

# Workforce Housing

**Dave Duncan, System Vice President  
Facilities Management**



# Our Health System

**Dartmouth Health**, New Hampshire's largest private employer with ~14,000 employees, serving 1.9 million patients across northern New England

- Community based hospitals and clinics and a broad community of nursing, rehabilitation, hospice and personal healthcare services in NH and VT
- Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, DH's flagship academic medical center includes a 396-bed (licensed) hospital, with the only Level I Trauma Center and Level II Pediatric Trauma Center, and the only air ambulance service in NH.
- Home to Dartmouth Cancer Center, one of only 51 NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the nation, and Dartmouth Health Children's, the state's only children's hospital.

## Workforce Need:

- Currently recruiting for 1800+ position across the health system, including 400+ Registered Nurses



# Healthcare Workforce

## Key trends impacting our regional labor pools:

- 1 Aging Population.** New Hampshire and Vermont have the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> oldest populations in the country with a median age of 43. The result will be an increased demand for healthcare services and a smaller working age population
- 2 Slow Growth.** New Hampshire and Vermont population growth is approximately 1%, compared to 4+% nationally.
- 3 Low Unemployment Rate.** The unemployment rate in New Hampshire and Vermont is 1.8% (Sept. 2023) compared to 4.5% nationally
- 4 Cost of living comparable to urban areas:** high cost of living pushes our workforce to more rural parts of the state. Even with significant investment in compensation it is not possible to keep up with rising inflation.
- 5 Rural Community:** Most roles in healthcare require a specific credential and in a rural area there is a small candidate pool to recruit from. The health system is dependent on people being able to relocate to this area in order to join our workforce.

# Housing Challenge – Affordability & Accessibility

## Critical Inventory Shortage:

- 60,000 units needed in NH by 2030, and 90,000 by 2040
- 30-40,000 units needed in VT by 2030
- There is a 0.6% rental vacancy rate in NH

## Affordability:

- The inventory that is available is not affordable for the majority of Dartmouth Health employees
- Affordable housing costs (rent/mortgage, interest, taxes, utilities) are typically defined as no more than 30% of gross income, for example:
  - \$70k annual salary: 30% on housing costs is \$2,100/month
  - \$50k annual salary: 30% on housing costs is \$1,500/month
- Current available inventory in the Upper Valley is typically priced between \$1,900 - \$2,600/month not including utilities

## Impact to Recruitment & Retention:

- Candidates declining offers or withdrawing their acceptance of an offer once they research housing options and can't find reasonable options
- If new hires can secure affordable housing it is often 30-60minute from their place of work
- Candidates who are joining us are doing under high stress conditions related to housing and childcare
- Limited short-term housing needed for travelers (average length of service 13-26 weeks)
- Significant turnover after 3-4 years of service due to lack of inventory to purchase

# Initial Actions Taken to Address Workforce Housing

- Dartmouth Health and six other businesses have co-invested at 1.5% return to create an \$8.95M 'Upper Valley Housing Fund' that facilitates access to capital for affordable housing
- Assessed demand of workforce housing over the next 5 years, taking plans for growth and expansion, staff vacancy and regional availability of talent into consideration
- Identified and secured apartments for clinical new hires relocating to work at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center
- Developed recruitment incentives to assist with affordability
- Hired a dedicated Housing Program Manager to assist new hires and current employees secure housing in the region
- Established a shuttle service to and from the hospital and apartments
- Gather regular feedback from employees and tenants to understand evolving needs

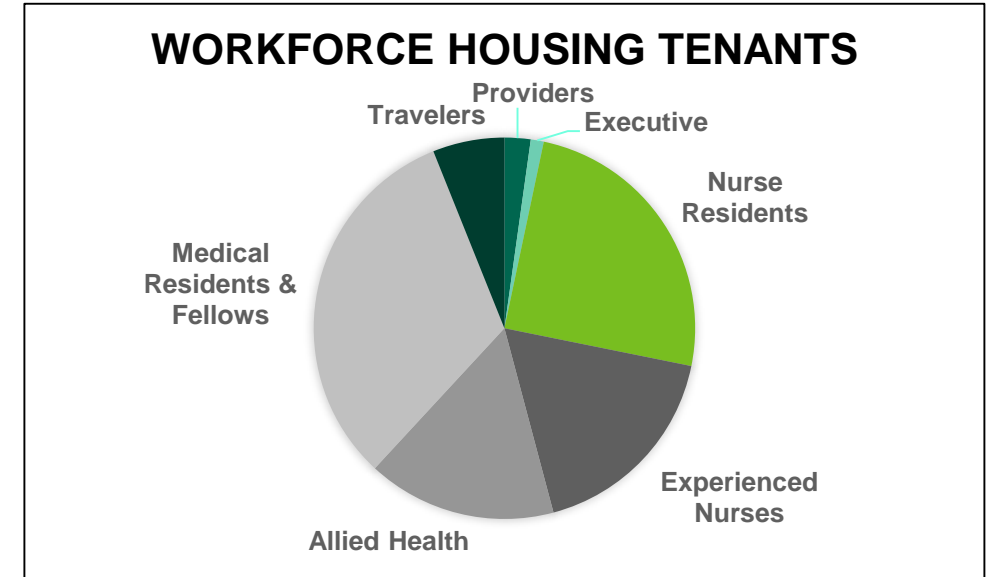


New patient pavilion opened in spring of 2023 at DHMC adding 65 new inpatient bed to help meet demand for service

# Workforce Housing Program

## Workforce Housing & Relocation Program:

- 150 units master leased units at 4 properties, subleased to new hires
- 180+ clinical employees residing in workforce housing
- FY23 YTD our Housing Program Manager supported over 600 new hires and employees with housing
- Rental website established to promote local listings to employees and new hires
- Income based housing subsidy established as a recruitment incentive



## Next Steps

- Continue to foster and invest in partnerships
- Partner to develop housing that is affordable and accessible to our workforce
  - Meets the needs of professionals and families earning between \$60-100K
  - Drives staff retention
  - Connected to support services such as childcare and public transportation
- Advocate and support development of various types of housing so that when young professionals are ready to grow out of their apartment they have a place to purchase (and stay in our region/workforce)

