

DSG | Global

DSG Insights

2025 Healthcare Survey
and Workforce Movement
Trends



Contents of The Report

- 03.** About the Survey
- 04.** Survey Respondents
- 05.** Employee Values
- 06.** Preferences by Career Stage
- 07.** Staffing Issues
- 08.** Employee Retention
- 09.** Occupational Preferences
- 10.** AI Insights
- 11.** Employee Movement
- 13.** Recommendations
- 14.** About DSG Consulting



About the Survey

In today's rapidly evolving healthcare landscape, understanding what drives satisfaction and retention is more critical now than ever. Healthcare professionals—across roles, regions, and career stages—are navigating increased pressures, changing patient needs, and ever-evolving workplace trends. This report distills insights from a broad spectrum of healthcare professionals on what factors contribute to a “top place to work”—offering actionable guidance for leaders committed to building supportive, high-performing cultures.

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DSG Global Insights: Healthcare Workforce Trends



Survey Respondents

This survey collected directional insights from 40 U.S. healthcare professionals—spanning a range of roles and settings—through targeted outreach conducted in April 2025. While the sample size was modest, clear patterns emerged—offering timely, directional insights into the experiences and perceptions shaping today’s healthcare work environment.

40 Respondents

Millennials (Gen Y, 1981–1996): 54%

Generation X (1965–1980): 29%

Baby Boomers (1946–1964): 11%

Generation Z (1997–2012): 6%

**Average
Years of
Experience:**

15.4 years

Location

Southeast: 39%

West: 26%

Northeast: 21%

Mid-Atlantic: 8%

International: 8%

Role Categories

Clinicians 67%

Executives 28%

Trainees 3%

Other 2%

Overall Employee Values

1. Compensation: A Foundational Expectation

No surprises here: compensation is seen as the top factor for employees when defining a top workplace, with nearly 8 in 10 respondents (77%) pointing to competitive pay and benefits as a non-negotiable.

2. Leadership and Culture: A Defining Factor

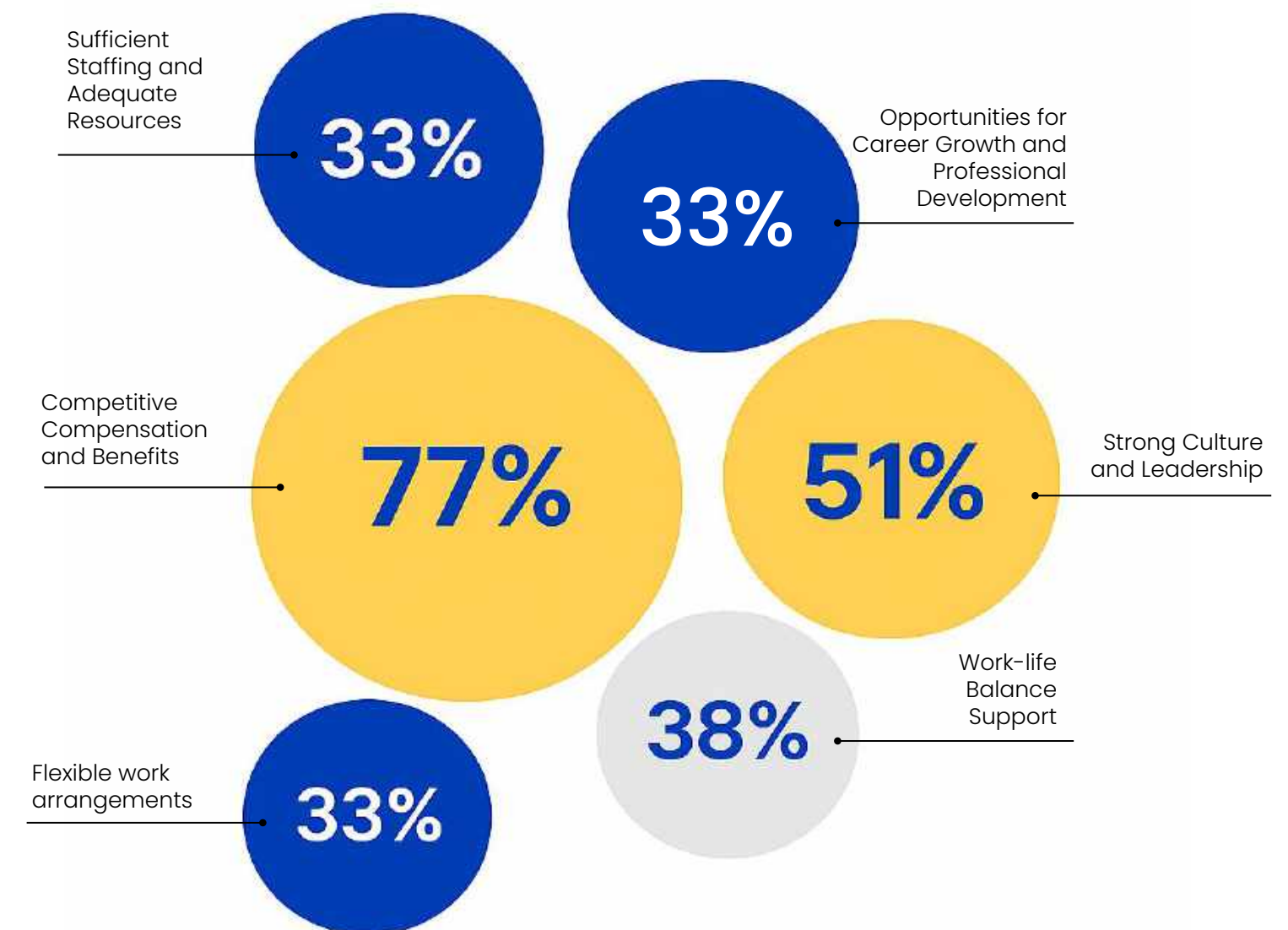
Over half of respondents highlight strong leadership and culture as a key element that differentiates a top workplace.

3. Work–Life Factors: Essential Considerations

About one-third of respondents emphasize the importance of work–life balance, clear career paths, flexible schedules, and adequate staffing. These elements are increasingly essential—not optional—in attracting top talent.

Q. In your opinion, which of the following factors are most important for a healthcare organization to be considered a top place to work?

The following shows the % of respondents who identify a listed factor among their three most important workplace attributes



Respondents could select up to three factors; percentages therefore do not sum to 100%.

Shifting Priorities Across Career Stages

While competitive compensation and a strong culture are foundational to each group, other distinct priorities emerge across experience levels, underscoring the need for tailored organizational strategies.

→ **Early Career Professionals (0-5 years):**

Early career professionals prioritized work-life balance 10% more than their more experienced colleagues and were 3 times as likely to cite innovation as a key factor for a top workplace.

→ **Mid-Career Professionals (6-15 years):**

Mid-career professionals were nearly 2 times as likely as both early career and experienced respondents to prioritize flexible work arrangements.

→ **Experienced Professionals (15+ years):**

Experienced professionals were nearly 1.8 times as likely as early career professionals and about 1.4 times as likely as mid-level professionals to prioritize sufficient staffing and adequate resources.

Q. In your opinion, which of the following factors are most important for a healthcare organization to be considered a top place to work?



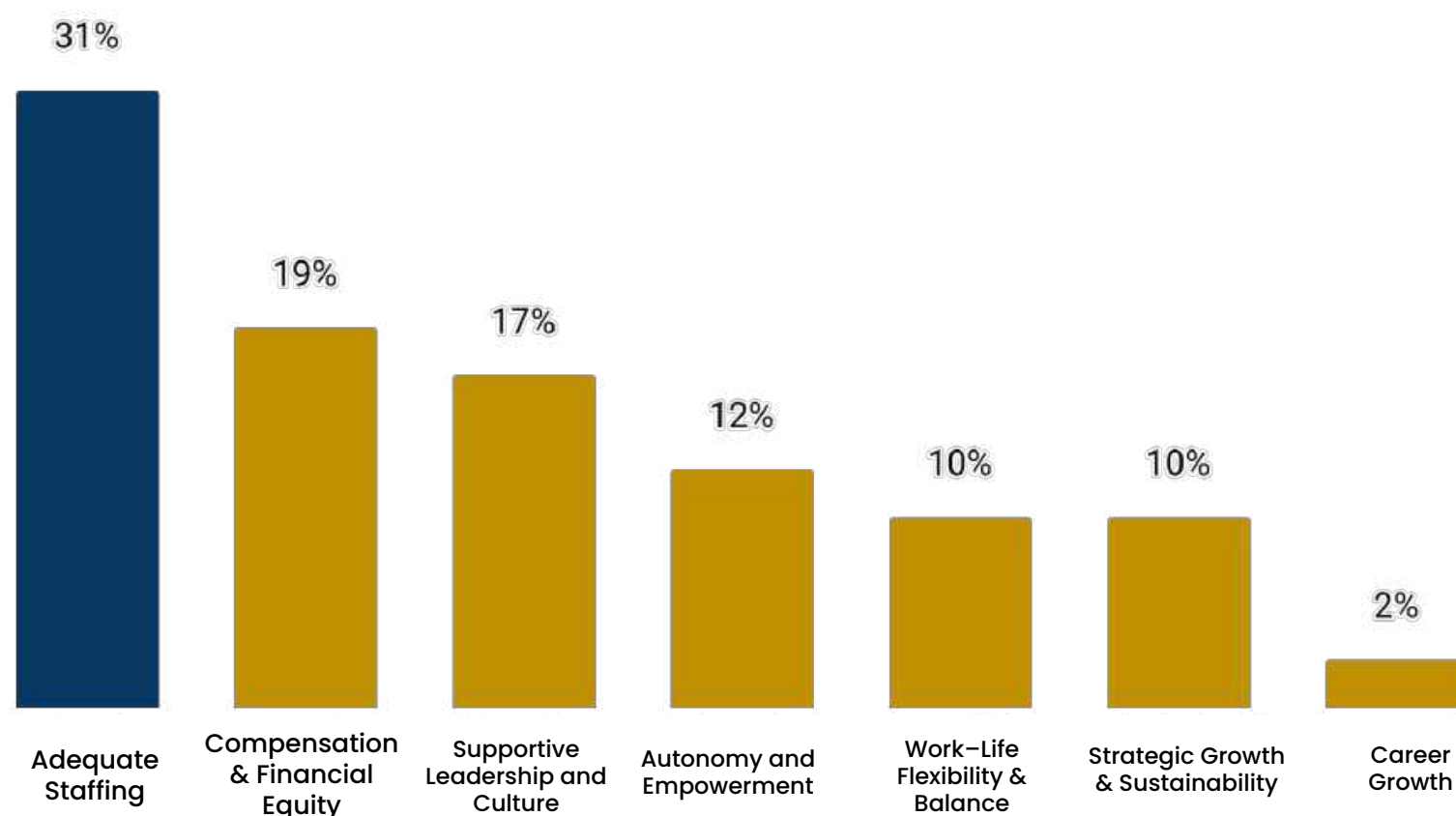
Staffing Issues Persist

The ongoing U.S. healthcare shortage is top of mind for respondents.

31% would like to see their workplace increase staffing and improve staff-to-patient ratios. This call for more resources underscores the systemic challenge impacting healthcare delivery and employee well-being.

Q. What is one improvement that would make your workplace significantly better?

% of respondents that identify each factor as the top improvement needed



In addition to workload pressures, employees highlighted other critical areas for workplace improvement:

Market-Aligned Compensation

Employees emphasized the need for market-aligned pay, indicating that competitive compensation remains a crucial yet unmet need for many.

Supportive Leadership & Patient-centered Culture

Respondents emphasized the need for more transparent, collaborative leadership and a patient-centered culture, underscoring that effective leadership directly shapes employee engagement, satisfaction, and organization performance.

Employee Retention

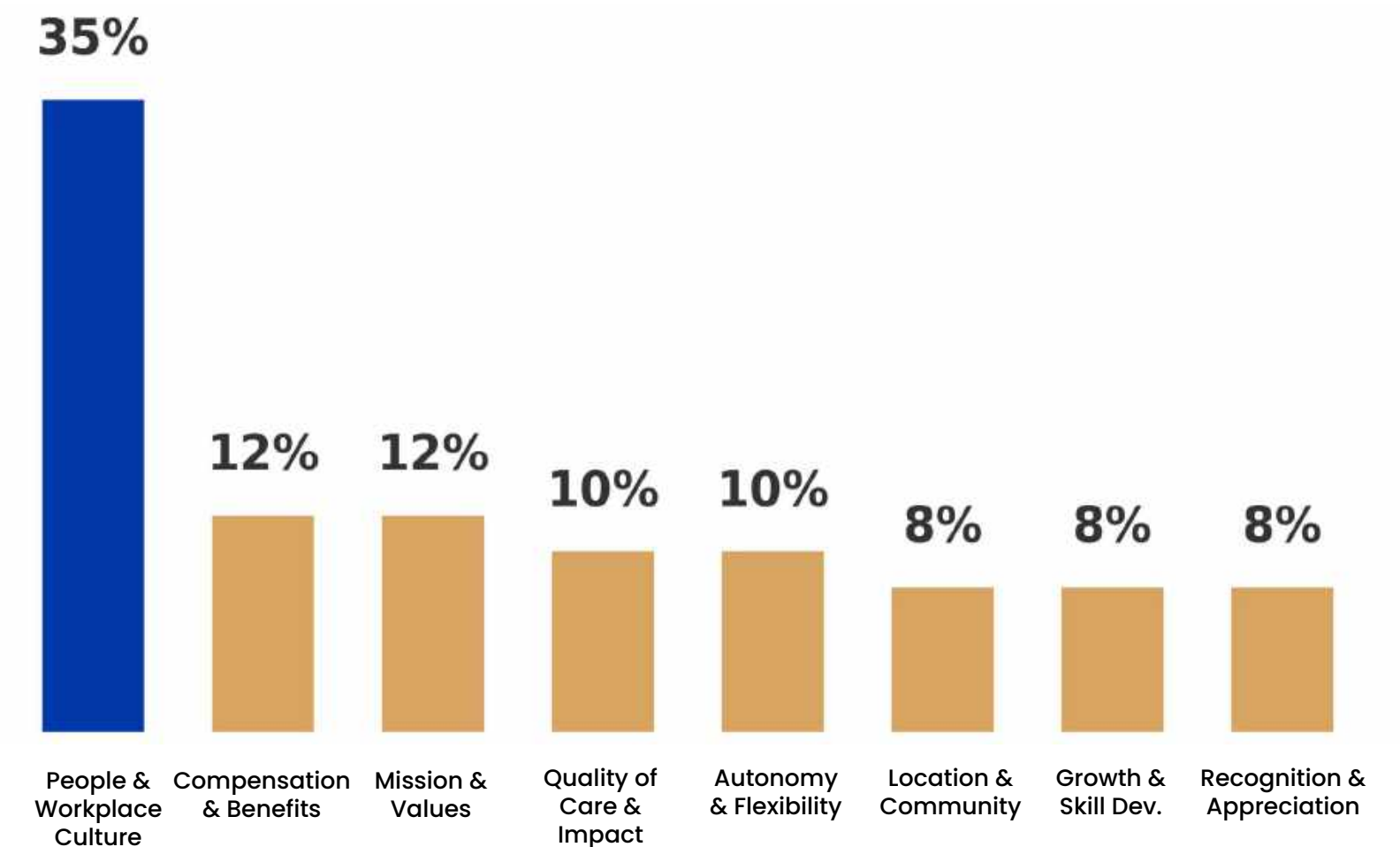
Workplace Culture is the Most Influential Factor in Healthcare Workers' Decision to Stay

Healthcare workers rank People & Workplace Culture (35% of all respondents and 39% of clinicians) as the top reason they remain at their organizations. This insight underscores the strategic value of cultivating strong team dynamics and a healthy organizational culture to enhance engagement, reduce burnout, and secure long-term retention.



Q. What is the most important factor that has influenced your decision to join or stay at your organization?

% of respondents that identify each factor as their the reason to stay



Occupational Preferences

Healthcare Workplace Priorities: One Size Doesn't Fit All

While some preferences are more universal, when we looked at role-based breakdown of responses, unique workplace priorities were illuminated. Meeting the diverse needs of different kinds of healthcare professionals is key, if you want to be a top workplace.

Executives Align on Culture and Leadership

Executives prioritize organizational culture and leadership more—and well-being less—than average respondents, but other priorities diverge clearly by role:

- Clinician executives uniquely emphasize patient-care resources and advanced technology.
- Non-clinician executives distinctly highlight compensation, staffing adequacy, and professional growth.

For Nurses, Balance and Staffing Outrank Compensation

- Only 25% of nurses cite pay as a top workplace factor, compared to 77% overall.
- Nurses specifically highlight work-life balance and adequate staffing as key factors

Aligning organizational support with nurses' priorities is crucial for improving retention, workplace effectiveness, and patient outcomes—particularly given the anticipated growth in demand for nurses through 2032.

Clinicians Prioritize Autonomy and Culture Improvements

Clinicians place distinctly different priorities on workplace improvements compared to the broader respondent pool.

- They were 50% more likely than the broader group to cite autonomy and flexibility as key improvement areas—18% versus 12%—highlighting a desire for greater control over their practice.
- Clinicians were 26% less likely to prioritize compensation (14% vs. 19%) and 24% more likely to highlight culture (21% vs. 17%) as areas needing improvement.

AI Insights

Out of **38 responses**, the data reveals a **diverse but largely optimistic view of AI** in the healthcare field, with a significant portion already using it and seeing value. However, skepticism and uncertainty remain for some segments of the workforce.



Q. Which statement best describes your current use of AI tools in healthcare and their impact on your work?

Strong Adoption & Positive Impact (34%)

- Nearly **one-third** of respondents **actively use AI and report clear benefits** to their work. These individuals see AI as a **value-add**—likely in areas like diagnostics, administrative tasks, or decision support.

Uncertain (29%)

- A sizable segment of the workforce (both users and non-users) expresses **skepticism or concern** about AI's risks. Concerns may center around **job displacement, data privacy, or over-reliance** on technology.

Not Using AI, But Curious (21%)

- A smaller number of respondents **don't currently use AI but express interest** in exploring it. This reflects a **opportunity** for training, exposure, and pilot programs—especially if barriers like access or awareness are addressed.

Using AI, But Waiting for Results (16%)

- Some are already using AI but haven't seen **tangible benefits yet**. Despite this, their tone is **hopeful**, indicating trust in AI's **future potential** in healthcare.

Mapping the Movement of Healthcare Workers

In partnership with DSG Global, we also examined over 322 professional career transitions to better understand geographic mobility patterns—specifically, how far individuals are relocating for new leadership opportunities in healthcare. The findings help identify regional talent flows, inform strategic recruitment efforts, and anticipate trends on regional talent.

The methodology involved tracking each individual's original location and comparing it to the location of their new role. Key variables included whether a relocation occurred, the distance moved in miles, and whether the transition involved crossing one of the four major U.S. regions: South, West, East, or Midwest. This approach provides insight into both the extent and direction of executive mobility.

Average distance moved: 294 miles

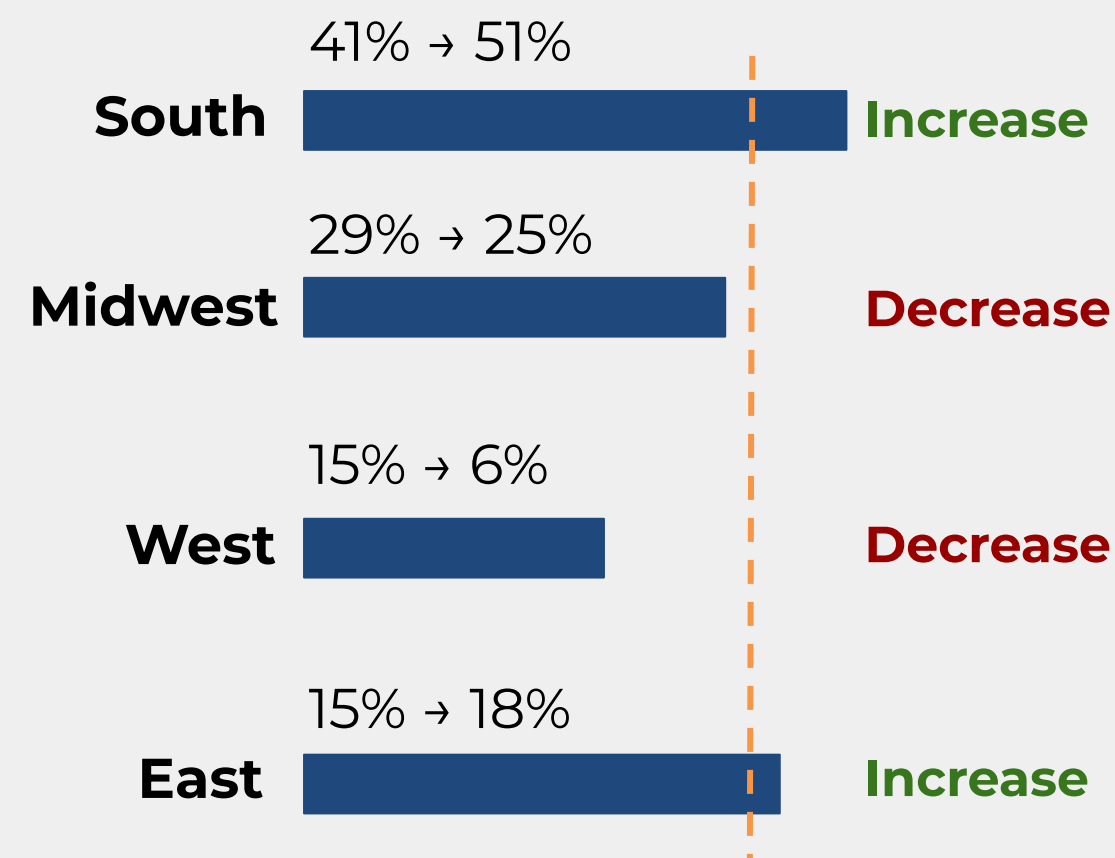
Median distance moved: 223 miles

% who moved more than 1 mile: ~75%

Mapping the Movement of Healthcare Workers

Migration Shifts

The percentage change signals the change in movement across a specific region, while the dotted line indicates a measure of the original percentage. Please note that each region started with a different percentage.



What the Data Suggests:

- The South is emerging as a hub for career opportunities, potentially due to job growth, economic development, or organizational expansion. [The Census Bureau](#) confirmed a continued trend of domestic migration to the South, largely due to lower cost of living, warmer climate, and lower tax burdens.
- The Northeast maintains a strong hold on its workforce, showing high regional loyalty. In [LinkedIn's Workforce Report](#), the Northeast tends to see lower job-switching rates and higher tenure, especially among workers with advanced degrees or specialized skills.
- The Midwest and West Coast showcase a decrease in recent movement. While these regions host major U.S. metropolises, aging populations, higher costs of living, and regional economic conditions could be factors that influence migration patterns.

Recommendations

Prioritize Fair Pay and Strong Benefits

- 01.** A clear priority across all groups, benefits should meet diverse needs across various employee life stages.

Invest in Culture, Mission and Leadership

- 02.** A supportive culture grounded in teamwork, trust, and a shared mission is a key driver of employee commitment.

Support Work-Life Balance

- 03.** Paid leave, child care assistance, and workplace flexibility are particularly valuable for early-career professionals.

Create Clear Pathways for Growth

- 04.** Develop career ladders, mentorship, and training programs to support long-term professional development.

Protect Staff Well-being by Addressing Workload

- 05.** Commit to adequate staffing levels and realistic workloads to prevent burnout, and consider how AI can help—not hinder—your employees.

How DSG Consulting Can Help

Our scalable solutions and **data-driven approach** address the challenges posed by emerging technologies, complex cultural shifts, and evolving market trends, and turn them into opportunities—thus, bridging the gap between where businesses are today and where they aspire to be.

Operational Optimization

We align your mission, values, and strategy using operational frameworks and technologies that drive growth.

Performance Management

We leverage data insights to refine talent mapping and compensation strategies to create a more engaged, high-performing workforce.

Corporate Governance

We refine leadership roles within your C-suite and board of directors to enhance stakeholder engagement and accountability.

Employee Engagement

We refine internal communication strategies, inclusion initiatives, and ERGs to enhance the employee experience and retain talent.

Organizational Design

We assess team roles, responsibilities, and structures for optimal alignment with business objectives.

Leadership Development

We deliver tailored trainings in order to upskill teams, develop future-ready leaders, and strengthen the leadership pipeline.

Contact Us

At DSG Consulting, we believe that listening leads to lasting impact. These results provide a powerful foundation for change—and together, we can help you build long-term strategies that support your employees and advance your organizational goals and overall mission.

Contact:

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