time to document or update care plans	49%
Residents failing to report issues	40%
Lack of real-time activity data	35%
Inability to leverage existing data	30%
Lack of effective data-sharing between caregivers	25%
Alert fatigue caused by nurse call system overuse	22%

*Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%

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Most alerts are non-emergencies

64% of respondents state that over half of nurse call alerts are false alarms.

Residents frequently press the button or pull the cord for help with changing the TV channel or simply because they're lonely.

This behavior not only wastes time that staff can ill afford – it also damages relationships between residents and caregivers.

Nurse call overuse is a bigger problem in larger facilities than in smaller communities **(83%** vs **55%)**, most probably because residents, just like modern city-dwellers, are at higher risk of loneliness.

Figure 6: Proportion of false alarms due to resident overuse of nurse call systems
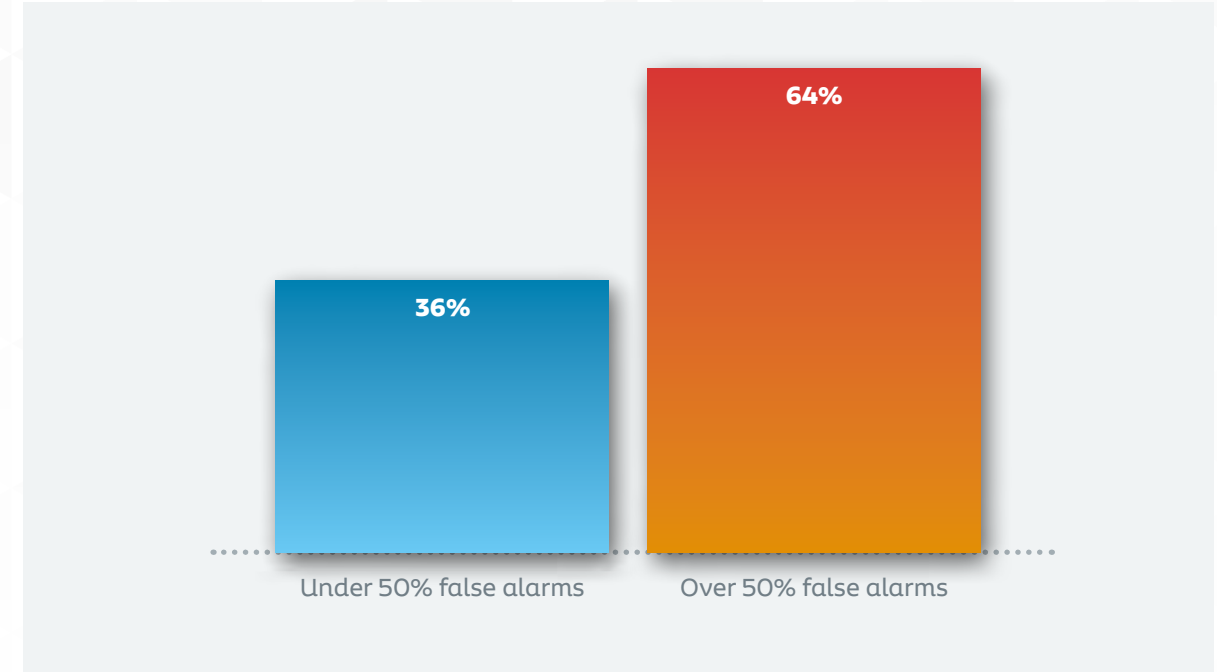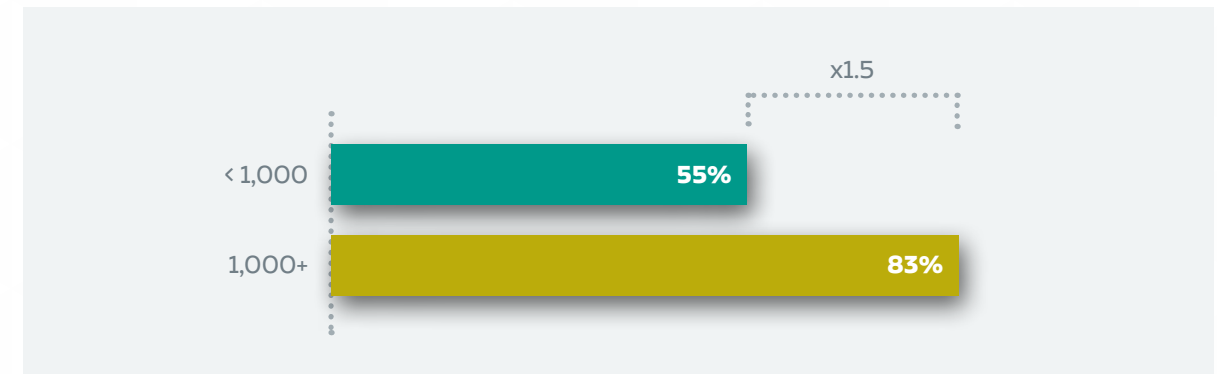

36% — Under 50% false alarms
64% — Over 50% false alarms

Figure 7: 50%+ false alarms by number of residents in organization

x1.5

< 1,000 — 55%
1,000+ — 83%

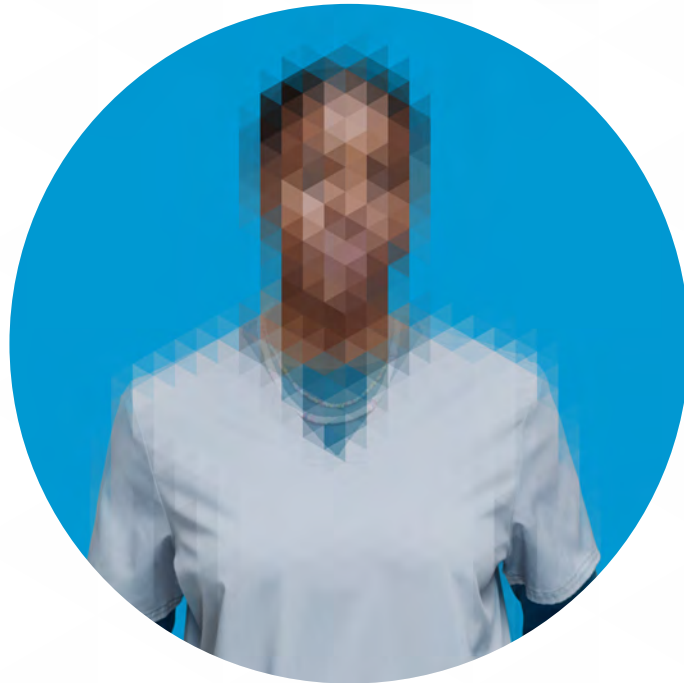vayyar™ care

Alarm fatigue could have deadly consequences

45% of respondents admit that they or a colleague have responded more slowly to an alert from a resident with a history of nurse call overuse.

The boy who cried wolf?

When residents waste staff time, they might experience delayed response when they truly need it.

What's even more troubling is that this figure represents only those who admit to experiencing or witnessing alarm fatigue.

The true figure is likely to be significantly higher.

Figure 8: *Impact of nurse call overuse on response times*

100%

0%

45%

"A colleague or I have delayed response to a resident with a history of nurse call overuse."

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Solutions

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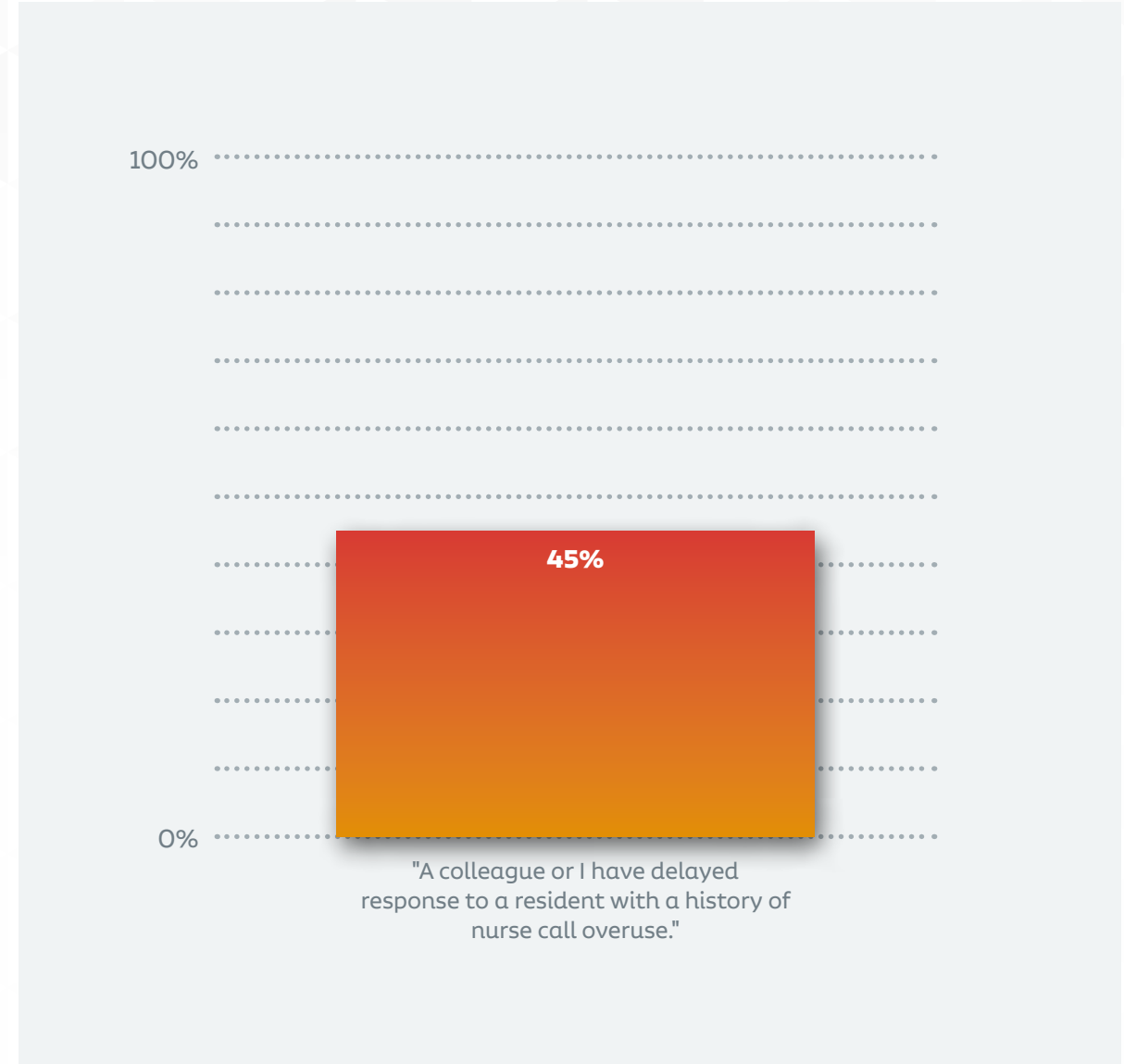
Tech needs to ease the burden and light the way

Our survey respondents want solutions that reduce staff workload **(44%)** and collect more resident activity data **(44%)** to enhance fall risk assessment and predictive care.

The more data senior care organizations gather, the more visibility they will have to predict resident needs and work more efficiently.

Resident activity data can include how long residents spend in their rooms, in bed and at rest, revealing mobility loss—a key fall risk factor. It can also point to psychological issues such as loneliness and depression.

Figure 9: *What senior care tech needs to deliver*

Reduced staff workload	44%
More resident activity and falls data	44%
Easy data-sharing	12%

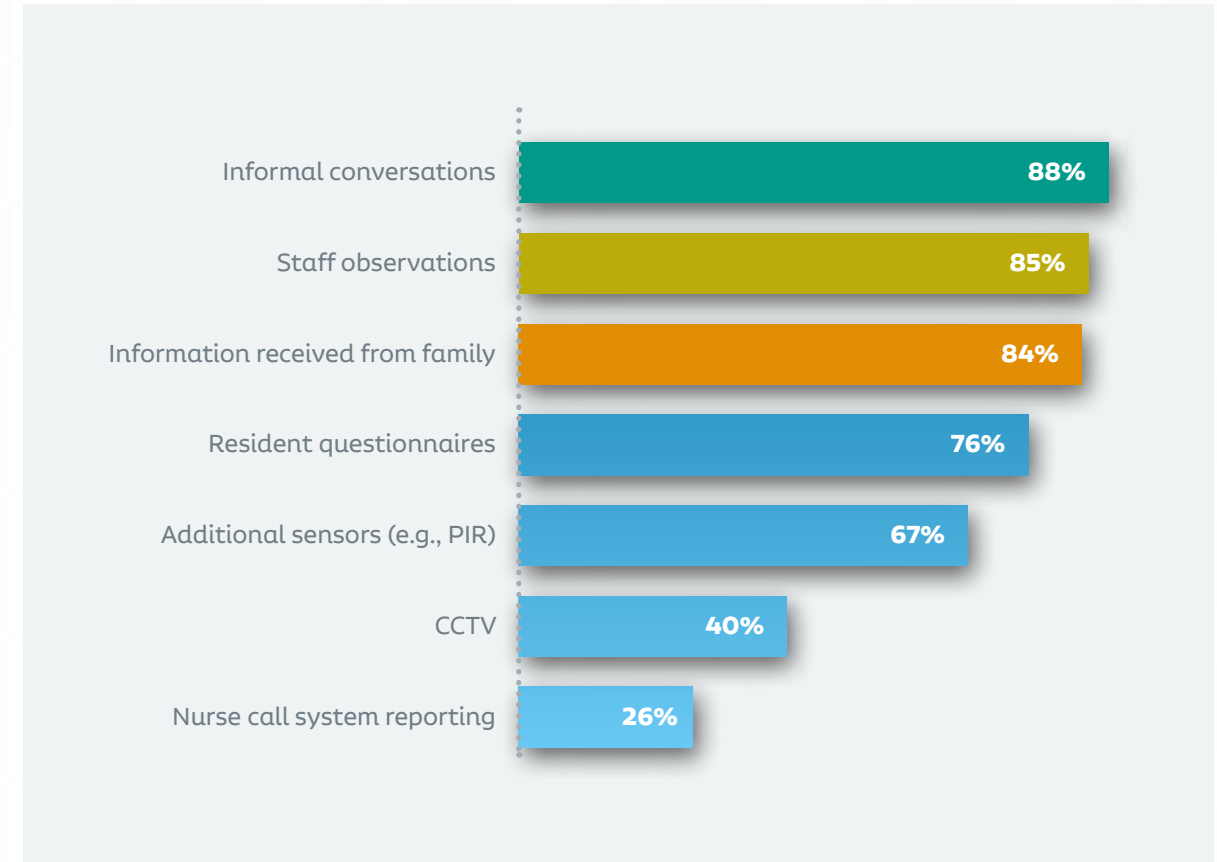vayyar™ care
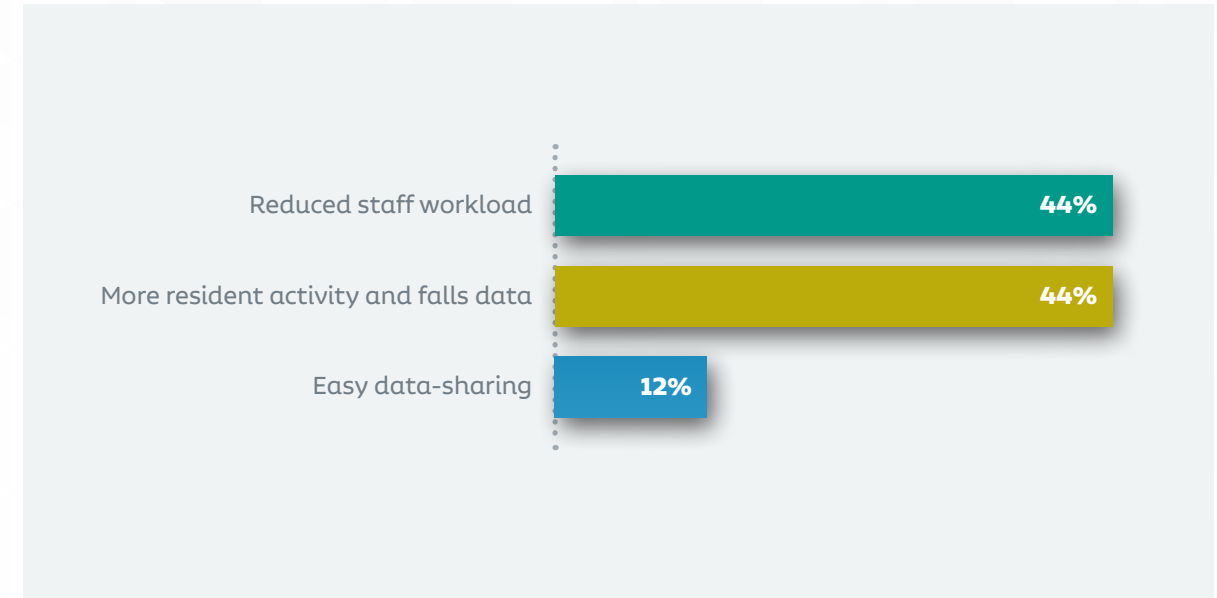
Gathering data relies on old-school methods

The three most common methods of gathering data on residents' health and wellbeing are:

▶ informal conversations **(88%)**,

▶ staff observations **(85%)**, and

▶ information received from family **(84%)**.

While human interactions and observations will always be key components of care, data gathered in this way is often subjective and relies on residents' ability and willingness to clearly communicate issues, as well as each caregiver's ability to ask the right questions and accurately record the answers.

What's more, many overstretched caregivers simply don't have the time to carry out regular resident evaluations such as mobility assessments.

Figure 10: *Resident data-gathering methods*

Method	Percentage
Informal conversations	88%
Staff observations	85%
Information received from family	84%
Resident questionnaires	76%
Additional sensors (e.g., PIR)	67%
CCTV	40%
Nurse call system reporting	26%

*Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%

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Senior care staff know exactly what data they need

The data that would best support person-centered care includes:

- ▶ bathroom visit times/ frequency **(80%)**,
- ▶ room visit confirmation **(80%)**,
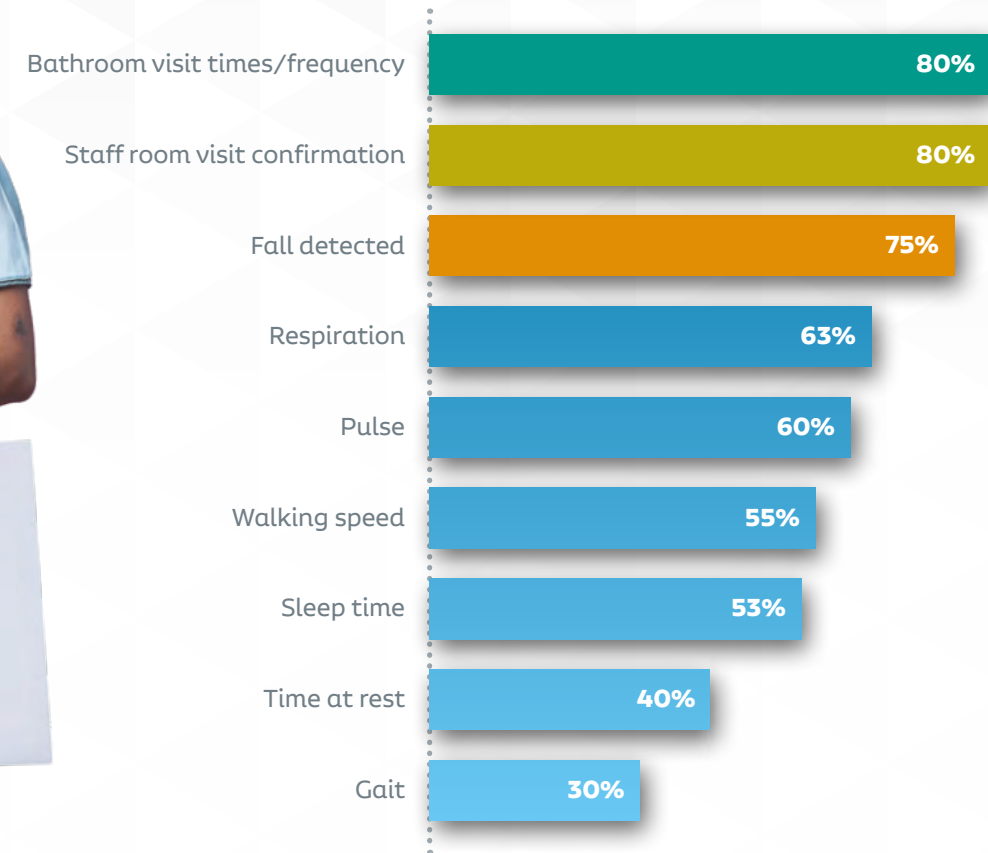- ▶ and fall detection **(75%)**.

Changes to a resident's bathroom habits could indicate a medical condition such as a urinary tract infection, and an unusually high number of bathroom visits overnight can cause fatigue, increasing the likelihood of a fall.

Confirmation of room visits by staff are vital in terms of minimizing the risks of a long lie. This data also allows a facility to demonstrate to the relevant authorities and residents' loved ones that staff are fulfilling their duty of care.

GIVE US THE TECHNOLOGY

Figure 11: *Data to support person-centered care*

Bathroom visit times/frequency	80%
Staff room visit confirmation	80%
Fall detected	75%
Respiration	63%
Pulse	60%
Walking speed	55%
Sleep time	53%
Time at rest	40%
Gait	30%

*Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages will add up to more than 100%

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Hidden falls, out-of-room detection and unwanted visitors top the list of must-have alerts

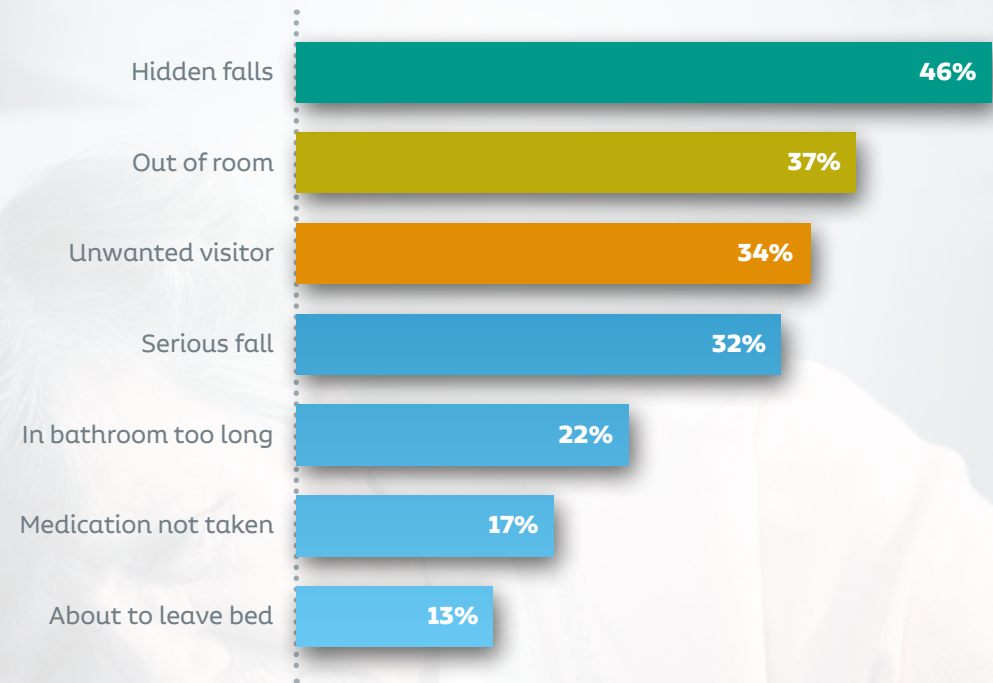The real-time alerts that would most enhance care delivery are for:

- ▶ hidden falls **(46%)**,
- ▶ residents being out of their rooms **(37%)**,
- ▶ and unwanted visitors **(34%)**.

Minor falls regularly lead to more serious incidents within six months, but only half of these falls are reported. Reasons for residents failing to notify staff include fear of losing independence, shame, and simply not wishing to worry their families.

Nocturnal wandering, meanwhile, can indicate dementia-related sundowning and puts the resident at high risk of falling.

Dementia patients are also likely to enter other residents' rooms without permission.

Figure 13: *Top alerts to enhance care delivery*

Alert	Percentage
Hidden falls	46%
Out of room	37%
Unwanted visitor	34%
Serious fall	32%
In bathroom too long	22%
Medication not taken	17%
About to leave bed	13%

*Question allowed more than one answer and as a result, percentages add up to more than 100%

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Demographics

Residents served by organization, job seniority and team member function
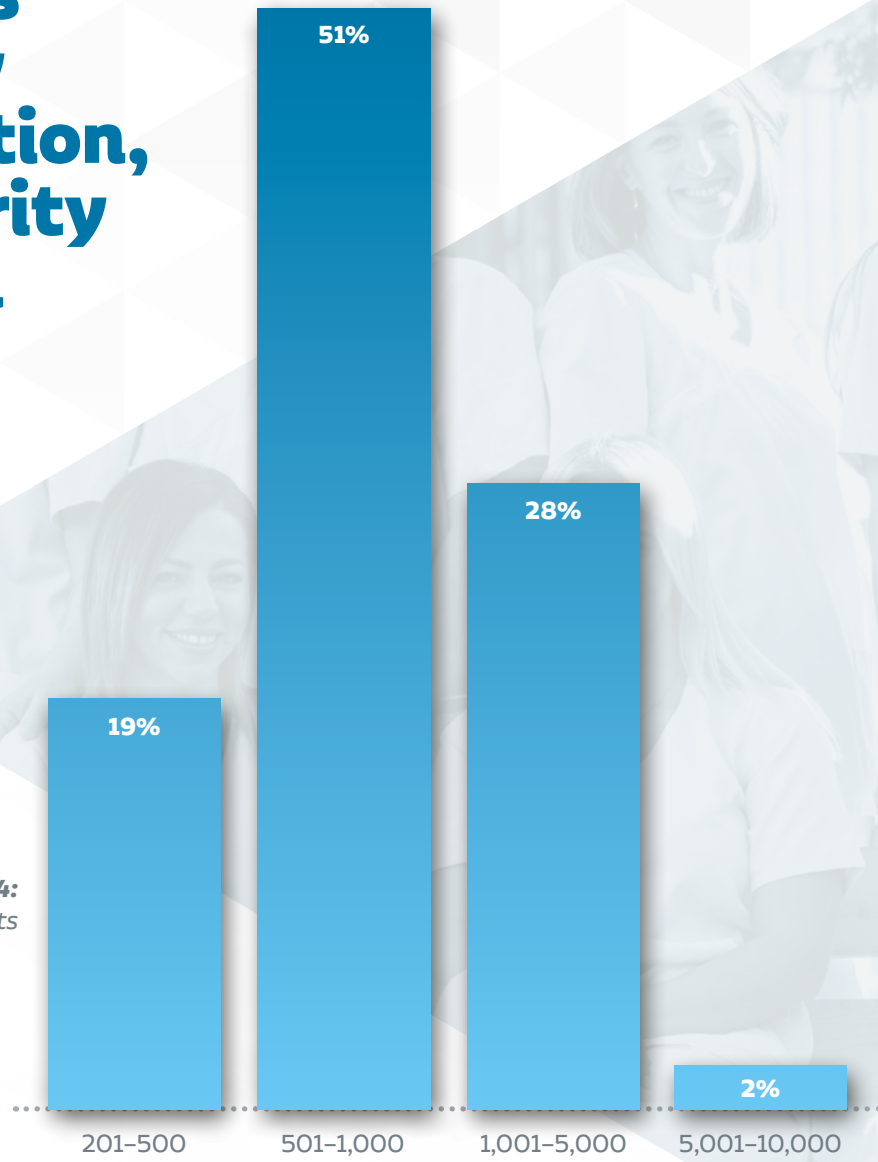

Figure 14: Residents

- 201–500: 19%
- 501–1,000: 51%
- 1,001–5,000: 28%
- 5,001–10,000: 2%

Figure 15: Job seniority

- Team Member 23%
- Manager 27%
- C-Suite 22%
- Executive management 29%

Figure 16: Team member function

- Caregiver 37%
- Nurse 64%

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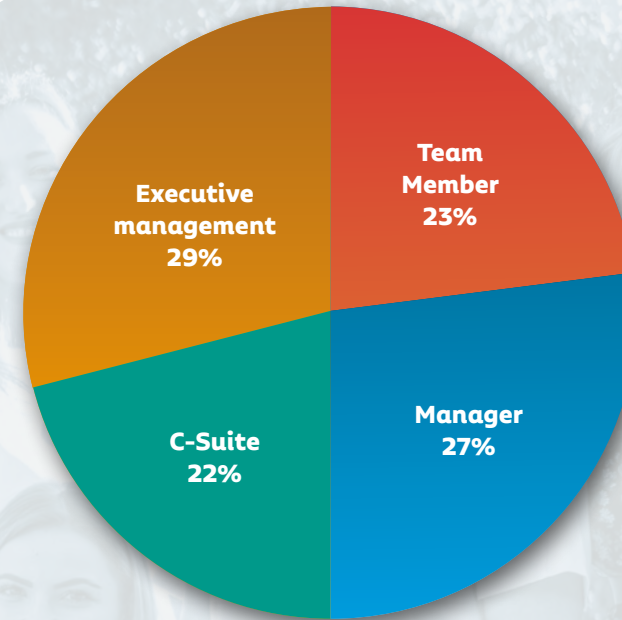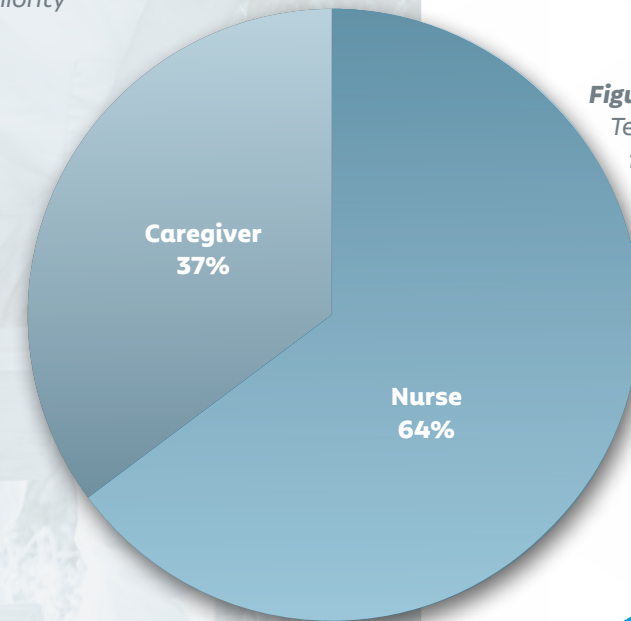
About
Vayyar Care

Your virtual caregiver in every room

With unique touchless technology—no buttons, cords, cameras or wearables—our 4D imaging solution provides instant fall detection and rich data on presence and activity, tracking a resident's behavior over time.

The data supports notifications on imminent bed exits, enabling real-time fall intervention, measures time at rest to reveal mobility levels, and tracks bathroom visit times and frequency to highlight medical conditions.

Our RF sensors provide accurate, real-time sensing in all conditions, ensuring **24/7 visibility** while maintaining privacy.

Vayyar Care supports predictive and person-centered care while easing the burden on caregivers.

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Immediate fall detection

By detecting when a resident moves from an upright to a prone position, a Vayyar Care sensor can alert caregivers via any channel, enabling them to provide timely assistance.

Over 95% fall detection rate

Vayyar Care achieves industry-leading accuracy, proven during a study of devices installed in assisted living and memory care facilities. By minimizing false alerts, the solution ensures optimal resident safety and alleviates pressure on caregivers.

Vayyar Care Sensor
The device requires no user input, enabling caregivers to provide rapid response to emergencies.

Fall Detected
The device identifies that a resident has fallen.

Fall Confirmed
Unless canceled within a few seconds (due to the resident standing), the device identifies the fall as confirmed.

Alert Stage
The device sends text messages to the defined caregivers and an alert sounds and appears on the facility dashboard.

Fall Exit
If the device detects a person standing after a fall, it cancels the fall event automatically.

Deep resident data

Vayyar Care provides rich data on each resident's wellbeing, giving caregivers the ability to identify a wide range of trends that could warrant intervention, as well as positive changes that prove the effectiveness of care strategies.

It integrates with any existing nurse call system and care platform, enabling staff to prioritize care delivery, manage time more effectively, and enhance health outcomes across the board.

Time in bed
Spending an unusual amount of time in bed could indicate illness, injury, or depression.

Bathroom visits
An unusually high number of bathroom visits could be symptomatic of an infection or a side-effect of medication.

Time out of room
The longer a resident spends out of their room, the happier and healthier they are likely to be.

Night-time wandering
Spotting sundowning in residents who may suffer from early-onset Alzheimer's is the key to protecting them.
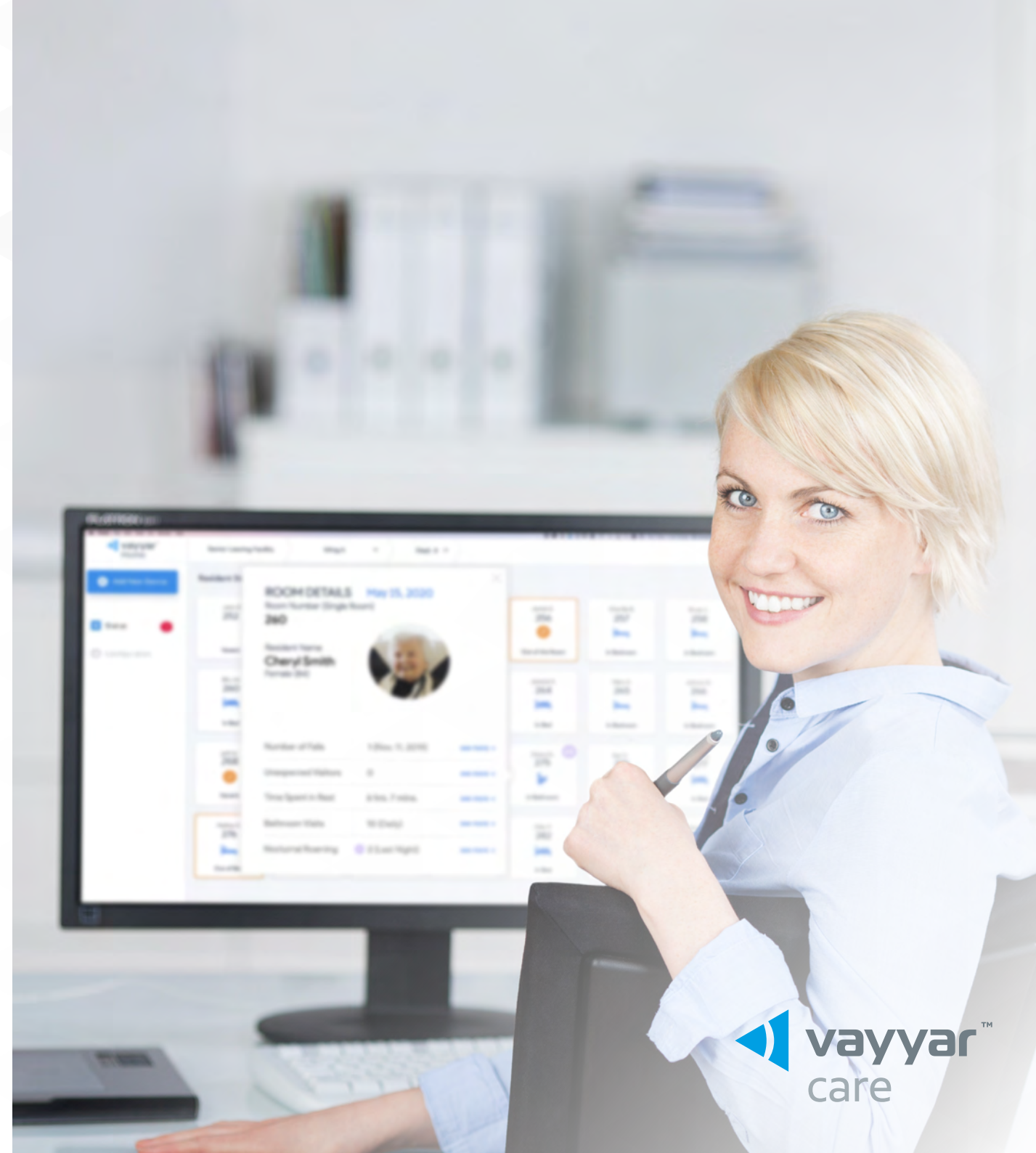
Vayyar Care partners leverage this data to provide a wide range of metrics such as:

▶ **Mobility score**
Data gathered from entire living space including transitions between rooms.

▶ **Sleep score**
Sleep quality evaluated through consistency of bedtime and wakeup, tranquillity, and other factors.

▶ **Stability score**
Risk assessment based on observed and predicted falls in the living space.

▶ **Wellness score**
Aggregated mobility, sleep and social scores provide a holistic indicator of each resident's wellbeing.

Facility-wide data
Operators can monitor all residents and view aggregated data to track KPI performance, fall incidence, response times and overall health outcomes.
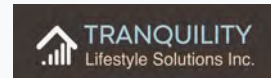
A lifeline for your front line

Vayyar Care eases the burden on senior care staff in a number of ways.

With fall detection accuracy of over **95%**, it mitigates the problem of false alerts and the alarm fatigue that's often a consequence.

By confirming that residents are safe, Vayyar Care can also reduce the need for routine room checks, allowing staff to work smarter.

The data collected by Vayyar Care also enables our connected care platform partners to flag up which residents need closer care, allowing staff to focus their energies accordingly.

These analytics also serve to support caregivers by streamlining administrative duties, providing at-a-glance data for end-of-shift reports, fall risk assessments and care plan updates.

For a rapidly growing number of operators, Vayyar Care is a key part of the long-term solution to the senior care staffing crisis.

For more information contact:

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🌐 **vayyar.com/care/b2b/overview**

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🐦 **vayyarinc**

f **vayyarltd**

FEELING SAFE IS MY RIGHT

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