

ALF Wages Remain Relatively Flat

Administrators Record Gains, But DON Salaries Drop

The national median salary in 2003 for administrators in free-standing assisted living residences increased just 3 percent over 2002 levels, from \$51,501 to \$53,040, according to the sixth annual “Assisted Living Salary and Benefits Report,” published by the Hospital & Healthcare Compensation Service (HCS). That is less than half of the 7 percent increase from 2001 to 2002 reported by HCS’ survey last year. By comparison, the national median salary for nursing facility administrators in 2003 was \$47,430. Administrators at continuing care retirement communities averaged \$49,192. The average bonus paid to an assisted living administrator was 15.6 percent of salary.

Nationwide, administrators drawing the highest median salaries—\$65,000—worked in facilities with annual revenue exceeding \$2.5 million; administrators in facilities with lower annual revenue earned about \$14,000 less, bringing in \$50,748.

Administrators in larger facilities—75 units or more—earned about \$5,000 more per year (a national median of \$57,606) than did those in smaller facilities (\$52,000).

The highest administrator salary was reported in the Pacific Northwest at \$112,000.

Directors of nursing (DONs) earned a national median salary of \$48,400, according to the survey, or about \$5,000 less than in 2002. In facilities with revenue of more than \$2.5 mil-

lion, DONs earned a median salary of \$56,000, while those in facilities with less revenue drew a median salary of \$50,000. Personal care aides earned an average of \$8.63 per hour, a rate that varied little depending on unit size, revenue, or geographic region.

Benefits reported for assisted living staff decreased over 2002, while management benefits increased slightly. The survey showed nonmanagement employees averaged 15 paid days off after one year of service and 20 paid days off after five years of service, compared with 19 and 21 days, respectively, in 2002.

Management staff earned an average of 20 paid days off after one year of service and 25 days after five years of service, compared with 17 and 21 days off in 2002.

—Amy Waye