



2022 INDUSTRY TRENDS REPORT

— THE STATE OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT —



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Industry Trends Survey Confirms Employee Orientation and Engagement Programs Are Critical to Address Staff Retention

In a survey of thousands of home-based care providers from agencies of all sizes, nearly two-thirds of more than 1,800 respondents indicated they have been at their jobs for three years or less, and nearly 80 percent indicated effective orientation and onboarding programs are important strategies to drive retention.

The survey conducted jointly by healthcare technology leader Axxess and healthcare consulting firm SimiTree in December 2021 also revealed flexibility to balance work and personal responsibilities and meaningful supervisor feedback are critically important. Beyond that, at least half of respondents feel employee recognition programs such as celebrating birthdays and other milestones, professional development opportunities and fair compensation could be better addressed by their employers.

At least three in four respondents agreed that important strategies to drive engagement and retention include:

- Effective orientation and onboarding,
- Regular training and education,
- Mentorship,
- Providing flexibility to balance work and personal life responsibilities, and
- Financial incentives.

In addition, more than 80 percent agreed having easy-to-use software is an important component in retaining employees. In addition to being easy to use, respondents indicated important elements for a software are having a mobile component, effective software training, automated workflows, clinical intelligence and full integration with other software being used.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Of the more than 1,800 respondents, including more than 200 from enterprise-level organizations, 73% indicated they provide home healthcare service. Nonetheless, the issues addressed in the survey are impacting all aspects of the care at home industry including hospice and home care. Respondents came from all levels and roles of organizations; two thirds provide direct care to patients and clients.

The survey, which had respondents from all levels of organizations, including management and caregivers directly working with patients and clients, revealed that while compensation, chemistry and career development have been equally important over many years, pay and total compensation may be more important now.

The top five reasons cited for employees considering other opportunities include:

- Pay and total compensation,
- Inadequate communication,
- Inability to balance work and personal life responsibilities,
- Workload outpacing staff bandwidth, and
- A lack of structure and leadership.

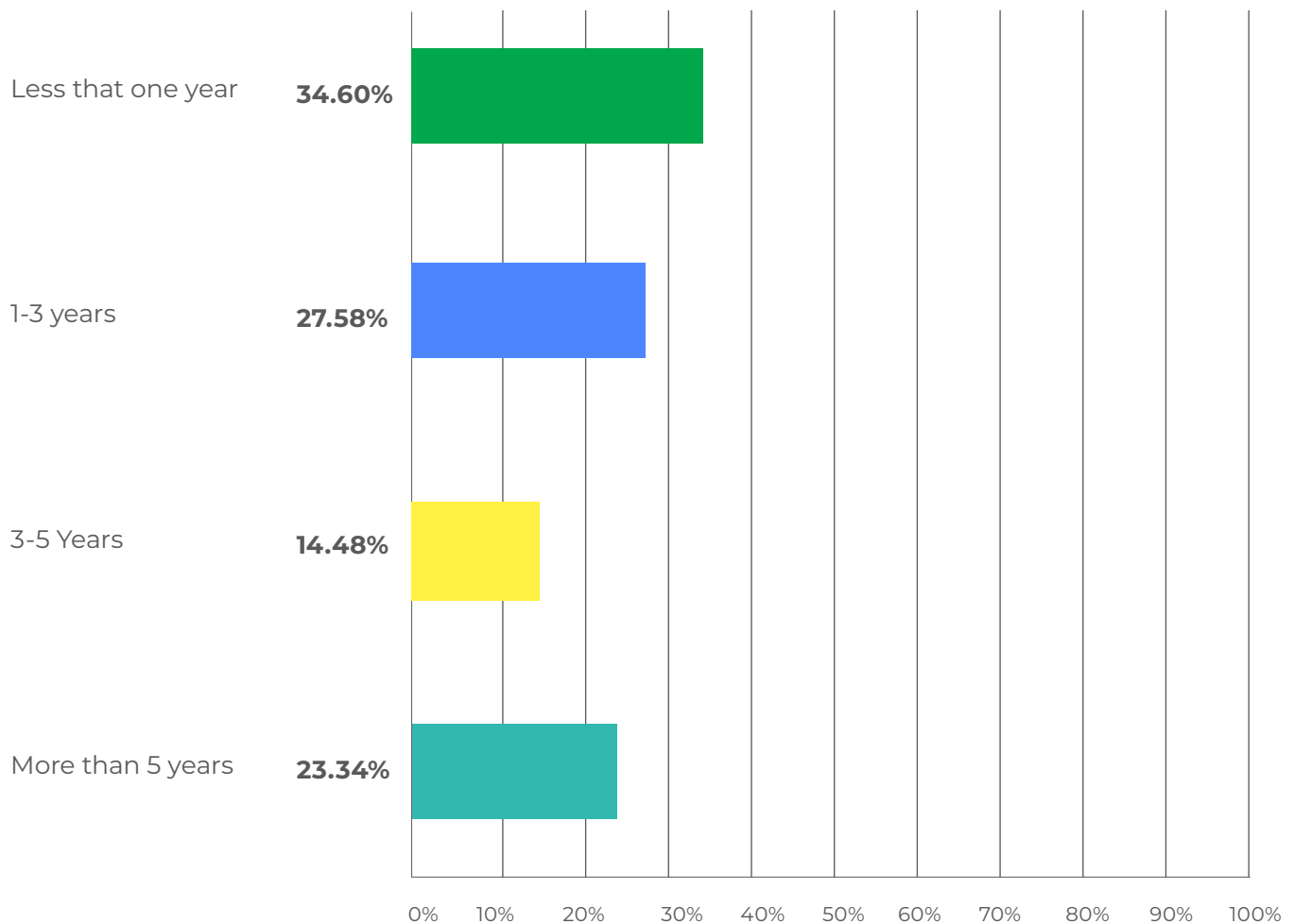
Conclusions

This survey shows that while some things change, many things stay the same. Competitive compensation and career development opportunities are always high up the list of important areas to focus. Effective and formal onboarding practices are equally as important to new hires. The experience a new hire has in the first 90 days of employment goes a long way to determining whether that employee stays for the long-term. Invest in employees early to ensure long-term success.

Based on the findings, numerous best practices to consider are offered by Axxess and SimiTree at the end of this report to help agencies thrive in the years ahead.

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

How long have you been at your organization?

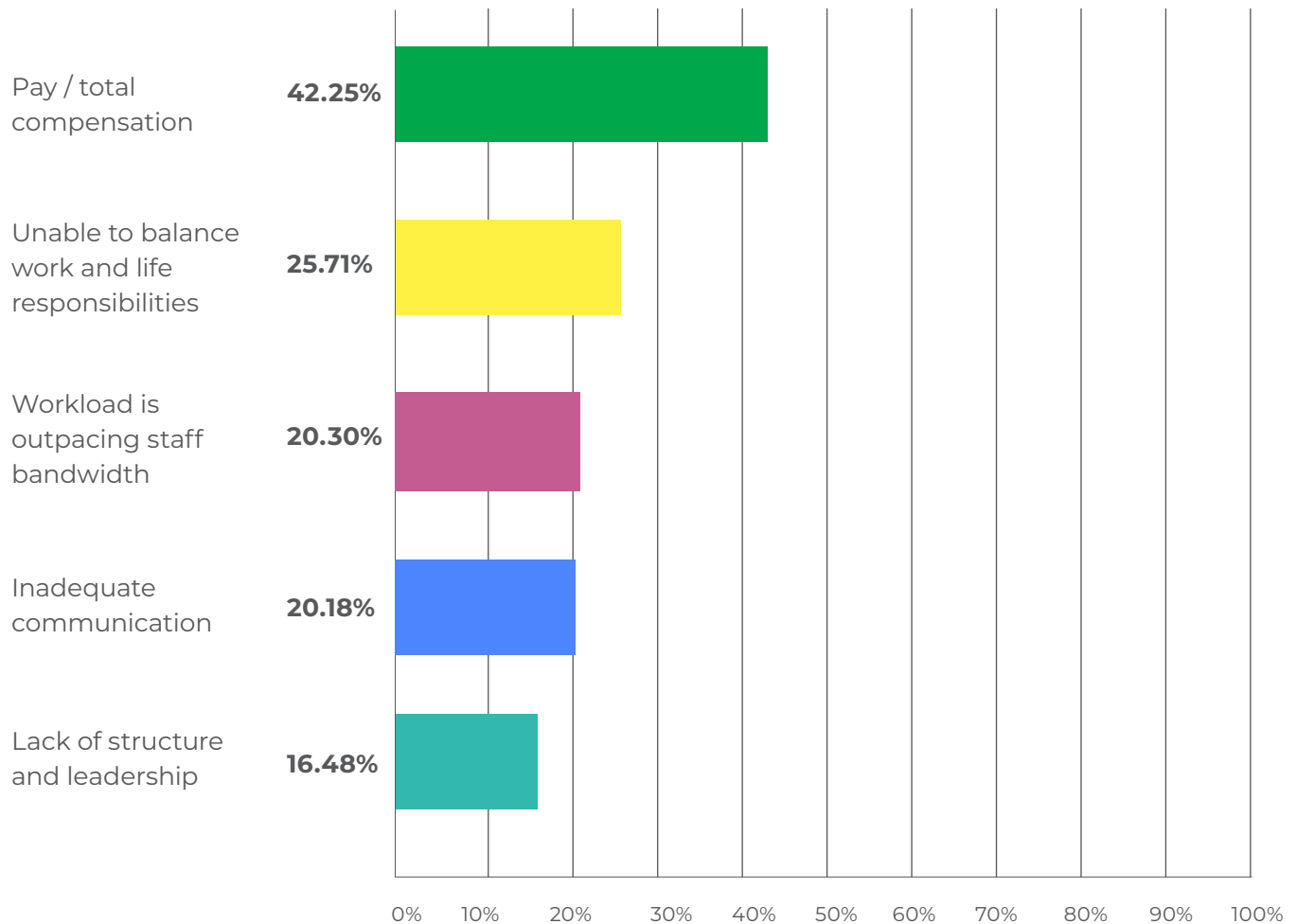


KEY INSIGHT

Almost two-thirds (62.2%) have been at their current workplace three years or less. Only one in four have worked at their organization more than five years. These numbers reflect the long-standing challenge experienced in the care at home industry. Those responding from larger organizations indicated somewhat longer periods, which could reflect that larger organizations have stronger retention strategies and more attractive resources and opportunities compared with smaller care providers.



The survey provided a series of possible reasons for leaving an organization and asked participants for their top three reasons.



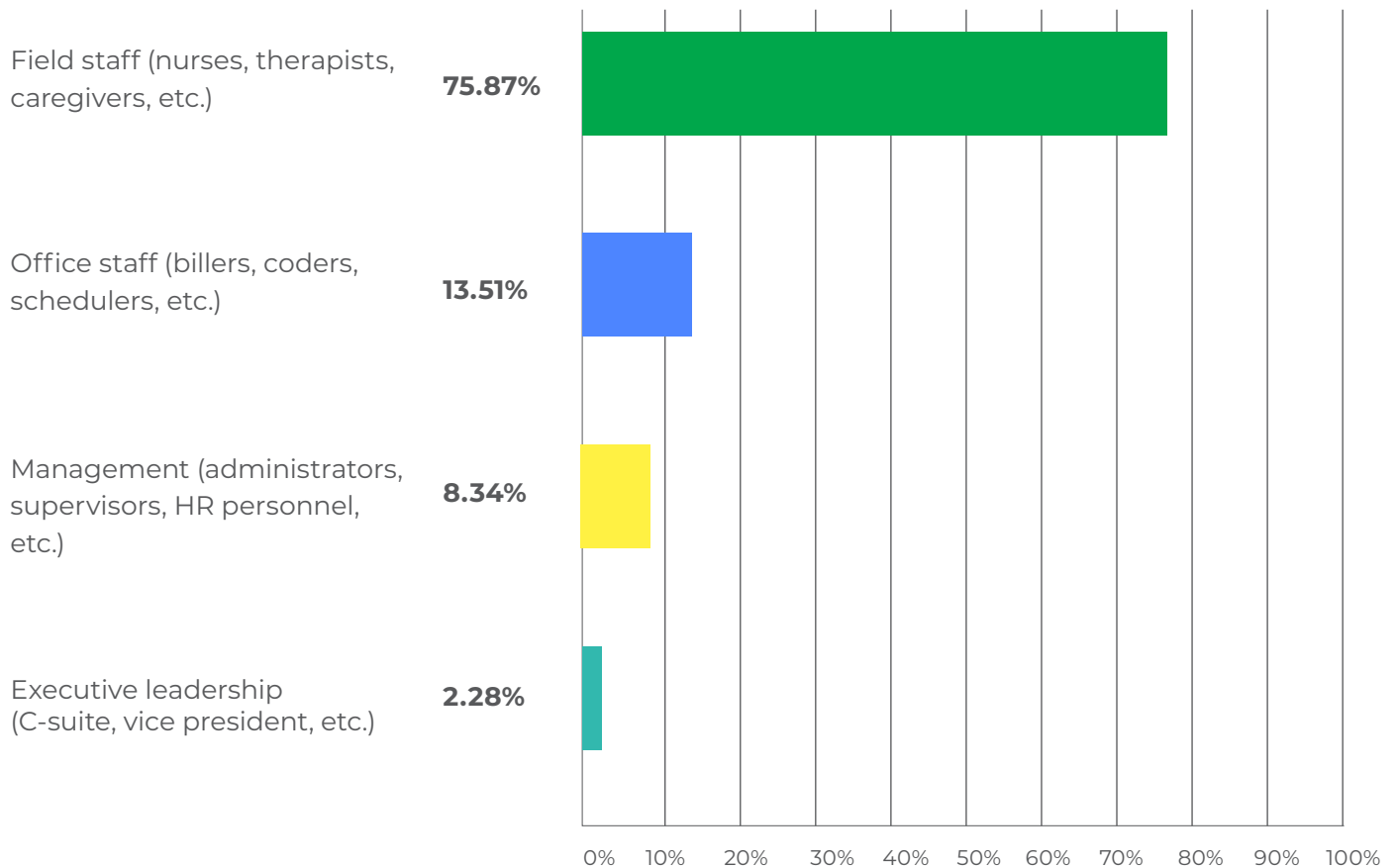
KEY INSIGHT

The top five reasons cited for leaving an organization: pay/total compensation, unable to balance work and personal life responsibilities, the workload is outpacing bandwidth in the organization, inadequate communication, and lack of structure and leadership. Compensation, chemistry and career development have been equally important over many years, but the higher percentage citing pay and total compensation may indicate that has become more important over the past year.



SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

Which positions have the most turnover in your organization?

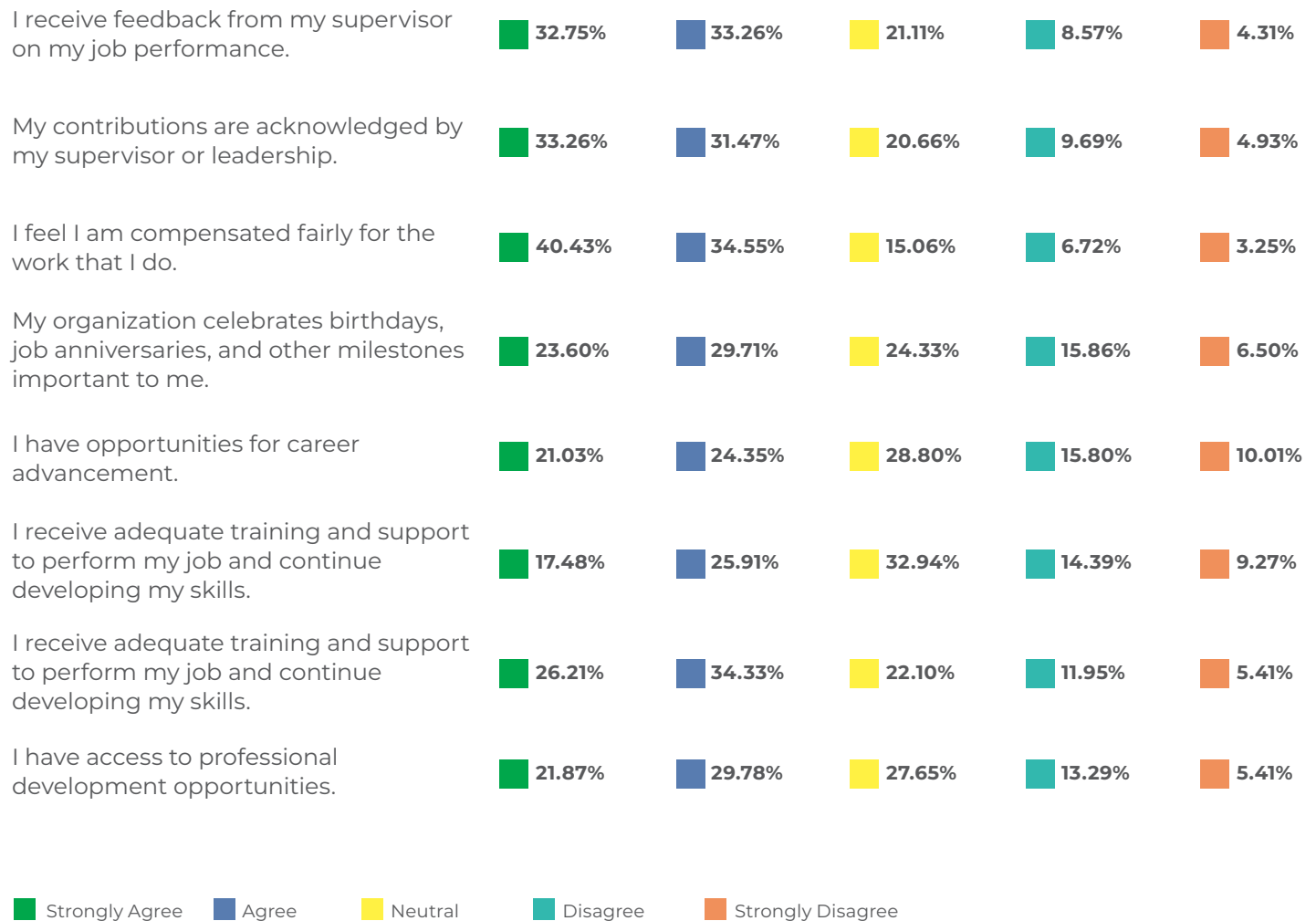


KEY INSIGHT

The 76% of respondents indicating field staff and direct caregivers experience the most turnover reflects what the industry is seeing overall.



Tell us how you feel about each statement as it relates to engagement with your current organization.



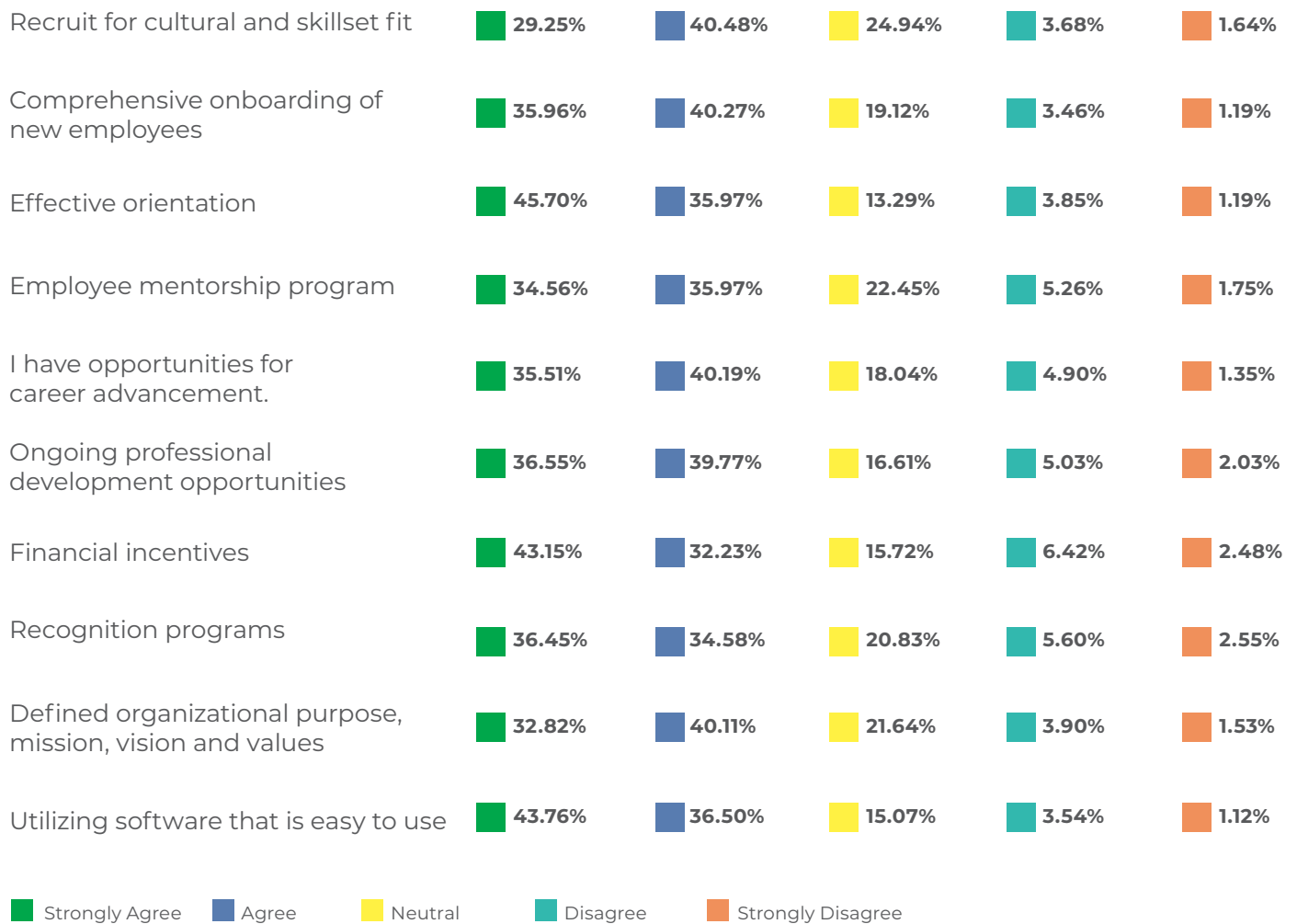
KEY INSIGHT

There is widespread agreement among respondents that they have flexibility to balance and personal life responsibilities, receive feedback from their supervisor on their job performance, their contributions are acknowledged, and they receive adequate training and education. However, there was significantly less agreement on organizations providing career advancement and professional development opportunities, celebrating birthdays and milestones important to the worker, and feeling that they are compensated fairly. These areas provide opportunities for an organization to differentiate themselves with employees.



SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

Which of these strategies do you feel are important to drive employee engagement and employee retention?

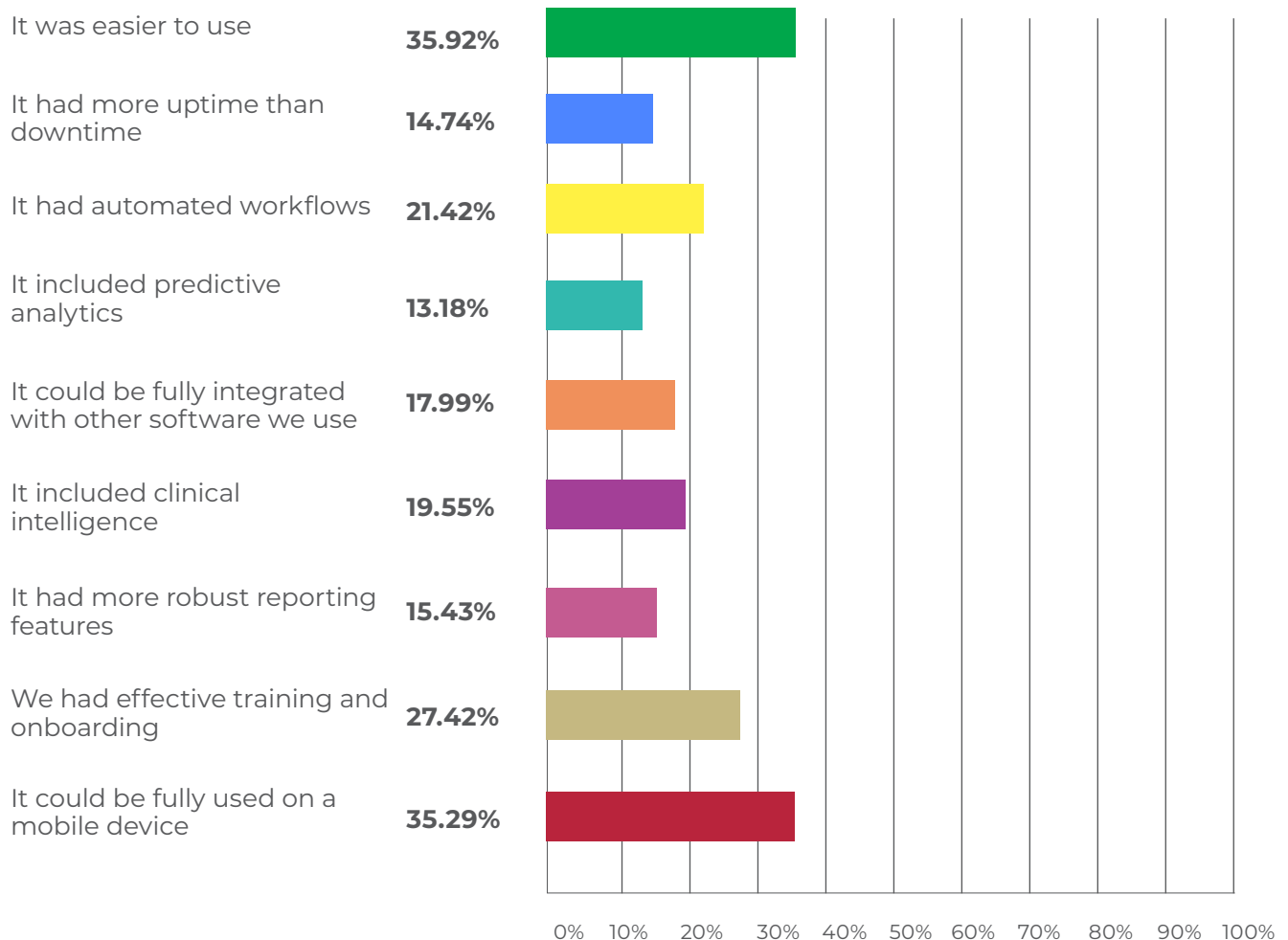


KEY INSIGHT

There is broad agreement that effective orientation and comprehensive onboarding of new employees, as well as having easy to use software, are important strategies to drive engagement and retention of employees. Ongoing engagement, mentorship, training and professional development programs are also seen as important, along with providing financial incentives.



The use of software in my organization could be more effective if: (check all that apply).



KEY INSIGHT

In a separate question, 90% indicated their organization is effectively using technology to run their business and document patient and/or client care. Having easy to use software, a mobile component, effective software training and onboarding, automated workflows, clinical intelligence and being fully integrated with other software being used by the organization were cited as significant opportunities. Having robust report features and predictive analytics were cited somewhat less often but that may be due to two of three respondents being direct care providers and less involved in business management. Direct care workers emphasized the need for ease of use, a mobile component and effective software training.

BEST PRACTICES TO CONSIDER



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Based on the findings, Axxess and SimiTree have compiled some best practices to consider for thriving in the coming years.

- ▶ **Organizations should conduct surveys** to see their employees' perceptions on engagement and retention initiatives. This would help keep a pulse on factors leading to overwork and/or burnout. Conducting the surveys through a third-party will promote greater comfort for employees to be completely honest with their opinions.
- ▶ **Benchmark salaries and retention against similar healthcare providers in your area.** It is typical to see higher turnover for direct care, especially clinical, roles given the shortage and high demand. The challenge is magnified due to organizations in other industries (i.e., Starbucks, Amazon, etc.) offering competitive salaries.
- ▶ **Design the employee experience to reduce burnout.** This encompasses the entire journey an employee has with their organization starting at pre-hiring. For example, online HR solutions and learning platforms streamline the onboarding process and make it easy for organizations to recruit and train.

- ▶ **Recruit the right people.** Look at how employees will fit into your organization versus only looking at those that have your required skills. The cost of replacing an employee can be between 100 and 200 percent of the salary, depending on the role.
- ▶ **Manage by metrics to decrease burnout due to direct care workers workload.** This provides more visibility to create immediate action. Often the most productive and engaged staff are the ones in the most danger of burnout. Monitor patient-to-staff ratios as well as productivity. In addition, travel time, non-patient activity and acuity of patients are metrics to consider.
- ▶ **Ensure managers know their role and the expectations for driving employee engagement.** Equip them with the training tools and resources to develop their teams. You're not a leader until you have developed another leader who can develop another leader.
- ▶ **Focus on professional development.** Managers who consistently work with their team members can identify what they do best, and praise and guide them to maximize their natural talents. Empowering employees to use their talents and strengths provides ongoing value to an organization.
- ▶ **Continuously get feedback on and improve onboarding and training.** This is essential to direct care worker retention and satisfaction. Organizations can also partner with a company that can provide more comprehensive training because most turnover happens in first 90 days, so it is important to support new employees during this time.
- ▶ **The choice of documentation software for direct care workers should prioritize ease of use and mobile functionality.** These were found to be important elements to clinical employee engagement and retention.
- ▶ **Celebrating birthdays, milestones, work anniversaries, etc.** is a less costly but effective way to improve retention.



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