



Delays in patient discharges to post-acute care settings have become a growing challenge for hospitals and post-acute care providers, which include inpatient rehabilitation facilities, long-term acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), assisted living residences, and home care services, among other settings.

While throughput issues were significant before the pandemic, COVID-19 exacerbated the situation and created a large volume of patients who are ready for discharge from hospitals but cannot find an appropriate bed in a post-acute care setting. In some cases, patients who require specialized post-acute care services wait weeks or even months to find an appropriate bed or service.

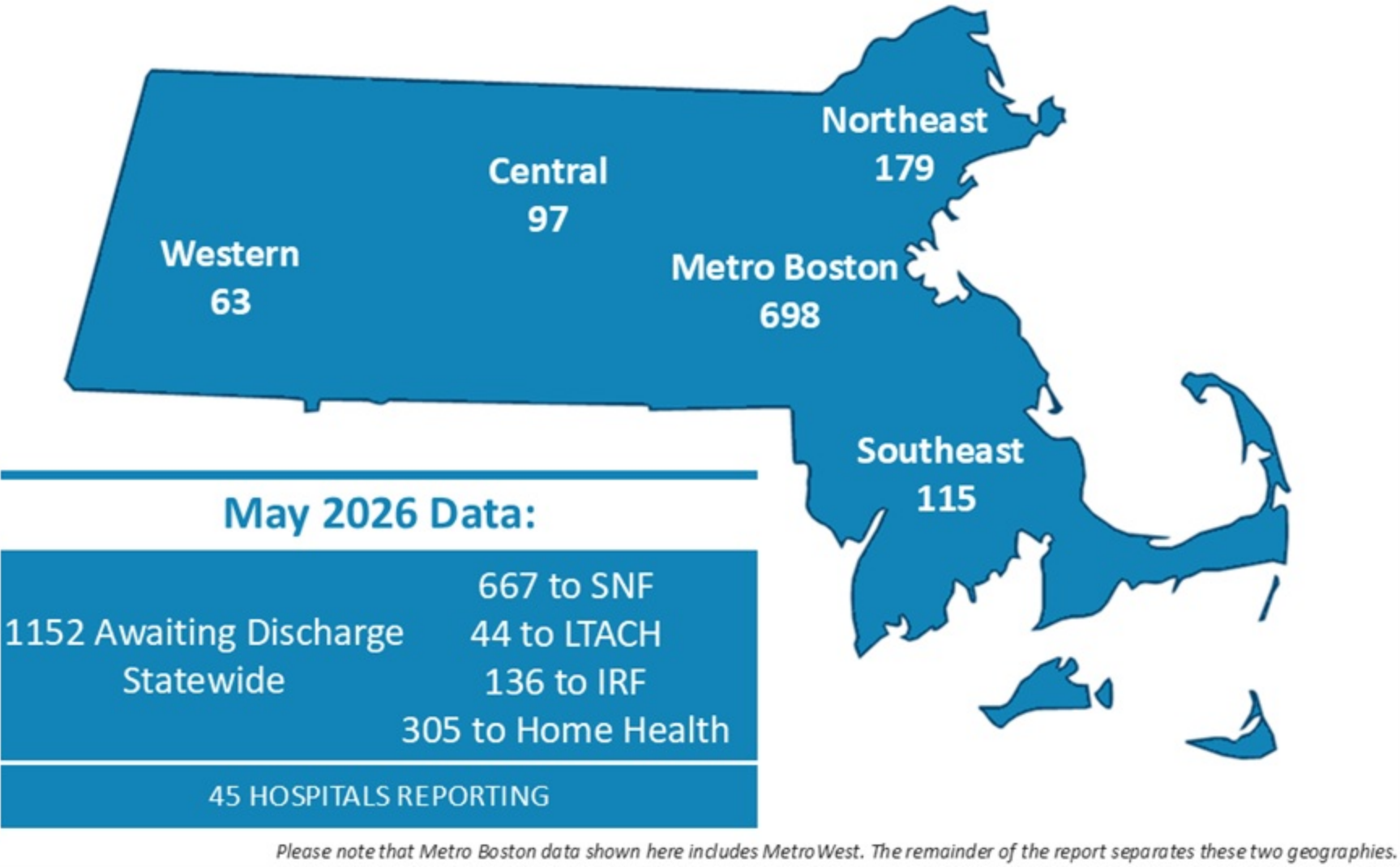
Addressing transition delays and optimizing the flow of patients throughout their healthcare journey is an ongoing priority for MHA, its members, and our partners in state government and the post-acute care community.

This report summarizes Massachusetts hospital data relating to the number of patients awaiting post-acute care placement, the types of services needed, barriers to patient care, and length of wait times, among other areas. The data is derived from a survey of case management directors in acute and post-acute care hospitals. It is intended to inform policy development and ongoing efforts to address these care challenges.

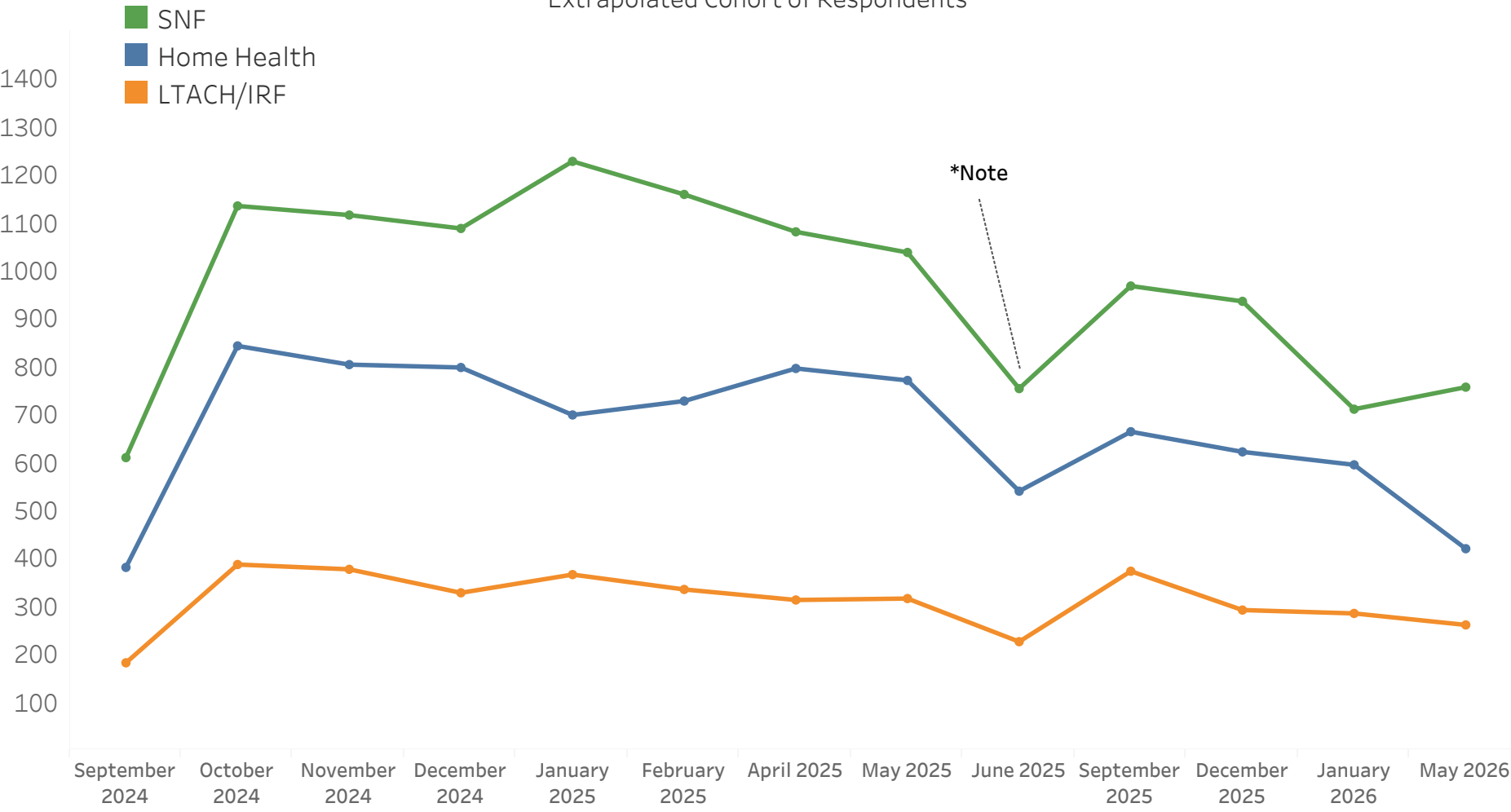
Over the past four years, MHA has worked closely with the Massachusetts Senior Care Association and state government in an attempt to mitigate throughput challenges. MHA looks forward to our continuing work with our members, partners, patients, and the state to improve post-acute care transitions for patients in need of timely, specialized care.

The chart and tables below are a summary of key data collected in this survey.

Number of Patients Awaiting Discharge to Post-Acute Settings



Patients Awaiting Discharge by Service Type
Extrapolated Cohort of Respondents



*Several hospitals that typically provide data were not included in the reported month's data, temporarily impacting volume.

Patients Awaiting Discharge by Service Type
Percent Change from Prior Month

	Home Health	LTACH/IRF	SNF
% Change	-29%	-8%	6%

Note: The figures in the two charts above are from a cohort of respondents that includes extrapolated data for non-respondents who have submitted a response within the last three months. If a respondent did not submit data for the most recent month, we include extrapolated data that takes the average number of patients awaiting discharge (for each sub-type) for the prior three months. Because of this, figures shown here may not match those shown in other sections of the report. If a hospital fails to respond in any of the past 3 months, it is removed from the cohort for that month. Therefore, while the chart and table above may not always represent a consistent cohort of respondents, it is intended to accurately represent the directional trend of patient demand.

Patients Awaiting Discharge by Service Type
Percent of Patients Waiting over 30 Days

	Home Health	LTACH/IRF	SNF
October 2024	12%	27%	42%
November 2024	16%	21%	37%
December 2024	19%	23%	42%
January 2025	12%	26%	39%
February 2025	18%	40%	41%
April 2025	10%	30%	44%
May 2025	9%	27%	35%
June 2025	21%	19%	45%
September 2025	7%	10%	49%
December 2025	11%	30%	40%
January 2026	18%	46%	48%
May 2026	11%	28%	43%

*MHA did not collect Throughput data in March 2025

If you have any questions about the survey report, please contact MHA’s Chief Data Officer Anu Puri at (781) 262-6049 or apuri@mhalink.org. If you have any questions about post-acute care transitions in general, please contact MHA’s Director of Virtual Care & Clinical Affairs Adam Delmolino at (781) 262-6030 or adelmolino@mhalink.org.

MHA Throughput Survey Report: Patients Awaiting Discharge to Post-Acute Care and Discharge Challenges

Based on Responses to MHA’s May 2026 Throughput Survey

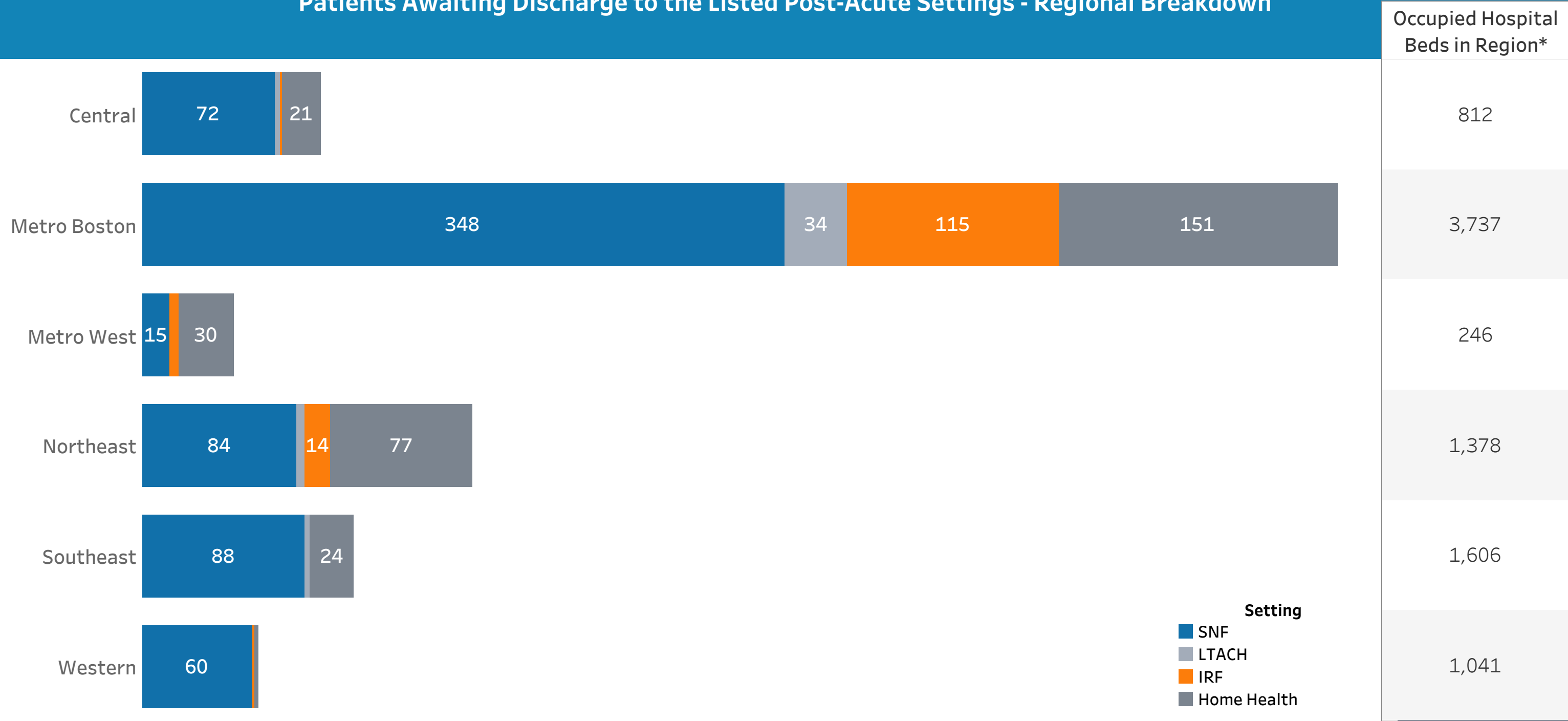
Respondent Information

	Statewide	Acute	Post-Acute	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western
Number of Hospitals	45	41	4	4	17	2	6	8	8
Percent of Staffed Inpatient Beds Represented by Respondents	77%	78%	18%	61%	85%	53%	68%	80%	80%

Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings - Statewide

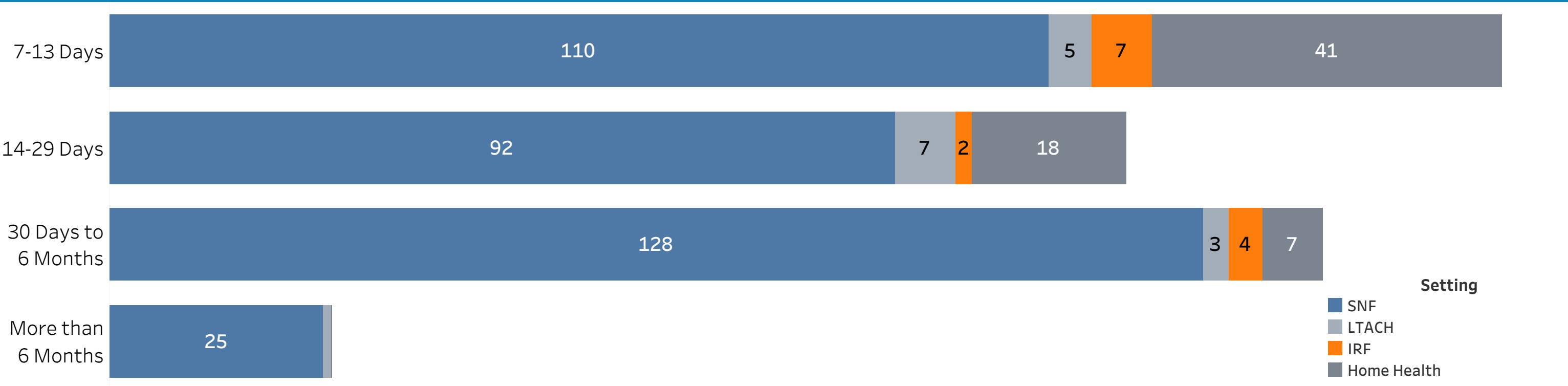
667 SNF	44 LTACH	136 IRF	305 Home Health
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Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings - Regional Breakdown



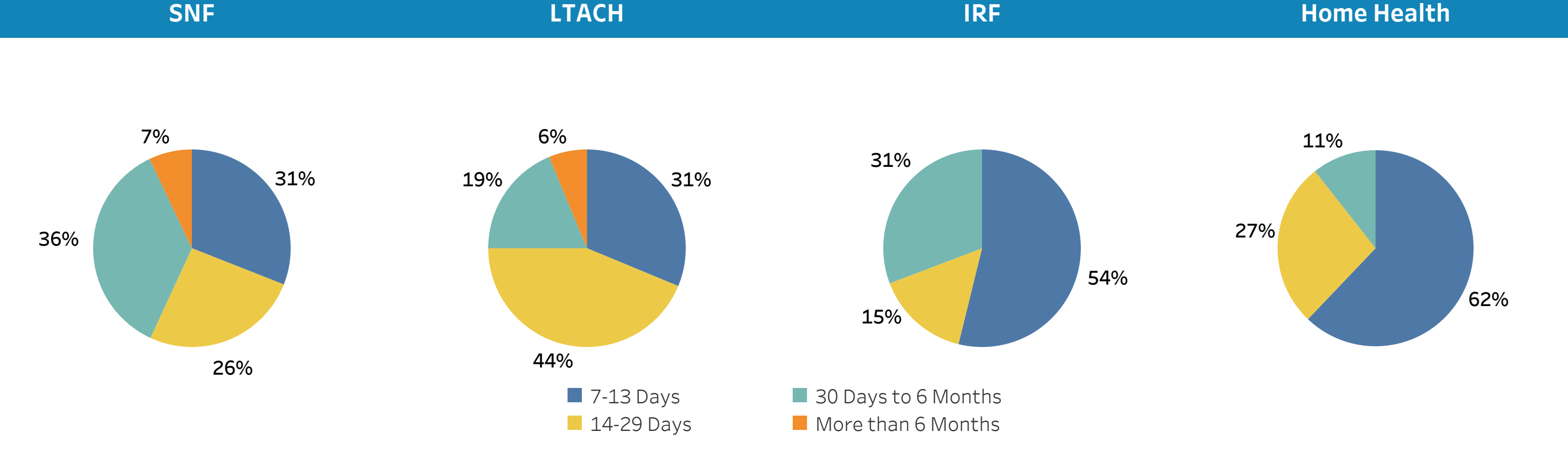
*The number of occupied hospital beds in region ONLY includes acute hospital respondents.

Length of Time of Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Setting



Please note that the totals above may not match those of prior charts, as survey respondents may not have answered every question.

Percentage Distribution of Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings



Please note that the percentages in the charts above may not add to 100% due to rounding. Additionally, survey respondents may not have answered every question. The charts and tables in this report are based on the number of responses to each specific question.

MHA Throughput Survey Report: Patients Awaiting Discharge to Post-Acute Care and Discharge Challenges

Based on Responses to MHA’s May 2026 Throughput Survey

Bed Type Needs for Patients Awaiting Discharge to SNFs							
Bed Requirement/Care Need	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western	Statewide
Short-Term Rehabilitation Beds	23	236	0	38	31	18	346
Long-Term Care Beds	49	112	5	43	53	40	302
Dementia	8	36	5	20	40	16	125
Geri-Psych Bed	0	8	2	6	14	7	37
Awaiting a Geri-Psych Bed in a Medical/Surgical Bed or Floor/Unit	1	5	2	11	13	7	39
Awaiting a Geri-Psych Bed in a Psychiatric Bed or Floor/Unit	0	3	0	0	6	0	9
Alcohol Use Disorder/Substance Use Disorder Bed	0	14	0	0	5	0	19
Tracheostomy and Percutaneous Endoscopy Gastronomy	6	6	0	3	1	5	21
Methadone Coordination	0	4	1	0	3	0	8
Bariatric Concerns	0	0	0	9	1	3	13
Alzheimer’s/Dementia in Locked Unit for Female	10	16	4	9	16	5	60
Alzheimer’s/Dementia in Locked Unit for Male	5	19	1	11	23	6	65

Special Requirements for Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings				
	Home Health	SNF	IRF	LTACH
1-to-1 Supervision	1	55	5	12

Additional Details on Patients Awaiting Discharge		
Number of Delayed Discharges due to Non-Availability of Transportation	Longest Waiting Period for Patient Awaiting Discharge due to Non-Availability of Transportation	Number of Delayed Discharges due to Lack of Reimbursement for Outpatient Hemodialysis
4	1 Day	0
Range of wait time for patients awaiting discharge due to non-availability of transportation: 2 hours to 1 day		

Patients Involved with State/Local Agencies						
	Department of Children & Families	Department of Developmental Disabilities	Department of Mental Health	Department of Youth Services	Local Education Agencies (LEA)	Statewide
Total Number of Patients Awaiting Discharge Involved with Listed State/Local Agencies:	1	12	13	0	0	26

Location of Patients within Hospitals Involved with State/Local Agencies							
Location of Patients Awaiting Discharge with State/Local Agency Involvement by Hospital Unit	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western	Statewide
Medical/Surgical:	2	7	2	7	3	4	25
Psychiatric:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Insurance Provider for Patients Awating Discharge to SNFs: May 2026 Survey				
Medicare Non-Managed 40%	Medicare Advantage 26%	MassHealth 10%	Commercial Insurer 5%	
			Dual Eligible 3%	MHPE 2%
		Other 10%	Self-Pay 2%	MHFA 0.3%
				MHL 0.3%
				Other State 0.3%

MHFA - MassHealth Family Assistance; MHL - MassHealth Limited; MHPE - MassHealth Presumptive Eligibility

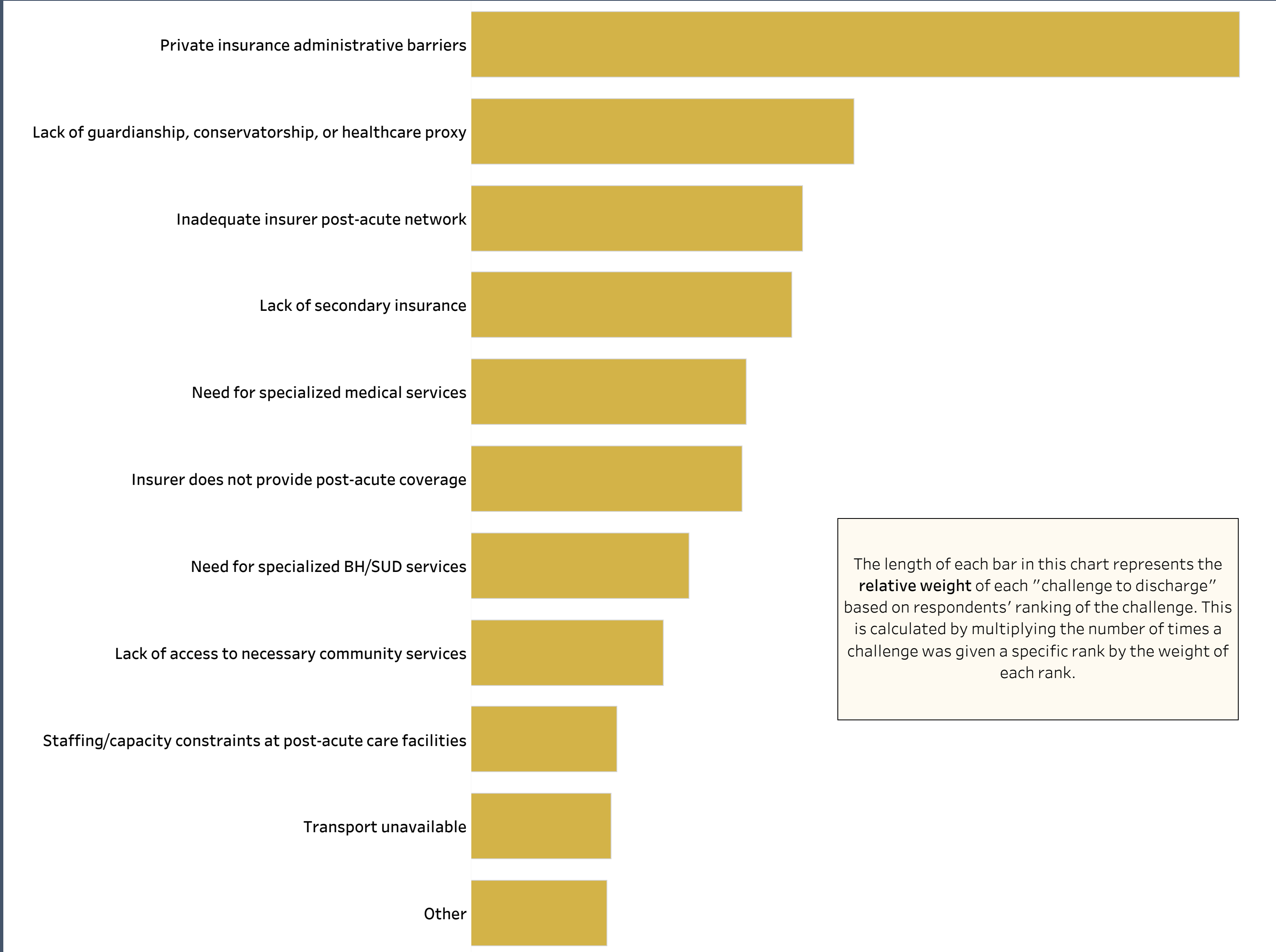
Challenges for Patients Awaiting Long Term Care Beds in Skilled Nursing Facilities									
	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western	Acute	Post-Acute	Statewide
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	5	0	0	2	1	8	0	8
Acquired Brain Injury	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	2
Outpatient Hemodialysis (HD)	1	2	0	0	0	1	4	0	4
Tracheostomy (Trache)	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	3
Trache and HD	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Percutaneous Endoscopy Gastronomy (PEG)	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	0	4
Trache and PEG	4	0	0	2	1	5	12	0	12
Dementia Care Diagnosis	0	16	5	12	35	12	80	0	80
Behavioral Health Diagnosis	0	9	0	0	9	6	24	0	24
Other Neurocognitive Challenges	0	2	0	1	3	3	9	0	9
Awaiting Conservatorship	0	10	0	1	9	4	24	0	24
Awaiting Guardianship	23	13	0	15	11	8	70	0	70
Awaiting Guardianship Expansion	5	2	0	0	5	1	13	0	13
No Idenitifable Conservatorship	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Idenitifable Guardianship	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Patients Awaiting Long-Term Care Beds in Skilled Nursing Facilities with Pending MassHealth Long-Term Care Applications							
	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western	Statewide
Patients with No Outstanding Requests for Information Awaiting MassHealth LTC Application Approval	6	14	2	7	16	5	50
Patients with No Outstanding Requests for Information Awaiting MassHealth LTC Application Completion	23	8	2	9	6	4	52

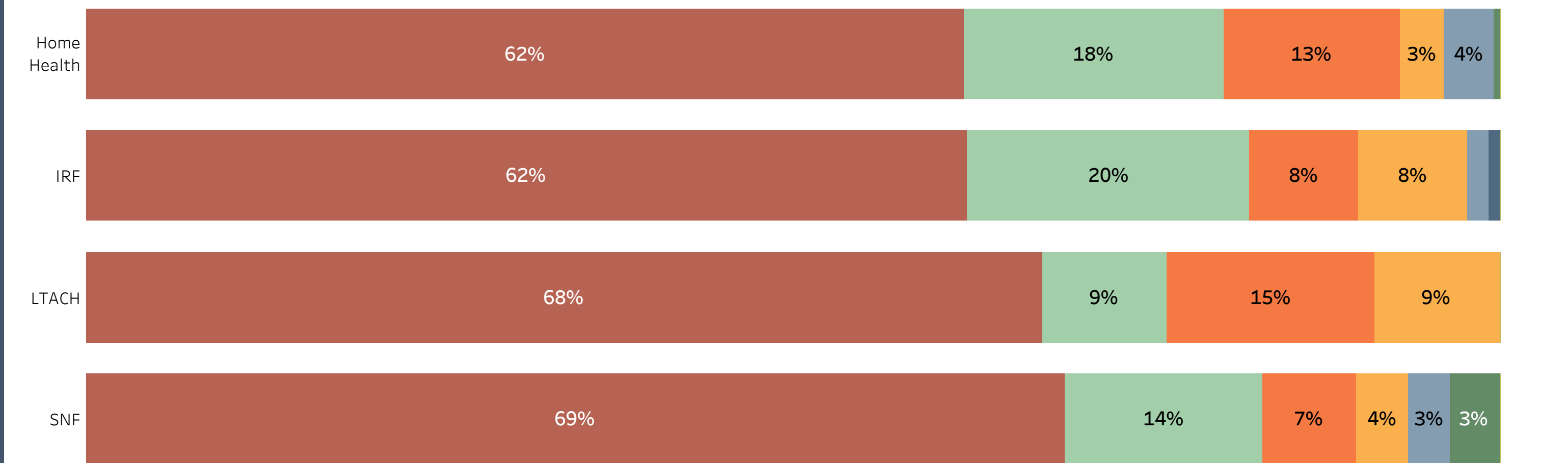
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Based on Responses to MHA's May 2026 Throughput Survey

Challenges to Discharging Patients to SNFs and IRF/LTCHs by Relative Ranking



Race and Ethnicity of Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings May 2026 Survey



Race/Ethnicity

White	Other	Asian	Hispanic/Latino
Black/African-American	Unknown/Not Specified	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Isl.

Please note that survey respondents may not have answered every question. The charts and tables in this report are based on the number of responses to each specific question.

Emergency Shelter Services

	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western	Statewide
The Number of Individuals who have Presented in Hospital Emergency Departments who are Seeking Emergency Shelter Services and do not Require Medical Care:	7	8	7	2	21	83	128

Challenging Discharges Due to Repatriation to Other States/Nations

				Home Health		IRF		LTACH		SNF		Statewide	
Total Number of Patients Awaiting Discharge who are Residents of Other States/Nations that will be Discharged Back to their State/Nation of Residency:				21		17		1		27		66	
	Connecticut	Florida	Georgia	Maine	New Hamp..	New York	Rhode Island	Vermont	Virginia	Portugal	Statewide		
Location to Which Non-Massachusetts Residents were Discharged to:	3	2	1	7	31	1	7	3	1	1	57		

DPH/DMH State Hospital Questions

Total number of patients awaiting discharge that are awaiting placement for a bed in a DPH state hospital:	13
Maximum length of time in days that a patient has waited at a facility for a bed in a DPH hospital in the previous month:	265 days
Total number of patients awaiting discharge that are awaiting placement for a continuing care bed in a DMH state hospital:	7
Maximum length of time in days that a patient has waited at a facility for a continuing care bed in a DMH hospital in the previous month:	128 days

Please note that survey respondents may not have answered every question and the charts and tables are based on the number of responses to each specific question. This data may change significantly as respondents collect more data for this question in future surveys.