



*There is no question there is a shortage of health care workforce. We have far fewer people in the workforce today than we did when the pandemic started.*

~ Jan Emerson-Shea, spokesperson for the California Hospital Association  
CalMatters, October 15, 2021

### California is in a Growing Healthcare Worker Crisis

- Over 11 million Californians live in an area with a shortage of healthcare professionals. [Source](#)
- California will need 500,000 new healthcare workers by 2024. [Source](#)
- Nearly a third of state hospitals are reporting critical staffing shortages. For some hospitals in the Central Valley, they have resorted to employing the National Guard for critical healthcare support. [Source](#)
- 10% of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers have retired, left the profession, or taken extreme leaves of absence during the pandemic. [Source](#)
- California has a shortage of over 40,000 registered nurses. [Source](#)
- The number of nurses aged 55-64 considering retirement jumped nearly 14% between 2018 and 2020. [Source](#)

### California is Failing Adult Learners

- California ranks last in the nation with 57% of adults in need of higher education. (Source: Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey 2018-2019) With 6.8 million Californians 25-64 with a high school diploma but not a college degree.
- The need to overcome financial barriers and provide 24/7 flexibility in educational courses are the biggest changes needed to enable California adults to return or enroll in a higher education program.
- Adults with some college experience but no degree cite the single most common reason for stopping their education is the need for flexibility and difficulty of balancing school and work. [Source](#)
- If these barriers are addressed, 50% of these adult learners expressed strong interest in returning or enrolling in higher education.\*

### Without State Action, California's Vulnerable and Sick Will Be More At Risk

- Time to eliminate barriers for financial support and inflexible higher education schedules by creating an Adult Learner Workforce Opportunity Grant specific to adult learners who need 100% flexibility to earn a healthcare degree.
- The grant will open opportunities to adult learners who need financial relief and the flexibility to earn a healthcare degree around their work and family schedules.
- Support Legislation to Create the Adult Learner Workforce Opportunity Grant.

**For more information, go to [www.CALNetwork.org](http://www.CALNetwork.org).**

\* Heart+Mind Strategies completed n=1065 interviews with a representative sample of Californians with some or no college matching age, gender, and ethnicity of the US Census for California. Additional oversample interviews were conducted with key groups, including: veterans, single mothers/fathers, foster children, rural residents, low-income rural residents, Asians, 1st and 2nd generation immigrants. Respondents participated via an online survey conducted June 15 to July 20, 2021.