MASSACHUSETTS Health & Hospital ASSOCIATION

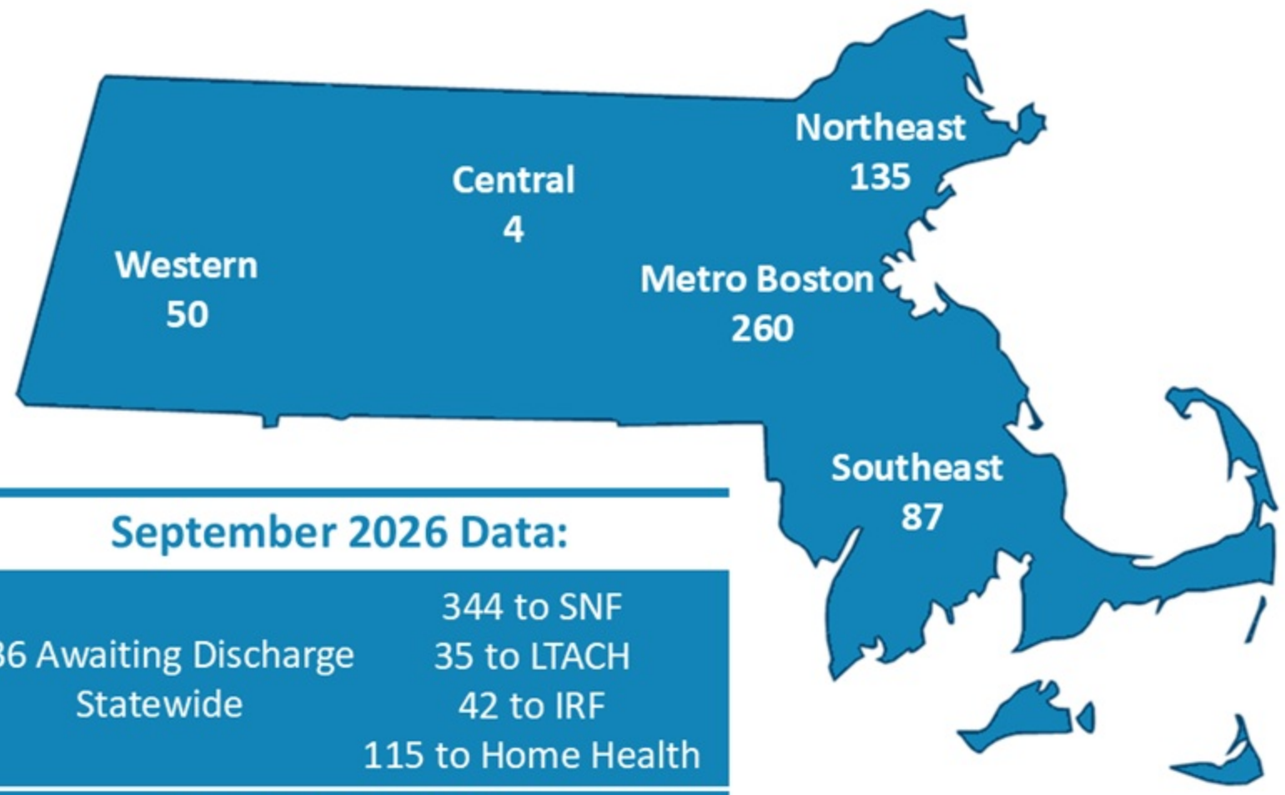
THROUGHPUT SURVEY REPORT

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.

Number of Patients Awaiting Discharge to Post-Acute Settings



September 2026 Data:

536 Awaiting Discharge Statewide	344 to SNF 35 to LTACH 42 to IRF 115 to Home Health
34 HOSPITALS REPORTING	

Please note that Metro Boston data shown here includes MetroWest. The remainder of the report separates these two geographies.

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

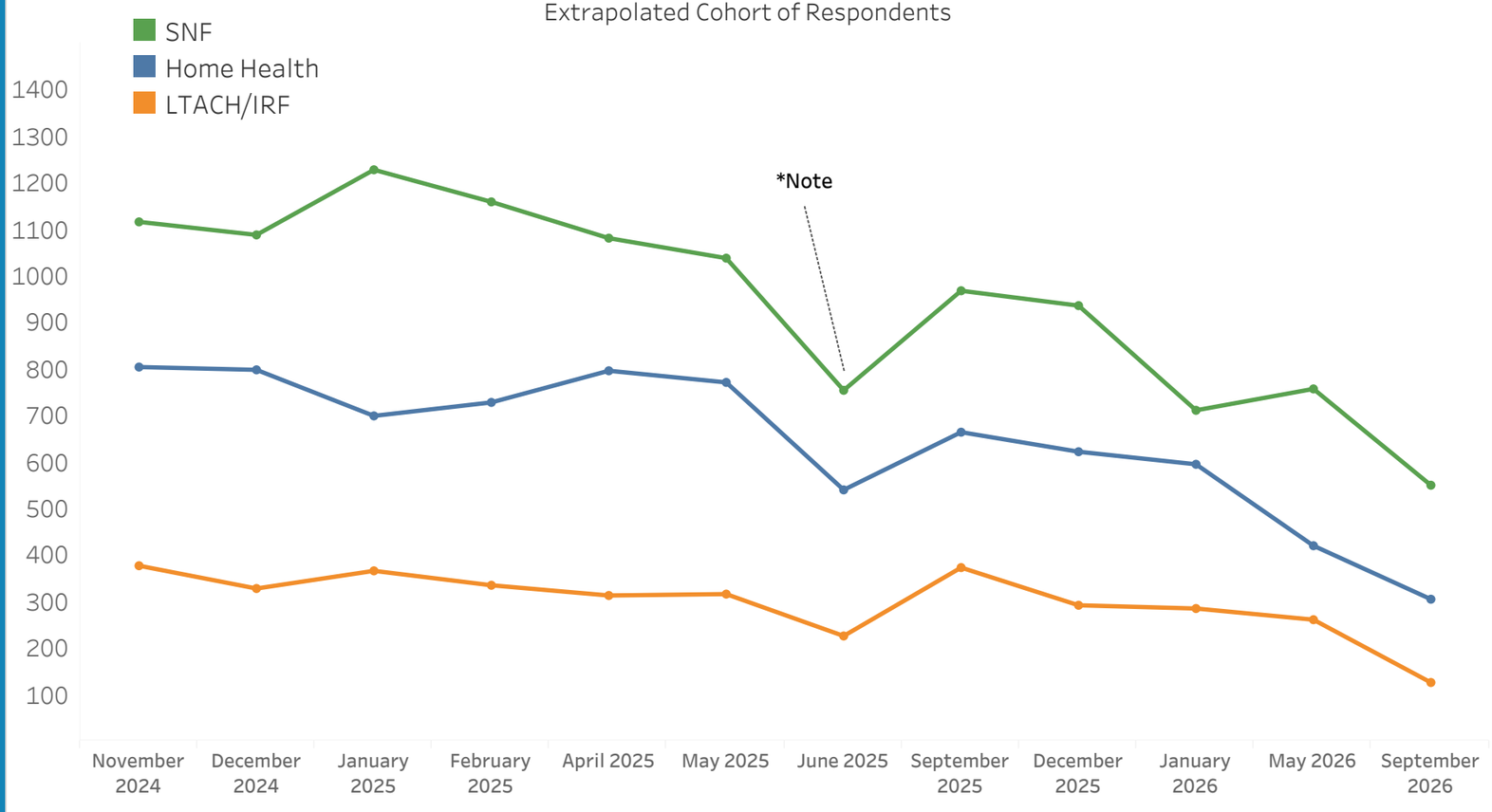
This report summarizes Massachusetts hospital data relating to the number of patients awaiting post-acute care placement, the types of services needed, barriers to patient care, and length of wait times, among other areas. The data is derived from a survey of case management directors in acute and post-acute 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.

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	-27%	-52%	-27%

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
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%
September 2026	5%	41%	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 September 2026 Throughput Survey

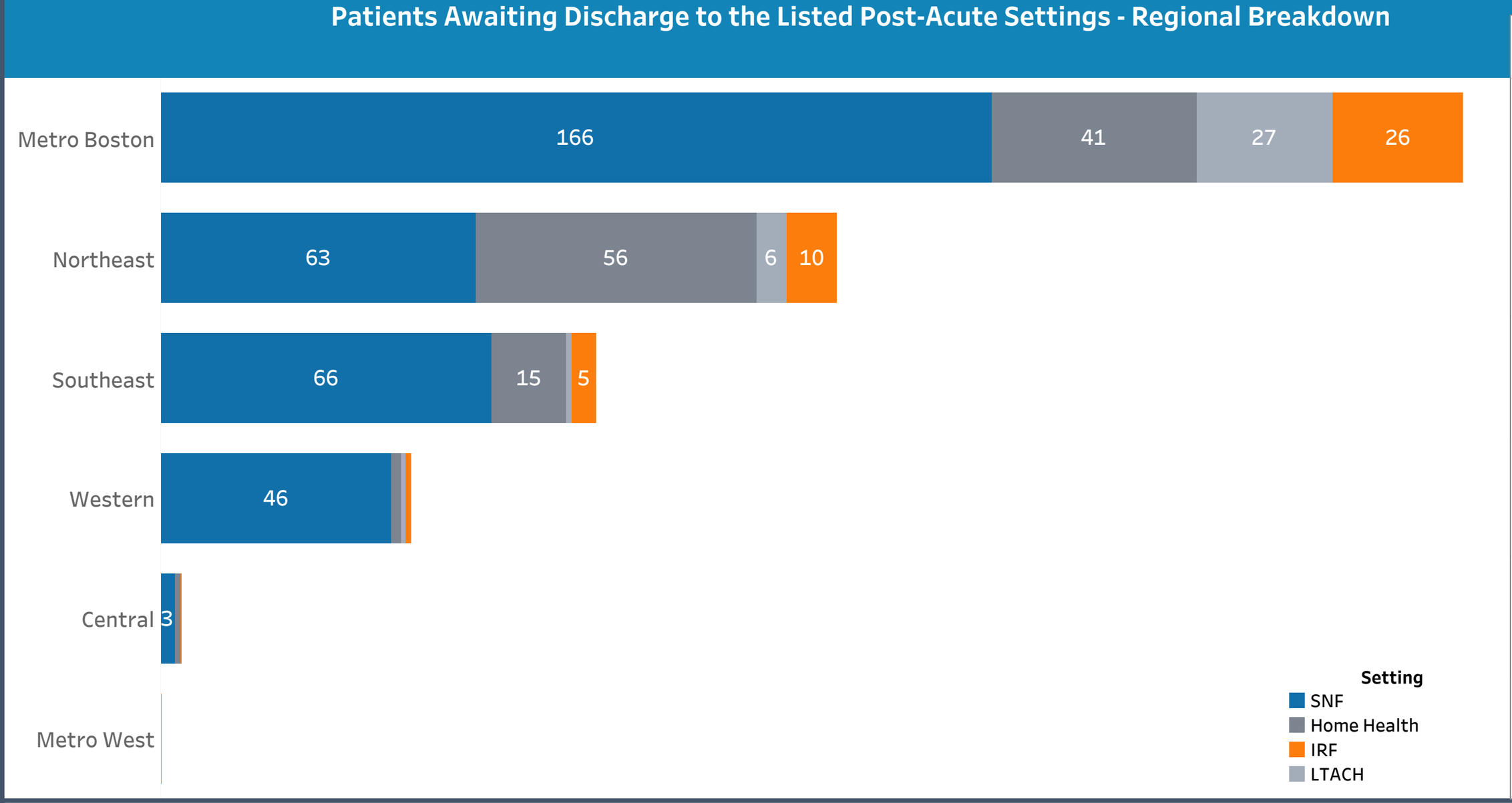
Respondent Information

	Statewide	Acute	Post-Acute	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western
Number of Hospitals	34	31	3	1	14	0	3	7	9
Percent of Staffed Inpatient Beds Represented by Respondents	64%	64%	18%	7%	82%	0%	68%	59%	83%

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



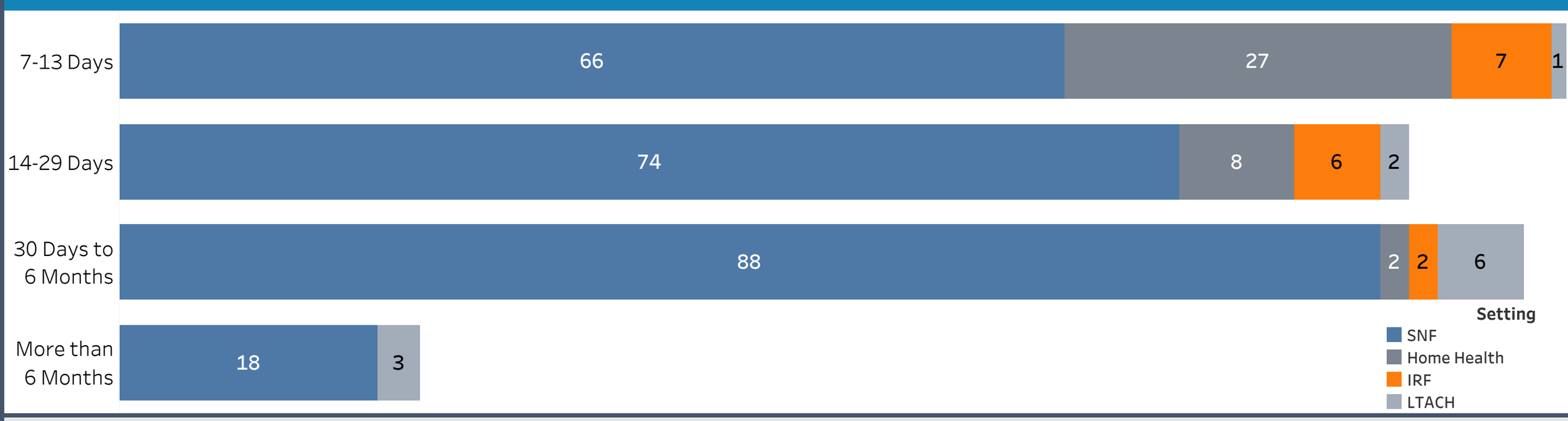
Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings - Regional Breakdown



Occupied Hospital Beds in Region*
3,589
1,343
1,227
1,070
72
0

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

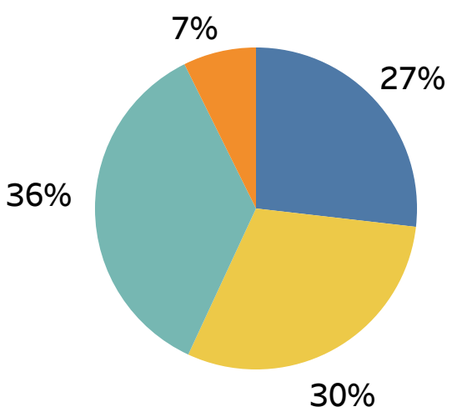
Length of Time of Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Setting



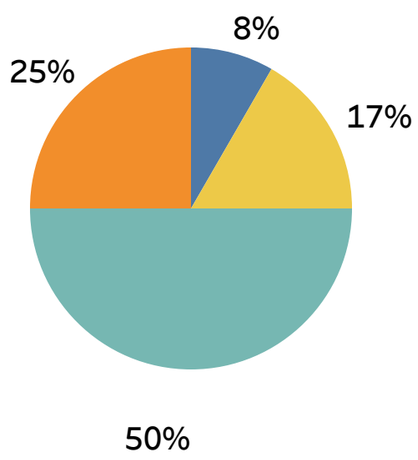
Please note that the totals above may not match those of prior charts, as survey respondents may not have answered every question.

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

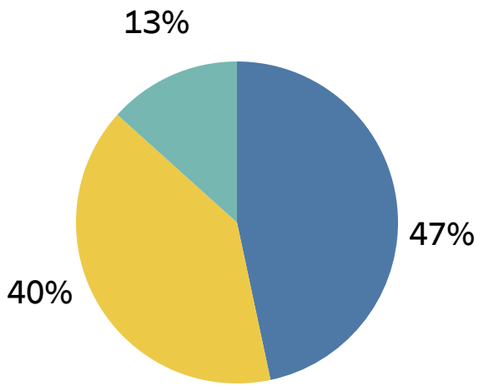
SNF



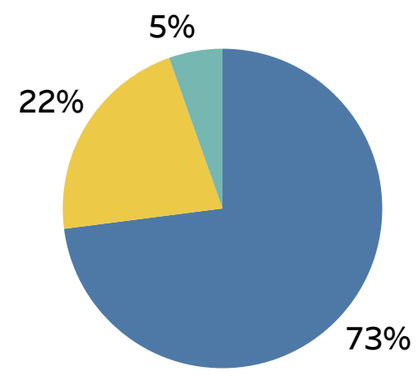
LTACH



IRF



Home Health



7-13 Days 14-29 Days 30 Days to 6 Months More than 6 Months

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 September 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	1	81	0	32	28	3	145
Long-Term Care Beds	2	85	0	25	37	44	193
Dementia	1	17	0	35	23	30	106
Geri-Psych Bed	0	5	0	10	8	3	26
Awaiting a Geri-Psych Bed in a Medical/Surgical Bed or Floor/Unit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Awaiting a Geri-Psych Bed in a Psychatric Bed or Floor/Unit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcohol Use Disorder/Substance Use Disorder Bed	0	2	0	2	1	2	7
Tracheostomy and Percutaneous Endoscopy Gastronomy	0	6	0	1	1	1	9
Methadone Coordination	0	3	0	2	2	3	10
Bariatric Concerns	0	0	0	2	1	1	4
Alzheimer's/Dementia in Locked Unit for Female	0	4	0	11	2	13	30
Alzheimer's/Dementia in Locked Unit for Male	1	8	0	12	6	6	33

Special Requirements for Patients Awaiting Discharge to the Listed Post-Acute Settings

	Home Health	SNF	IRF	LTACH
1-to-1 Supervision	4	34	4	9

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
0	0 Days	1

Range of wait time for patients awaiting discharge due to non-availability of transportation: N/A

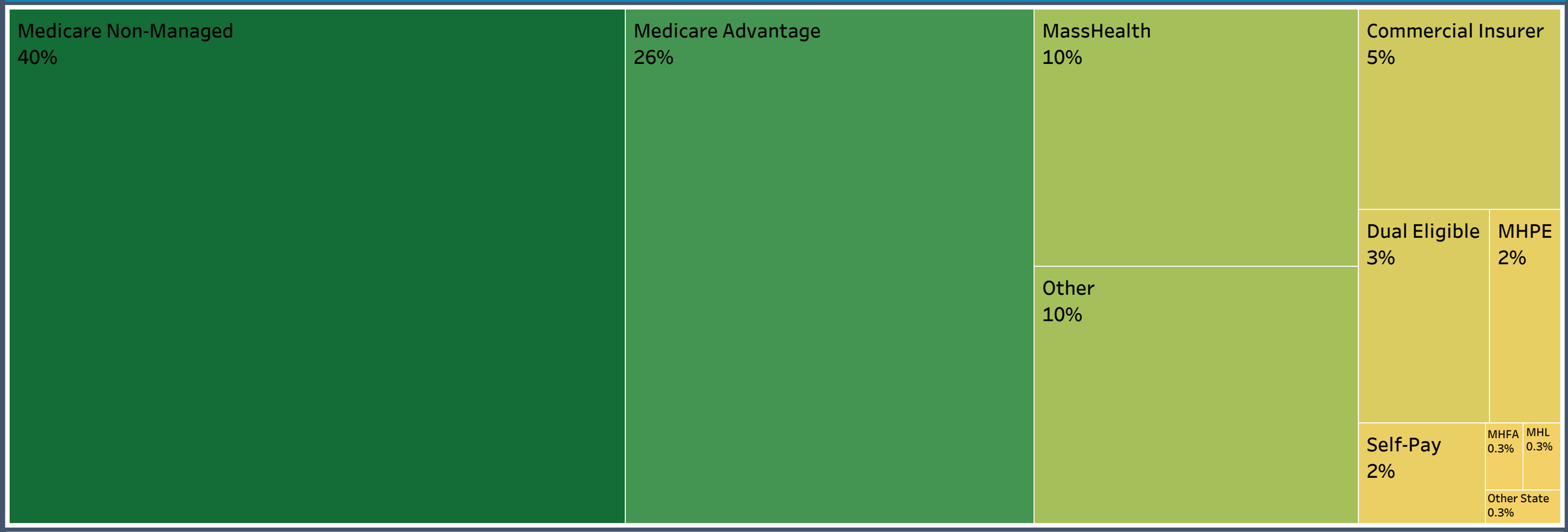
Patients Involved with State/Local Agencies

	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:	3	14	12	0	0	29

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:	0	1	0	4	1	15	21
Psychiatric:	0	3	0	0	0	0	3

Insurance Provider for Patients Awating Discharge to SNFs: May 2026 Survey



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	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	2
Acquired Brain Injury	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	2
Outpatient Hemodialysis (HD)	0	1	0	0	1	2	4	0	4
Tracheostomy (Trache)	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Trache and HD	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
Percutaneous Endoscopy Gastronomy (PEG)	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Trache and PEG	0	2	0	2	0	1	5	0	5
Dementia Care Diagnosis	1	21	0	12	24	22	80	0	80
Behavioral Health Diagnosis	0	6	0	4	3	4	17	0	17
Other Neurocognitive Challenges	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	3
Awaiting Conservatorship	1	4	0	10	8	8	31	0	31
Awaiting Conservatorship with No Identified Assistance	0	0	0	4	2	0	6	0	6
Awaiting Guardianship	0	10	0	7	6	9	32	0	32
Awaiting Guardianship Expansion	0	4	0	1	0	2	7	0	7
Awaiting Guardianship with No Identified Assistance	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	3

Patients Awaiting Long-Term Care Beds in Skilled Nursing Facilities with Pending MassHealth Long-Term Care Applications

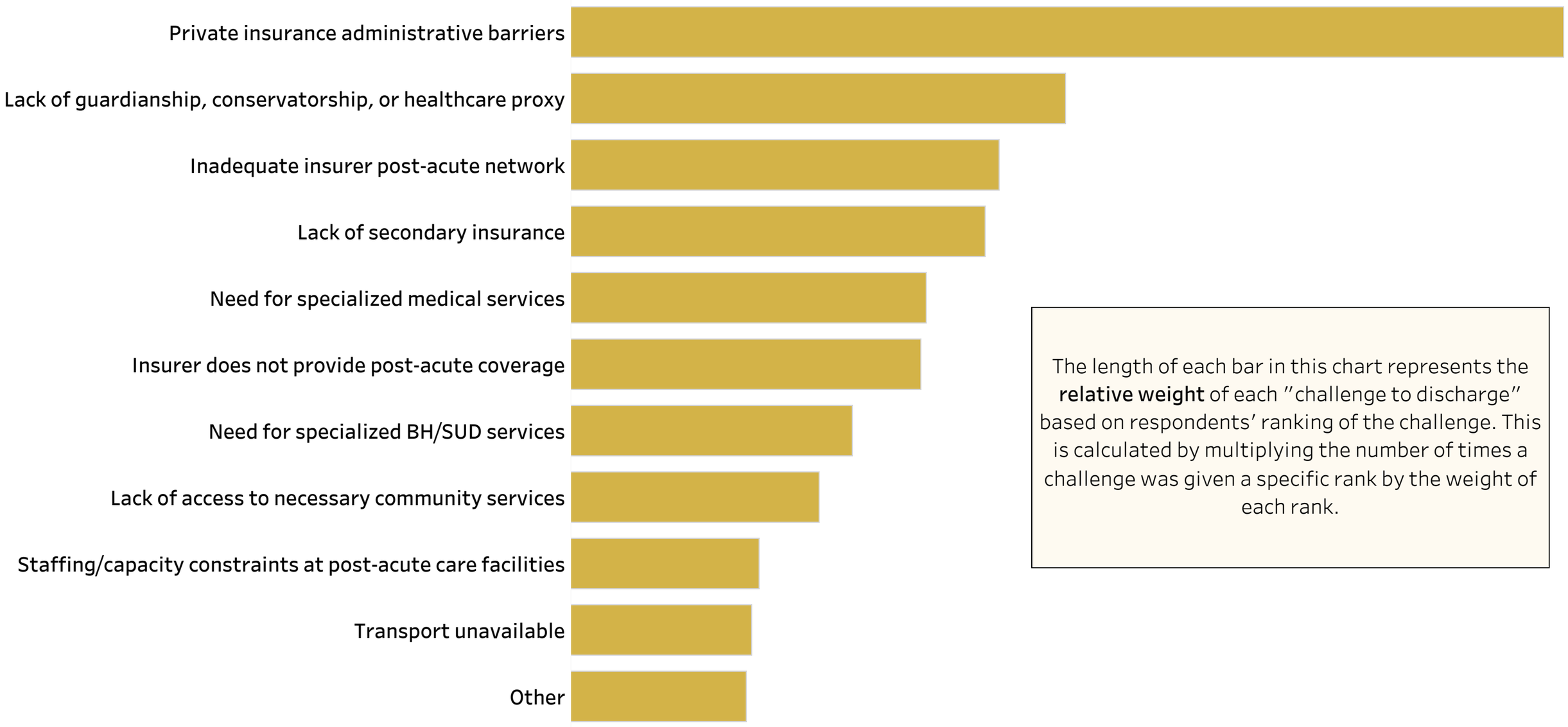
	Central	Metro Boston	Metro West	Northeast	Southeast	Western	Statewide
Patients with No Outstanding Requests for Information Awaiting MassHealth LTC Application Approval	2	5	0	8	18	7	40
Patients with No Outstanding Requests for Information Awaiting MassHealth LTC Application Completion	0	5	0	3	1	63	72

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.

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

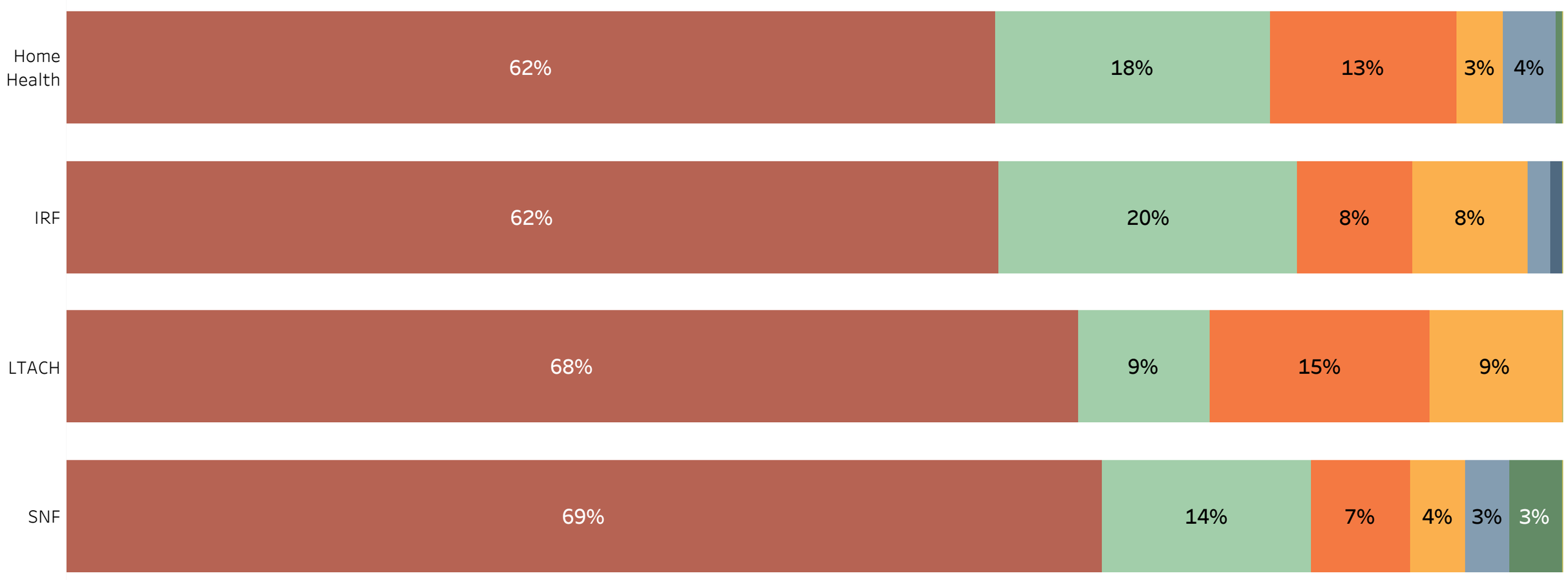
Based on Responses to MHA's May 2026 Throughput Survey

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



The length of each bar in this chart represents the **relative weight** of each "challenge to discharge" based on respondents' ranking of the challenge. This is calculated by multiplying the number of times a challenge was given a specific rank by the weight of each rank.

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



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:	2	1	0	12	17	66	98

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:	5	6	1	15	27

	California	Connecticut	Florida	illinois	Maine	New Hamp..	New Jersey	New York	Rhode Island	Vermont	Statewide
Of the patients reported above as residents of other states, to which states are they awaiting discharge?	1	0	1	1	2	17	1	0	1	4	28

DPH/DMH State Hospital Capacity

Total number of patients awaiting discharge that are awaiting placement for a bed in a DPH state hospital:	15
For patients reported above, what is the length of time in days that a patient at your facility has waited for a bed in a state hospital in the previous month?	325 days
Total number of patients awaiting placement in a continuing care bed in a DMH state hospital (i.e., WorcesterRecovery Center, Taunton State Hospital, Tewksbury State Hospital, Lemuel Shattuck Hospital, Dr. Solomon Carter Fuller, or Mountain View)?	4
For patients reported above, what is the maximum length of time in days that a patient at your facility has waited for a DMH continuing care bed in astate hospital in the previous month?	180 days

Patients Who Lost Coverage and Are Unable to Access Post-Acute Care Due to Passage of OB3

Of the total number of patients who are awaiting discharge in your hospital, how many patients have lost coverage or are expecting to lose coverage due to the passage of OB3 in the year 2026, and, as a result, will no longer be able to access post-acute care?	14

Hospitals Providing Coverage for Post-Acute Care for Patients

Total number of hospitals reporting that they have arrangements with post-acute providers where the hospital covers the costs of the patient's post-acute care because the patient doesn't have post-acute coverage through the state:	5
The total number of patients that a hospital is currently paying for their post-acute coverage:	13

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.