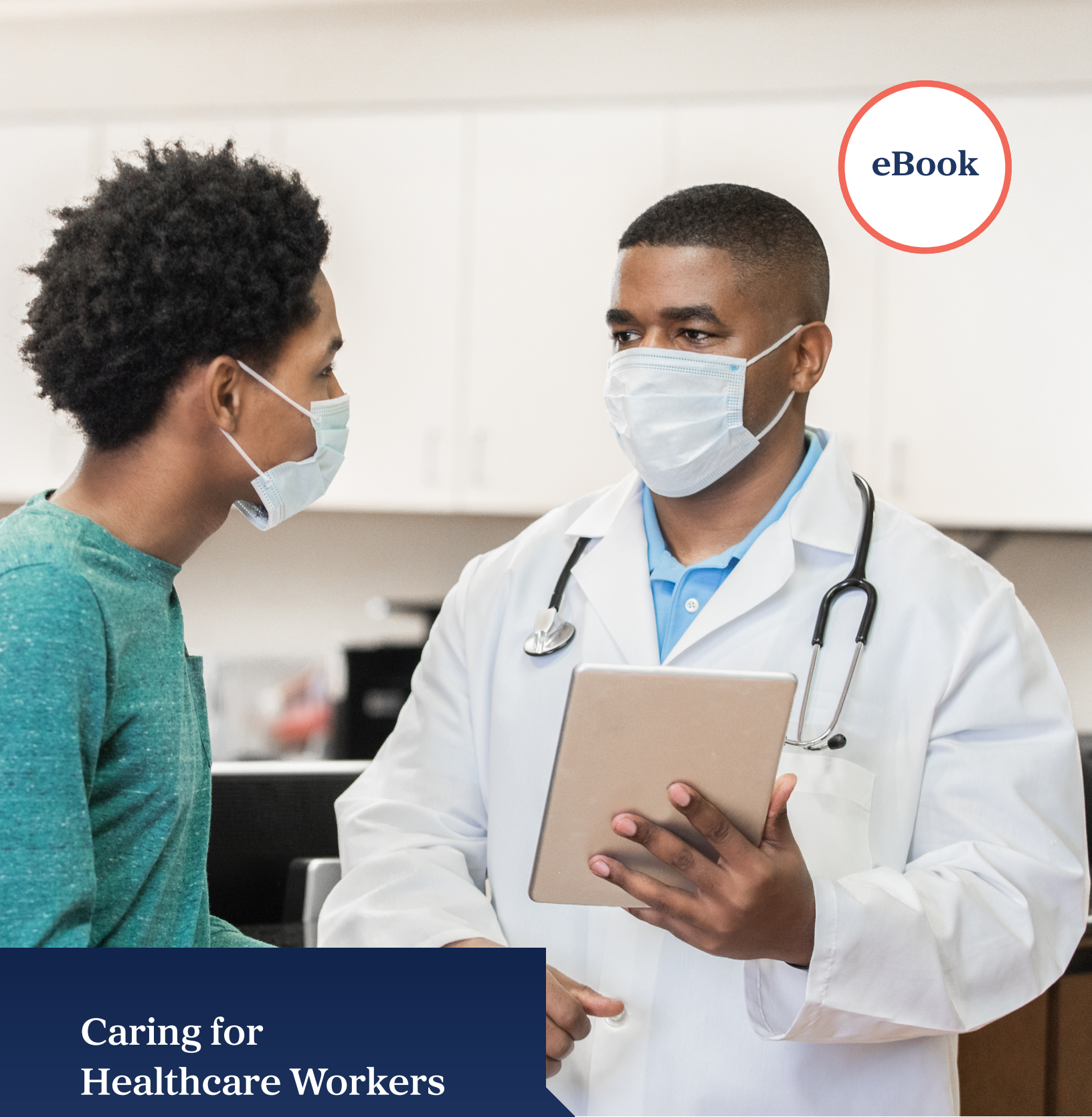




eBook

Caring for Healthcare Workers

Explore how workflow optimization creates safer, more sustainable workplaces that support resilient caregivers for the future of healthcare.

ergotron

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Introduction

Healthcare workers have long faced extraordinary physical and mental demands. Even before the pandemic, staffing shortages, rising patient volumes and increasingly complex technology placed significant strain on both clinical and IT teams. These pressures have not disappeared. Burnout, workplace injuries and high turnover rates remain systemic challenges that threaten workforce stability and patient care.

Healthcare IT (HIT) professionals play a particularly critical role, managing the nonstop flow of data, devices and connectivity that keep care delivery moving. Their work requires long hours, constant vigilance as well as environments that support both efficiency and well-being. While digital tools like telehealth have expanded care options and improved access, their rapid adoption has also introduced new complexities that leaders must address.

Encouragingly, there are signs of progress. Recent data from the American Medical Association shows ***physician burnout has declined to below 45%***—the lowest rate since before the pandemic. This improvement suggests that efforts to better support caregivers are beginning to take hold. Still, issues like staffing shortages, rising patient volumes and complex technology remain, and healthcare leaders now have a critical opportunity to build on this momentum—transforming short-term gains into lasting, sustainable change.

By rethinking workflows, investing in ergonomics and prioritizing mental health, organizations can better equip their teams to work safely, sustainably and with renewed energy. This white paper explores the ongoing challenges healthcare workers face and outlines the strategies leaders can adopt to create vibrant, resilient workplaces where caregivers thrive.



Caring for the Caregivers:

The Mental + Physical Health Impacts

The past years have placed immeasurable stress on the well-being of healthcare and HIT professionals, where many healthcare organizations grappled with how to best support staff and meet patient demands. Ergotron surveyed 500 healthcare workers across the U.S. and found that the vast majority of survey respondents (94%) reported a negative impact on their physical and/or mental well-being during the pandemic.

THE HUMAN COST OF CARE: ADDRESSING BURNOUT AND INJURY

Survey respondents cited feeling more:

Physical Impacts



42%

Physically exhausted



25%

Physical pain, such as backaches, shoulder pain, carpal tunnel, etc.

Mental Impacts



39%

Stressed and anxious



36%

Burned out



29%

Depressed

These factors contributed to an already concerning healthcare worker shortage. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment for registered nurses (RN) is expected to **grow by 6% between 2023 and 2033**, a rate above the national average for all jobs. Each year, an estimated 194,500 RN positions will need to be filled, reflecting both new job growth and the replacement of nurses exiting the workforce through retirement or career changes. This is echoed in a recent report by the National Staffing Innovations (NSI) Nursing Solutions, which found that while turnover rates for both hospital staff and RNs have declined, **they remain higher than ideal**. Nationwide, hospital turnover is currently 18.3%, down 2.4% from 2023, while RN turnover has dropped by 2.0% to 16.4%.



61%

of caregivers cite that leadership teams could do a better job in encouraging work-life balance



43%

of caregivers think that more support is needed for mental health

Despite the stress and uncertainty that caregivers and HIT teams experience, many of them continued to find meaning and purpose in their roles. Over a third (35%) of respondents feel more connected to patients and coworkers and 86% of caregivers feel valued by the patient population.

Work Vibrantly in Healthcare: The Role of Ergonomics

Caregiving is known to be a physically, mentally and emotionally demanding job. Today's healthcare professionals often work extended shifts to cover staffing gaps and navigate the pressures of caring for increasingly complex patient populations. For many, this has led to rising rates of fatigue, musculoskeletal strain and workplace injuries that make an already challenging job even harder.

According to a study from the U.S. BLS, healthcare and social services experienced the highest number of nonfatal workplace injuries of any sector in 2023. **Reported cases rose by 27,800 from the prior year**, reaching a total of 471,600. The overall injury rate was 3 cases per 100 full-time employees, where certain settings recorded particularly high injury or illness rates:



1

Ambulance services: 7.4 per 100 workers

2

Skilled nursing facilities: 6.9 per 100 workers

3

Assisted living/continuing care: 6.5 per 100 workers

4

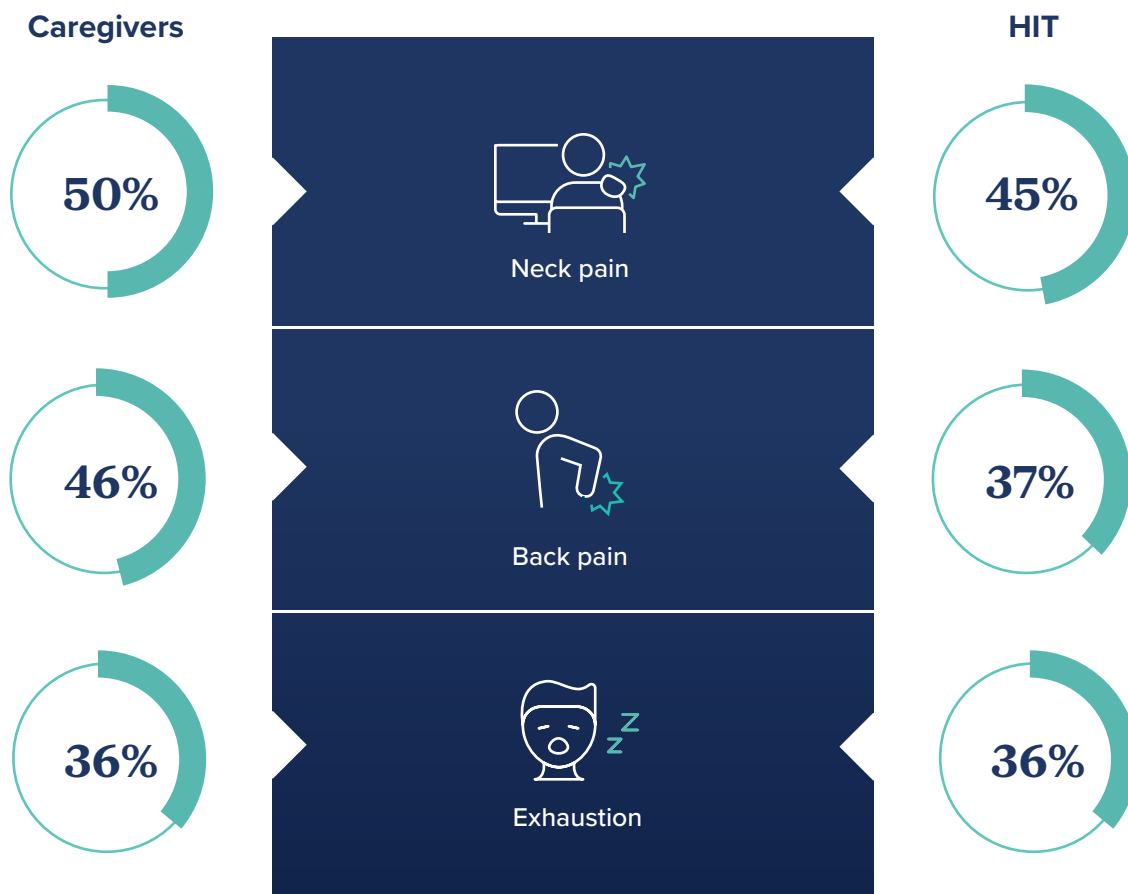
Psychiatric & substance abuse hospitals: 6.3 per 100 workers

5

General medical/surgical hospitals: 5.1 per 100 workers

These findings were underscored through Ergotron's survey, in which 43% of respondents reported experiencing work-related injuries or health problems related to repetitive stress or poor workplace ergonomics. Notably, 70% of the HIT staff surveyed have struggled with similar work-related concerns.

TOP PAIN POINTS AMONG HEALTHCARE WORKERS



Healthcare workers indicate that there's room for improvement when it comes to leadership-level response to the physical impacts of their work. For example, when asked if they had access to equipment to reduce the physical effects of stress and burnout, 35% of caregivers and 15% of HIT staff said that they did not have the appropriate tools.

There's a considerable amount of work-related pain, injury and exhaustion within the healthcare field, so both healthcare professionals and leaders must recognize the source and determine what can be done to alleviate this.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (95%) stated that having better, more ergonomic and mobile equipment could improve their health and well-being at work. And beyond physical health, 91% of the respondents stated that updated ergonomic equipment would increase their happiness at work.

INSIGHTS FOR HEALTHCARE LEADERS



65% of caregivers and 59% of HIT staff believe improvement is required to ensure that caregivers have the appropriate equipment to do their job well

This is even more likely for caregivers in large organizations **(78%)**



92% believe caregivers should have more of a voice when it comes to selecting ergonomic equipment and new technology at their organization

Although equipment cannot prevent all work-related exhaustion, pain or injuries, ergonomics do play a key role in helping employees to remain pain- and injury-free, so that they can work to the best of their ability. As workers across the country continue providing the best care and IT support they can, investing in creating healthy and vibrant workspaces can help alleviate some of the easily preventable work-related problems.



Healthcare's future depends on the people delivering quality care. The daily experiences of caregivers and Healthcare IT professionals can be transformed by designing work environments that support physical health and dramatically improved workflows. Thoughtful and targeted investments in workflow solutions don't just improve working environments; they help caregivers and IT professionals focus on delivering care – driving performance and retention."

Scott Gill, CEO, Ergotron

Improve Telehealth Workflow: The Rise of Virtual Care

Post-pandemic, businesses have transformed the way they operate, and the healthcare field is no exception. The use of technology to accommodate various health needs skyrocketed early in the pandemic when stay-at-home orders halted elective and preventative screenings and procedures, and telehealth became the new normal.

While the pandemic has receded, **telehealth usage remains above pre-crisis benchmarks**, according to an Epic Research study. With it, caregivers face new challenges: Managing longer hours in front of screens, balancing digital consultations with in-person care and adapting to evolving patient expectations.

HOW ARE TELEHEALTH & VIRTUAL CARE AFFECTING HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS?



68% of caregiver respondents report that telehealth or virtual care plays more of a role in their work than it did before the pandemic



50% of caregivers feel more productive providing virtual care



44% feel that they can provide better care for their patients through the increased use of technology

And while there are many positive benefits to reap, the shift to a more sedentary workstyle presents a significant change for caregivers who are used to moving between patient rooms. Citing this, 87% of caregiver respondents report that they're concerned about the physical impacts of using telehealth technology more frequently, which would likely mean more time spent seated. Leaders must ensure they anticipate this new way of working by providing the proper equipment to help their teams do so in a healthy manner.

While we continue to shift to a more virtual world and enjoy the benefits that come along with it, it's essential to remain cognizant about what the increased use of technology means for the health and well-being of clinical and non-clinical staff. Supporting caregivers and HIT professionals in this new environment will help to ensure a more vibrant workforce.



Modern healthcare requires teams to navigate a range of workflows—from bedside care to virtual consultations and complex IT operations. Leaders who design spaces tailored to these diverse needs (integrating ergonomic principles with workflow efficiency) create environments where caregivers and HIT professionals can perform at their best.

By investing in adaptable tools and thoughtfully structured workspaces, organizations not only protect their staff's well-being but also enhance patient outcomes and foster a resilient, high-performing workforce.”

Jessica Grenwis, Sr. Dir. Product Mgmt - Healthcare, Ergotron



Shaping the Future: Workspaces That Empower Caregivers and HIT Professionals

The future of healthcare relies not only on clinical advancements, but also on the environments that support those delivering care. Caregivers and HIT professionals are facing pressure from all sides, from rising patient demands to increasingly complex digital infrastructures. To meet these challenges, organizations must invest in workspaces designed for resilience, well-being and long-term performance.

1

Reimagining the Caregiver Experience

Caregivers thrive in spaces that reduce strain and sharpen focus. Ergonomic tools—like height-adjustable workstations, mobile carts and monitor arms—support smoother task transitions, cut fatigue and sustain energy through long shifts. Well-designed environments lower burnout risk and free caregivers to spend more time with patients.

2

Supporting Healthcare IT Efficiency

Every care model depends on HIT teams managing data, devices and connectivity. Their work demands adaptable spaces that keep pace with technology. Ergonomic setups—from sit-to-stand stations to mobile solutions—help IT staff stay productive, solve problems faster and maintain system reliability without sacrificing well-being.

3

Building Future-Ready Environments

Healthcare workspaces of tomorrow must be flexible by design. Ergonomic environments support both in-person and virtual care, adapt to shifting workforce needs, as well as strengthen clinical and IT performance. Investing in human-centered design creates energized workplaces where caregivers and IT professionals thrive, driving better patient outcomes.