

KEY FINDINGS

2025 Michigan Healthcare Workforce Index

Only Four Occupations Projected to Have a Surplus by 2034

Dentists, Occupational Therapists, Radiation Therapists, and Surgical Technologists are the only healthcare occupations projected to have a workforce surplus in Michigan over the next decade. Even among these, regional access remains a problem – Michigan has 242 dental health professional shortage areas **affecting over 1.5 million residents**.

Home Health Aides Face a 149% Projected Shortage

By 2034, Home Health and Personal Care Aides are projected to face the **highest shortage** of any occupation in the Index. By 2026, that translates to a **32% shortage**, or about **32,500 open jobs**, exacerbated by a Michigan **turnover rate of 87%**, far above the national rate of 70%.

Nursing Turnover and Burnout Are Alarming

According to a 2023 Michigan Nurses' Study, **35.5% of Registered Nurses (RNs) plan to leave** nursing within a year. Regional surveys show **burnout rates as high as 47.4%** in Northern Michigan, contributing to ongoing workforce instability despite modest projected shortages for RNs and LPNs.

Pharmacist Workforce and Wage Decline

Pharmacists had only **21% wage growth** from 2013 to 2023, compared to 46.7% for Dentists and 45.8% for Physicians. Pharmacy **school applicants dropped 35%** from 2011 to 2022. Between 2013 and 2023, the number of pharmacy **employees fell by 2,400** despite an increase in the number of open pharmacies.

Dental Assistants Rank Lowest Overall

Dental Assistants are the "unhealthiest" occupation in the Index, with a **129% shortage** and **67% turnover** rate. Michigan ranks lowest in the Great Lakes region for Dental Assistant wages, and 70% of dentists find recruitment "very" or "extremely challenging."

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Behavioral Health Workforce in Crisis

Michigan has **233 mental health HPSAs**, with only nine counties unaffected. Psychologists face the **highest shortage** and **lowest wage** rank among behavioral health occupations. Over **21%** of psychologist roles at community mental health organizations remain vacant.

OBGYN Residency Applicants Declining Sharply

Despite Michigan maintaining legal reproductive care access, OBGYN residency **applicants dropped 12.3%** between 2022–2024. The post-Dobbs legal uncertainty surrounding reproductive care may be deterring students from pursuing OBGYN careers even in supportive states.

Midwives Have the Highest Shortage Among Nurses

Nurse Midwives have a **33% projected shortage**, significantly higher than RNs (3%) and LPNs (4%). The added education burden, combined with limited practice settings, particularly in rural and underserved areas, limits growth in this field.

Patient Support Occupations Are Extremely Vulnerable

All patient support roles have **turnover rates over 50%** and **wages below Michigan's median** (\$22.57). Nursing Assistants have a **93% turnover rate**, while shortages for all patient support roles exceed **80%** over ten years.

Growing Workforce Diversity in Lower-Wage Roles

Many of the most diverse healthcare occupations – such as LPNs, behavioral health professionals, and patient support roles – are also **among the lowest paid**. Without career pathways and retention strategies, Michigan risks losing workforce segments that best reflect and serve diverse communities.