

WASHINGTON, March 7, 2014 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The following is being released by the Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare:

The February [jobs report](#) released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics today represents the single highest level of monthly job loss in the home health sector in more than a decade. According to the BLS report, 3,800 home health jobs were lost in February. Home health leaders warn that this decline is a direct result of the 14 percent Medicare cut the Obama Administration began implementing on January 1 as part of the Affordable Care Act.

In December 2013, the home health sector lost 3,700 jobs as patients and providers braced for the impending cut. Now in effect for two months, the negative trend is continuing at a heightened pace. In years past, home health was a consistent driver of new jobs due to seniors' preference to receive medical treatment at home, contributing a net increase in jobs in 125 of the 131 months preceding December 2013.

"Despite claims that the Affordable Care Act will not result in job loss for American workers, this month's jobs report suggests that the Medicare cut to home health is doing just that," stated Eric Berger, CEO of the Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare. "Obamacare's deep Medicare home health cut is having a direct impact on the Medicare program's most vulnerable patient population and the healthcare professionals – most of whom are women – on whom seniors depend."

According to [data analyses](#) by Avalere Health and Dobson|Davanzo & Associates, Medicare home health beneficiaries are older, poorer, sicker and more likely to be women and minorities than all other Medicare beneficiaries. In addition, women hold 90 percent of home health jobs and represent 60 percent of the home health patient population.

Over the next four years, home health funding will be cut by 3.5 percent annually, amounting to an unprecedented total cut of 14 percent. The Obama Administration concedes that this cut will drive "approximately 40 percent" of all home health agencies to net losses by 2017, resulting in job loss, agency consolidation and potential bankruptcy by thousands of providers. As evidenced in the February jobs report, these effects are already in motion.

US Jobs Report: Job Losses Escalate in Home Health Sector

Written by Australian Business

"With February being just the second of the 48 months in which the rebasing cut is being imposed, the home health community is already experiencing significant job loss," added Berger. "This is a dangerous trajectory for our senior population and economy. As a result, we are grateful for the attention that leaders in Washington are giving to this cut's impact on patient access and jobs, and we thank them for considering the provision of much-needed relief to the Medicare program's frailest patients and home healthcare professionals across our nation."

The Partnership for Quality Home Healthcare was established to assist government officials in ensuring access to skilled home healthcare services for seniors and disabled Americans. Representing community- and hospital-based home healthcare agencies across the United States, the Partnership is dedicated to developing innovative reforms to improve the quality, efficiency and integrity of home healthcare. To learn more, visit

www.homehealth4america.org

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