



WILDFIRE ASSESSMENT

Findings from a survey of 2,097 residents of Maui County and 1,105 fire-impacted individuals

JUNE 2024





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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

“ Sadness & Survival mode – Still integrating evacuating from fires and leaving island with my daughter, it’s been a hard transition, we grieve a lot, feel like a fish out of water and it breaks my heart my daughter will no longer grow up in Hawai’i, being that she is kanaka maoli. ”

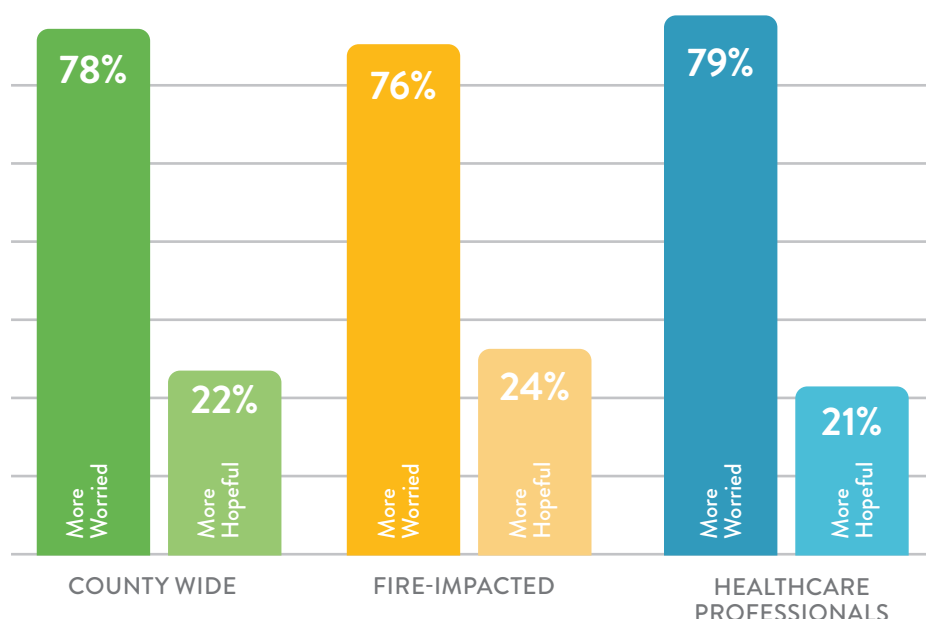


Worry Dominates Over Hope Across the County

Largely driven by economic insecurity.

The high cost of living, especially housing, and the inability to accrue savings are chief stressors and it is worse than right after the pandemic. Medical professionals are feeling the same way – so much so that many are considering leaving the state or the profession.

THE COST OF LIVING AND ACCESS TO STABLE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING ARE THE CHIEF CONCERNS ACROSS THE COUNTY.



Having money in savings is elusive to many and **nearly half county-wide say their personal financial situation is more dire since the fires.** The number who have seen their financial prospects worsen has increased by 18 percentage points in two years. This is also true of health care professionals. And they are going without, characterizing their existence as “surviving.”

SIX IN TEN OF ALL RESPONDENTS COUNTY WIDE and **more than 70% among the fire survivor sample,** **REPORT CUTTING BACK ON GROCERIES AND FOOD** for financial reasons.

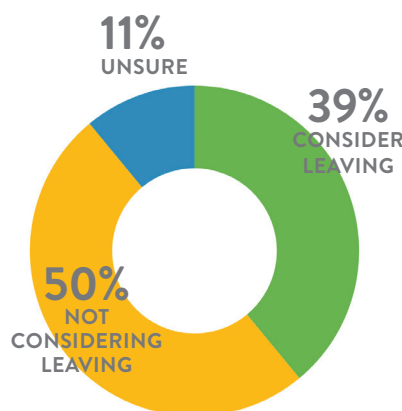
For fire survivors, health care professionals, and the County as a whole, the single greatest unmet need is financial support to help alleviate poverty.



More Needs To Be Done to Keep Providers From Defecting

Leaving is an option for roughly four in 10 and most know people who have left. Medical professionals, including doctors, are even more likely to consider leaving for economic and cost of living reasons.

When offered a list of solutions designed to alleviate health problems, health care professionals place highest priority on improving pay and reimbursement rates. Increasing the healthcare workforce focusing on home-grown recruits is another high priority item. **There is a meaningful number of individuals in our survey interested in health care careers.** Numbers are even higher among fire survivors.



NEARLY THREE-QUARTERS OF MAUI COUNTY HAVE FELT THE IMPACTS OF THE FIRES.

For those directly impacted, the loss and experience is dramatically different, with **MORE THAN HALF SAYING THEY LOST HOUSING, CASH, AND/OR FRIENDS.**



Those who have been directly impacted by the fires have experienced greater financial, mental and physical hardship than the rest of the county, though circumstances on all three islands have worsened over the past two years. While life is difficult for all survivors, those who have been able to settle on Maui’s West Side appear to be in better shape than those who have been geographically displaced.

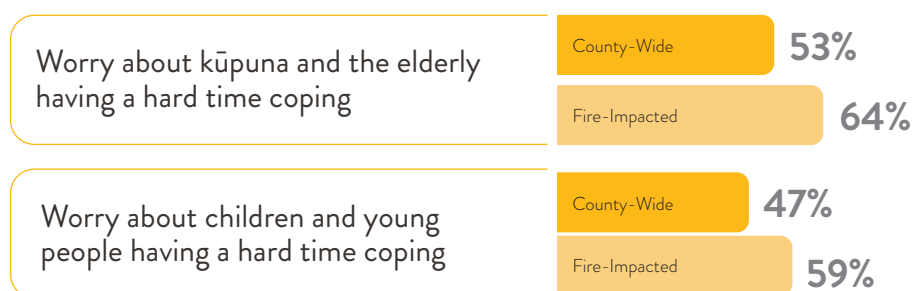
FIRE SURVIVORS, who are largely working class and multi-ethnic are MORE LIKELY TO BE UNDER-OR UNEMPLOYED (35%) than the rest of the County – and more interested in health care career training (17%)

The vast majority of those directly impacted are still living in “temporary housing,” and most are recovering from the upheavals of having to move multiple times since the fires. They are frustrated with delays, increased rents, and units sitting empty while landlords still get paid.

Uncertainty is the Dominant Feeling Among the Survivor Community and Beyond

It is those who have been here the longest who feel the most unstable – Native Hawaiians, kūpuna, and those who have lived on Maui for decades, if not generations. This is driven, in part, by housing instability. Fire-impacted individuals are much more worried about another fire than the rest of the County.

WE MUST NOT FORGET OUR ELDERLY KAMA‘AINA WHO SURVIVED THE FIRES.



There is greater concern over the ability of the elderly to cope since the fires than for keiki from both samples. That said, households with keiki are suffering a lot of financial insecurity, and they request more activities for kids and young adults.

AGREEMENT THAT THE COUNTY IS IN POOR HEALTH.

A majority say their community is “unhealthy.” While the numbers on Lāna‘i and Moloka‘i who pronounce their community as “unhealthy” are higher, worries about the health of kama‘aina are even higher among the health professionals we queried.

Most believe there is a doctor shortage, and it is impacting the ability to get appointments and access to providers who know their medical history. Healthcare delays are common and on the rise. Health care professionals are more likely to experience delays when making appointments for themselves or their ‘ohana than the county as a whole.

WITH NEAR UNANIMITY, MOLOKA‘I RESIDENTS BELIEVE THEY HAVE A PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE.

Providers agree that **staffing shortages are the biggest impediment**, placing highest priority on counseling and psychiatry professions, a finding we reported on two years ago. Meanwhile, county residents prioritize primary care and specialists, with dentists added to the list on Lāna‘i and Moloka‘i.

Be Mindful of the Unique Challenges Facing Moloka‘i and Lāna‘i



Especially as it relates to air transport to off-island appointments. They face significant delays in care as a result which are bound to impact health.

It could be why these Lāna‘i and Moloka‘i residents characterize their community’s health as being in worse condition than those on Maui, including fire survivors. In the words of one provider, “Maui County data needs to be separate for each island. Grouping the data into one county does not provide accurate information regarding the needs and challenges of each individual island. The data for ‘Maui County’ does not represent each island specifically.”



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“ We not only lost our past in the fire, we lost our future also. ”

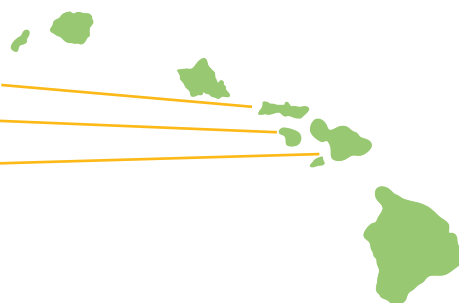


Research Started with Medical Professionals

ONLINE FOCUS GROUPS AMONG HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS ON MAUI, MOLOKA'I, AND LĀNA'I

Lisa Grove of Grove Insight, Ltd. managed and conducted all facets of the research. The project started with four online focus groups among the following medical professionals:

- Moloka'i primary and behavioral health providers (2/22)
- Lāna'i primary and behavioral health providers (2/15)
- Behavioral health providers on Maui (2/20)
- Primary health providers (2/21)



The evening groups were 75-90 minutes in length. Participants were recruited using established networks and provider lists the Hawai'i State Rural Health Association (HSRHA) has cultivated on these islands.

IN-PERSON FOCUS GROUPS WITH FIRE SURVIVORS AND LEAD VOLUNTEERS

Grove Insight conducted four in-person groups among the fire-impacted community. This included three groups among the directly impacted and one with on-site leads working in disaster relief as well as private hub leaders.

 <p>FOCUS GROUP 1: Fire-Impacted Community</p>	 <p>FOCUS GROUP 2: Fire-Impacted Community</p>	 <p>FOCUS GROUP 3: Fire-Impacted Community</p>	 <p>FOCUS GROUP 4: On-Site Leads working in disaster relief & private hubs</p>
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The lead volunteers' group was held on the morning of 3/12/2024 in Kahului; and the groups among fire survivors were held at the Lahaina Comprehensive Health Center on the evenings of 3/12, 3/13, and 3/14. Participants were recruited via the coconut wireless and select to postings including from a number of organizations in West Maui. Chain, or network sampling methods were also used to recruit acquaintances of qualified participants. We thank Fran Lucky Odoshi Waite for all did to make the focus groups run smoothly.

Maui County Community Survey



Grove Insight conducted a survey of **2,097 RESIDENTS OF MAUI COUNTY** and **1,105 FIRE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS** from May 20 to June 6, 2024. The survey was translated into Spanish, Tagalog and Ilocano.

Interviews were conducted online. Respondents were recruited for the survey via SMS-to-web, online panels and email addresses. Postcards were sent to random households county-wide, with a heavy concentration on Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi. The postcards contained a QR code and an ask to participate in English, Tagalog, and Ilocano. The sample was weighted to ensure it was proportionately representative of the true demographics of Maui County.



The bulk of the fire-impacted respondents came from a list provided by Maui United Way of qualified applicants for their Emergency Financial Assistance program. The remainder were the result of direct questioning in the survey.

The margin of error for is $\pm 2.1\%$ for the county wide sample and is $\pm 2.9\%$ for the fire-impacted sample. It is higher among subgroups and questions that were split or not asked of all respondents.

Grove Insight designed the survey instrument, programmed, and analyzed an online survey of 57 health care professionals in Maui County. The Hawaiʻi State Rural Health Association was responsible for outreach to would-be respondents, relying heavily on their Project ECHO list of providers. Physicians and registered nurses represent the bulk of the sample.

Note: Verbatim responses from the focus groups and responses to the open-ended questions are used throughout. They have been lightly edited for readability.

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS' SURVEY

Grove Insight designed the survey instrument, programmed, and analyzed an online survey of **57 HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS IN MAUI COUNTY**.

The Hawaiʻi State Rural Health Association was responsible for outreach to would-be respondents, relying heavily on their Project ECHO list of providers. Physicians and registered nurses represent the bulk of the sample.

The survey was conducted June 12-19, 2024. There is no margin of error for this survey because not every health care professional had an equal chance of participating in the survey based on its distribution.



KEY DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

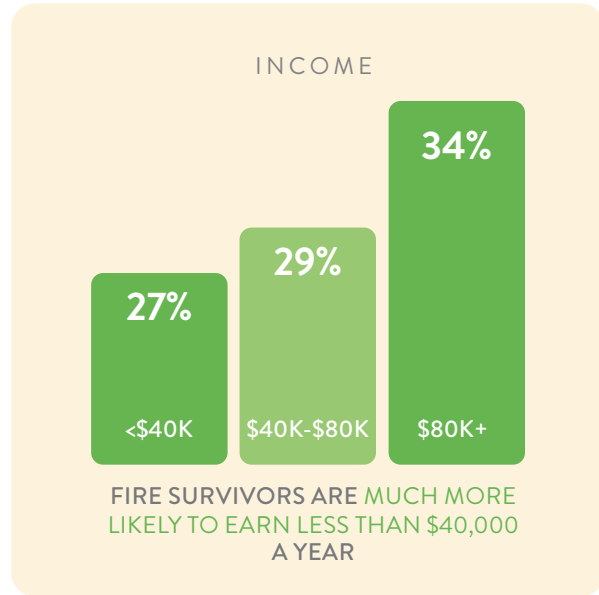
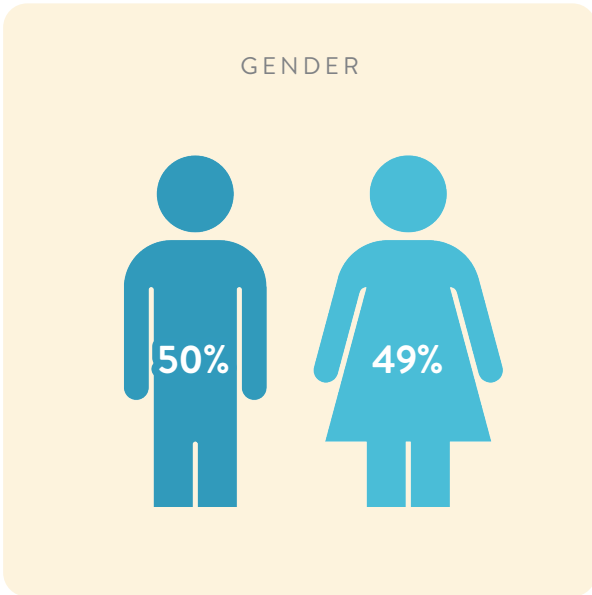
“ I want to feel like we get to like have some sort of voice at the table of what’s happening with our future. ”



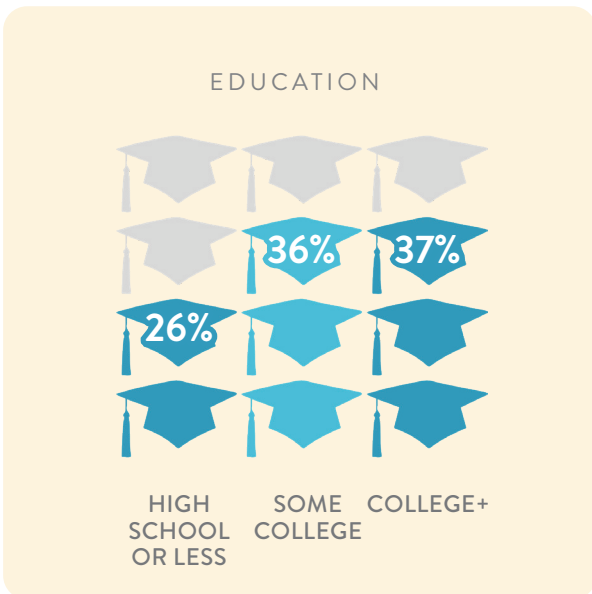
Key Demographic Differences Between the Countywide and Fire Survivor Populations

FIRE SURVIVORS IN OUR SURVEY ARE YOUNGER, LESS WELL-OFF, AND MORE CULTURALLY DIVERSE

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES



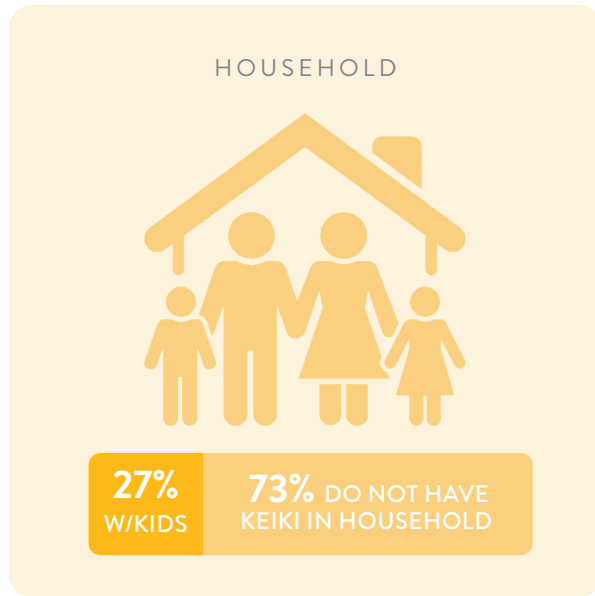
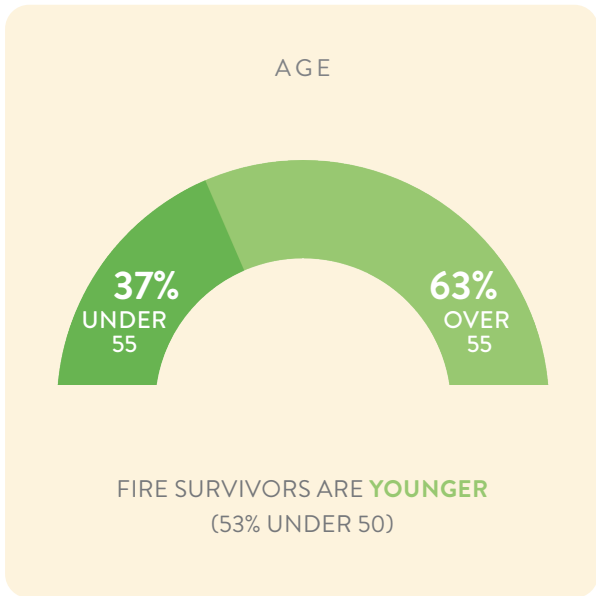
Our fire survivor sample, which mirrors the pre-fire Census data for Lahaina, is **much more working class** (lower income, less well-educated) than the County as a whole.



Fire Survivors are much **more likely to have a high school diploma or less**; less likely to have college degrees

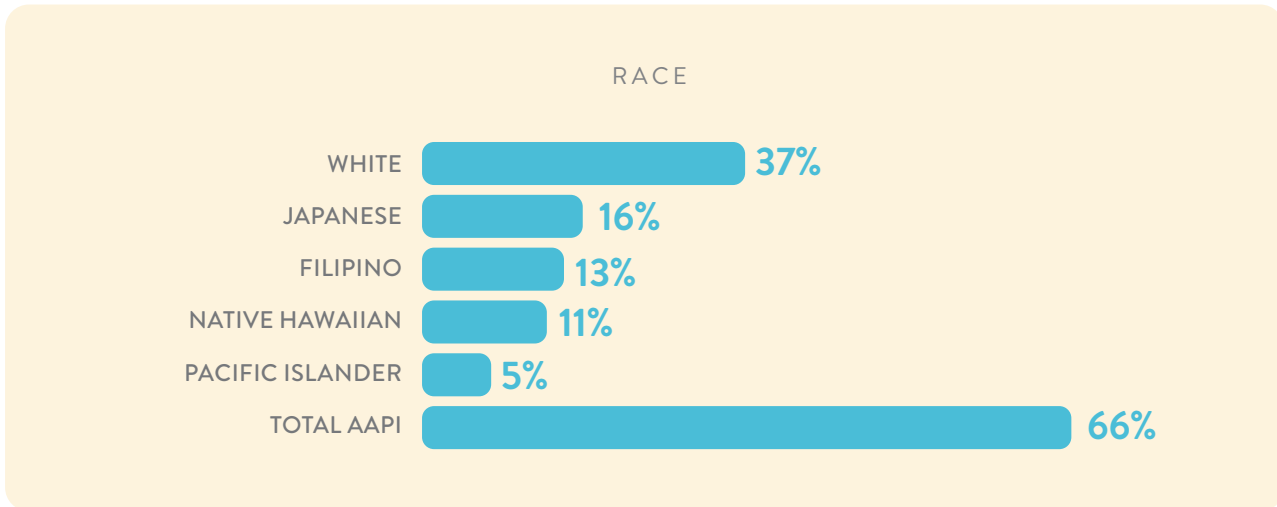
Fire Survivors are **more likely to be under- or unemployed (35%)** – and more interested in health care career training (17%)

Fire survivors in our sample were also **YOUNGER** than County residents and **more likely to have keiki under 18 in the household** (36% compared to 27% county-wide).



KEY DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

Fire survivors are also more **ethnically diverse** and are much more likely to speak a language other than English at home (43% compared to 25% county-wide). There is more Spanish spoken here than in other parts of the islands.



Roughly half (49%) of fire-impacted individuals no longer live on the West side
FIRE SURVIVORS WHO ARE DISPLACED FROM THE WEST SIDE ARE STRUGGLING MORE THAN THOSE WHO ARE LIVING CLOSER TO HOME.
 This is not to suggest that those on the West Side be ignored – their needs are almost as profound.



GENERAL MOOD: ECONOMIC WOES DOMINATE

“ Scared of more fires due to poor water management and ecosystem management causing bare ground which causes droughts that lead to deadly fires. I’m also disabled and have a newborn and live with 2 elderly people over 70. So, we’d all probably die in a fire. ”



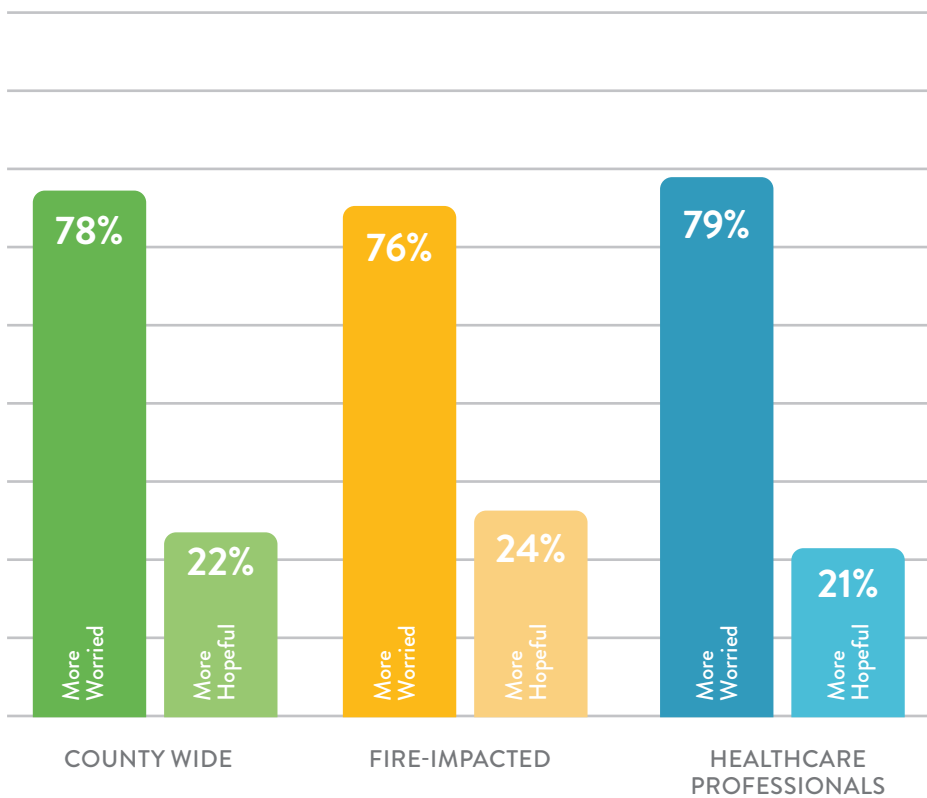
Majorities of County Residents Worry About an Uncertain Future

This is even more so with fire-impacted individuals.

A majority (51%) believe the County is headed on the “wrong track” with just over one in 10 (13%) believing it is on the right course. Over one-third (36%) are unsure.



MORE THAN THREE-QUARTERS (76%) – REPORT BEING MORE “WORRIED” THAN “HOPEFUL” ABOUT THEIR FUTURE IN HAWAII.



While majorities of every major demographic subgroup express more worry than hope, this is the truest among:

- Under 55, especially women, and younger AJA (Americans of Japanese Ancestry)
- Women who are Filipino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- High income earners with keiki in the household
- Unemployed
- Self/HH in need of counseling
- Are considering leaving

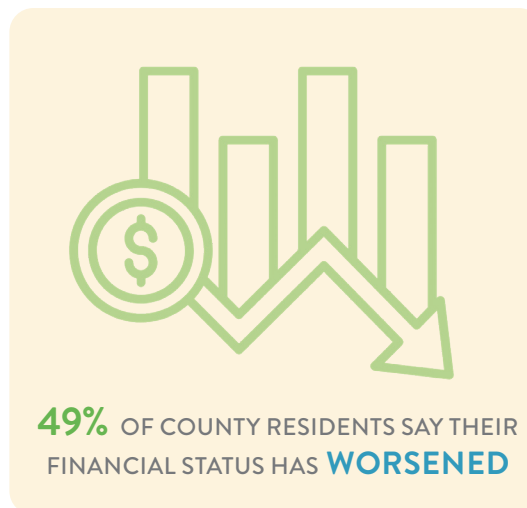
Those who report mental health counseling needs within their household or are contemplating moving are also among the most worried about the future.

High living costs, housing availability, lack of medical providers, uncertainty, including about the economy, are the greatest sources of worry. All these concerns receive even higher percentages of fire-impacted individuals who register a “great deal” of concern.

Economic Stressors Dominate and, for many, are not abstractions.

The fires have had an out-sized impact on the economy across the county. Today nearly half (49%) of county residents say their financial status has worsened since the fires, a number that is nearly **20 percentage points higher than in 2022 coming out of the pandemic.**

FIRE-IMPACTED RESPONDENTS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY WORSE OFF ON ALL METRICS, ESPECIALLY FINANCIAL STATUS AND MENTAL HEALTH.



Compared to 2020, financial health is much worse across the county, physical health is better and mental health is unchanged. Health care providers report being financially worse off since the fires.

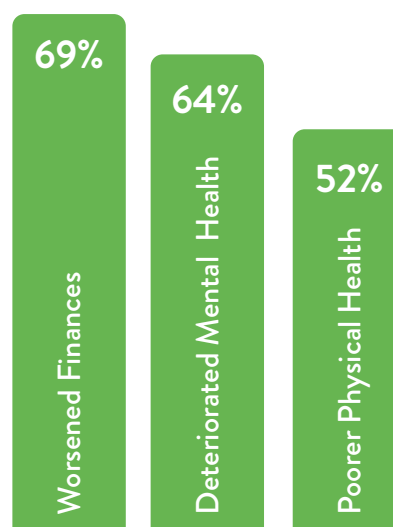
GENERAL MOOD: ECONOMIC WOES DOMINATE

71% OF FIRE SURVIVORS REPORT CUTTING BACK ON GROCERIES AND FOOD FOR FINANCIAL REASONS.

Six in 10 county-wide (60%) and 71% of fire survivors say they have had to cut back on food and groceries for financial reasons – numbers that are considerably higher than two years ago (54% reported cutting back in 2022).

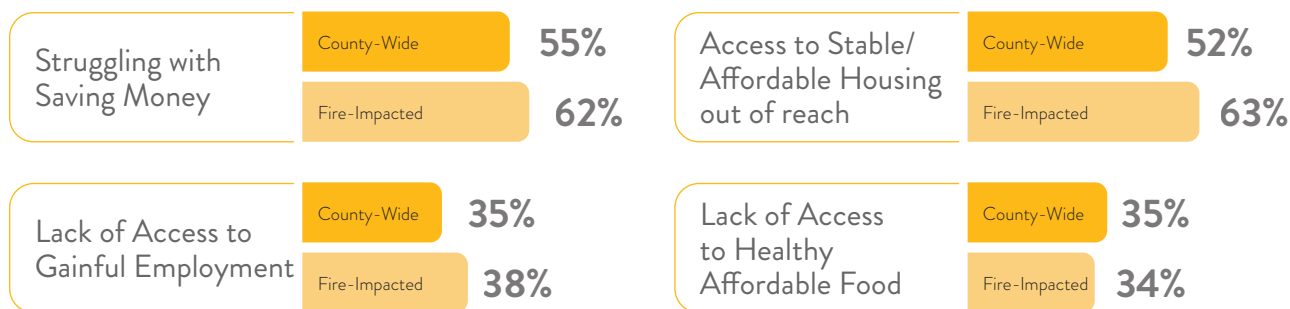
We have more respondents who say they have **cut back on medicine and medical care today because they cannot afford it**, a number considerably higher than two years ago (40% cut back on medical care due to finances today; 27% in 2022).

THE FINANCIAL, MENTAL, AND PHYSICAL TOLL IS HIGHER AMONG THOSE DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY THE FIRES.



Saving Money & Stable Housing Out of Reach

Measurements of the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) tell a similar story. Majorities of county residents and even higher numbers of fire survivors say being able to save money (55% county-wide; 62% fire-impacted), and have access to stable, affordable housing are out of reach right now (52% county-wide; 63% fire-impacted). Lack of access to gainful employment (35% county; 38% fire-impacted) and healthy affordable food (35% county, 34% fire-impacted) are next on the list.



While economic insecurity is at peak levels among the fire-impacted, they are not the only ones hurting.

NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS, THOSE IN LOW-INCOME BRACKETS, SINGLE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD, RESIDENTS WHO ARE 35-44 YEARS OLD, AND MED-QUEST PATIENTS AS STRUGGLING THE MOST RIGHT NOW.

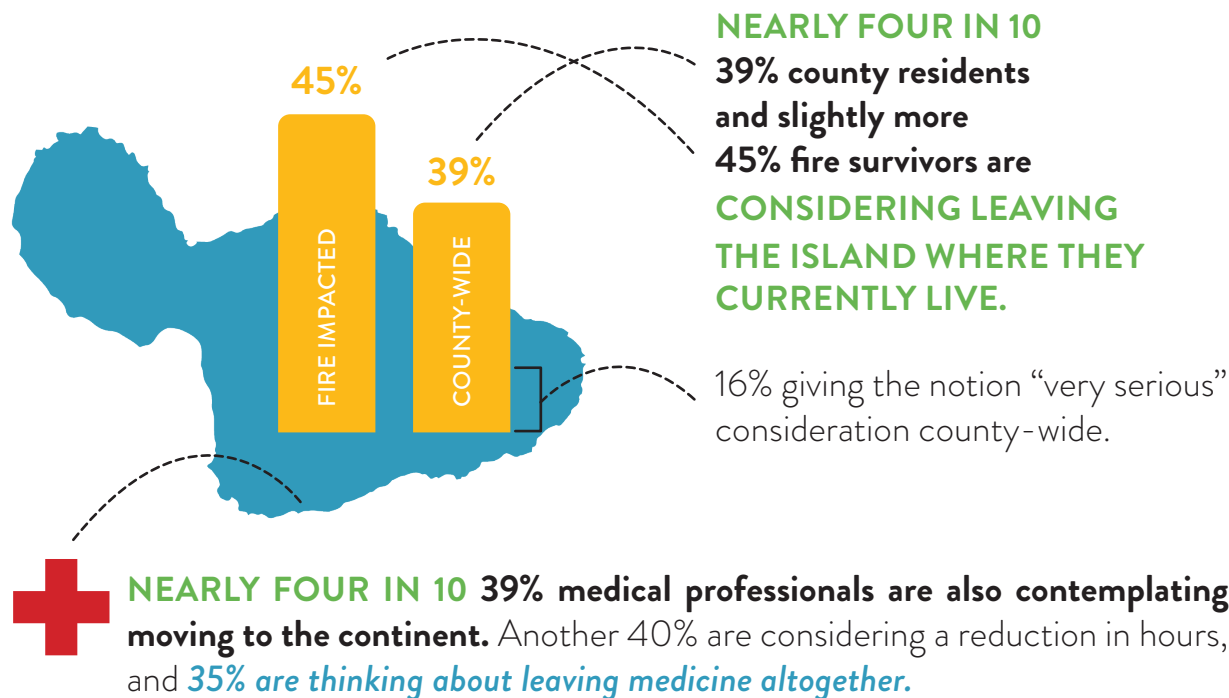


GENERAL MOOD: WHEN LEAVING BECOMES AN OPTION

“ I lived on front street, Lahaina. I was living in an apartment, and the fire on Aug 8th took everything I owned. I was lucky to get out of the apartment. I can't afford to live in Maui anymore. I had to move to the mainland where rent is affordable. ”



This struggle is making people question staying in Maui County or leaving



Most know someone who has left:

- friends (65%)
- neighbors (35%)
- co-workers (33%)
- and family (31%)

The numbers are considerably higher among the fire survivor community:

- friends (81%)
- neighbors (58%)
- coworkers (56%)
- family (48%)

ONLY 6% OF FIRE SURVIVORS SAY THEY “DON’T KNOW ANYONE WHO HAS LEFT” SINCE THE AUGUST FIRES.

Migration threats are a diverse group, ranging from younger respondents, a mix of races and ethnicities, low-income earners, and those who live in South Maui.

Fire-impacted respondents who have already moved tend to be older, college-educated, White, higher-income earners, and more recent arrivals. While the bulk of them have moved to Oahu, Hawai‘i Island, California, Las Vegas, and other western states, defectors are scattered across the continent, and can be found in Mexico and Guam.

GENERAL MOOD: WHEN LEAVING BECOMES AN OPTION



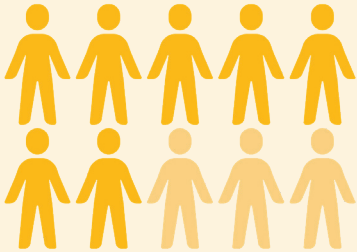
LIFE FOR FIRE-IMPACTED RESIDENTS: UNCERTAINTY & UPHEAVAL

*“ Surviving. As a Lahaina fire victim, we are displaced.
Myself along with my son, fiancé, my parents and aunty are displaced all together.
Not all of us are back to work yet or are able to due to circumstances.
We do not qualify for FEMA and are exhausting insurance/
money that we need to hold on to for the rebuild ...
We are not living... we are surviving. ”*



The Impact of the Fires is Pervasive

72% INDIRECTLY IMPACTED



More than seven in 10 residents of the three islands (72%) say they have been at least “indirectly impacted” from the fires.

While the bulk is on Maui, the impact numbers are higher on Lānaʻi than Molokaʻi. The responses showing perceptions of personal and financial well-being predicted this result – and point to the ripple effect of this disaster.

UNCERTAINTY AND UPHEAVAL

especially around housing, are dominant themes as most fire survivors describe their current living situation as “temporary.”

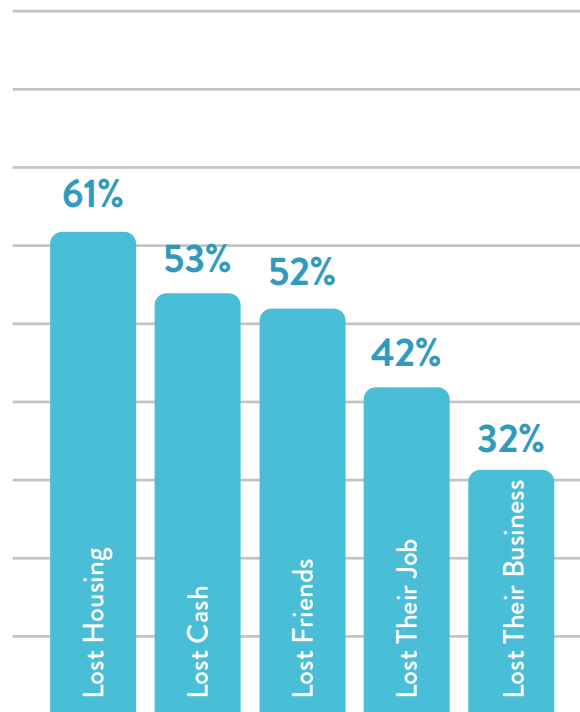
Housing tops the list of losses (61%), though majorities of those directly impacted by the fires also report losing cash (53%), friends (52%), their job (42%), or business (32%). Some echoed this sentiment from a fire survivor:

“I lost everything.”

Over three-quarters (78%) report currently living in “temporary housing.”

Just over four in 10 (41%) are in a rental or unit or condo, while more than one-third (34%) are shacked up with family or friends on a temporary basis, or still living in one of the resorts.

Three percent report being currently house-less.



LIST OF LOSSES

Stories abound from survivors about constantly having to move since the fires and the toll it has taken is confirmed in the data.



Nearly six in 10 (59%) have moved at least three times since the fires – one-third (33%) of whom have moved four or more times.

There were frustrations about living in the resorts raised in the focus groups and mentioned in open-ended responses to the survey that appear to have lingering effects. This includes:

- mandatory check-ins
- the subsequent difficulty of off-island travel
- fears of “eviction letters” with little warning
- owning pets
- difficulties associated with not having a kitchen
- loss of community
- having to share space with vacation-goers.

“ It was their best of times, and our worst of times, ”
said one respondent. (in response to sharing space with vacationers.)

While not having housing has been a clear source of stress, the underlying uncertainty, first heard in the focus groups, is even more dominant. By a wide margin, nearly six in 10 (58%) fire-impacted respondents say **one of the two hardest things since the fires is...**

“how uncertain the future is for me and my ‘ohana.”

Housing is next (40%), followed by difficulty in navigating the system when seeking help (30%) and the emotional and mental impacts of their loss (32%).

FEELINGS ABOUT UNCERTAINTY are more pronounced among those who have called Maui home the longest, including Native Hawaiians, elderly kama‘aina, and residents of Maui for at least 15 years or longer.

“ I want to feel like I have control in my life, ” said one fire survivor.



VIEWS OF THE DISASTER RESPONSE

“ Rough. We have been burned out of our residence and life is not going well. Am thankful for Red Cross and FEMA but there is much frustration with trying to find housing. Between the tragedy, trauma and everything else from seeming to keep jumping through hoops to try and get things done. Over and over the same thing and always getting the same result. Feel we are living the definition of crazy. Doing the same thing and expecting different results. ”



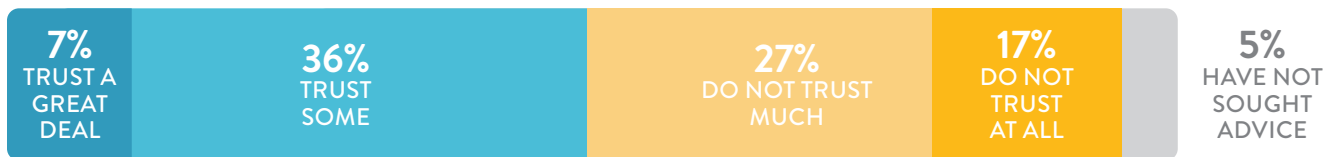
Financial Assistance is the Greatest Unmet Need

IMMEDIATE NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY FIRE SURVIVORS COME DOWN TO WHAT THIS DATA SET HAS PUNCTUATED FOR ALL OF MAUI COUNTY:

- They need *help with affordable housing* and **making ends meet financially** as they aspire to accumulate savings.
- They are less concerned about access to transportation and meeting mental health and trauma-related needs.
- They remind us to **help keiki and kūpuna** – and focus on fire prevention.
- Fire-impacted residents worry more about “*another devastating fire.*”
- Importantly, both samples have heightened concerns about the **ability of kūpuna to cope** since the fires – more so than keiki.
- While respondents worry a bit more about the ability of the elderly to cope than keiki, *after-school programs and activities for youth is something over 40% of our fire-impacted sample say they cannot easily access.*

Trust and Satisfaction with Disaster Resources is Lacking for Some

Fire survivors are divided over the extent to which they trust the advice and information from the government, nonprofits and disaster relief agencies. Roughly equal numbers say they trust and distrust these sources (43% trust, 44% don't trust) with more saying "they don't trust at all" (17%) than "trust a great deal" (7%) by 10 percentage points.



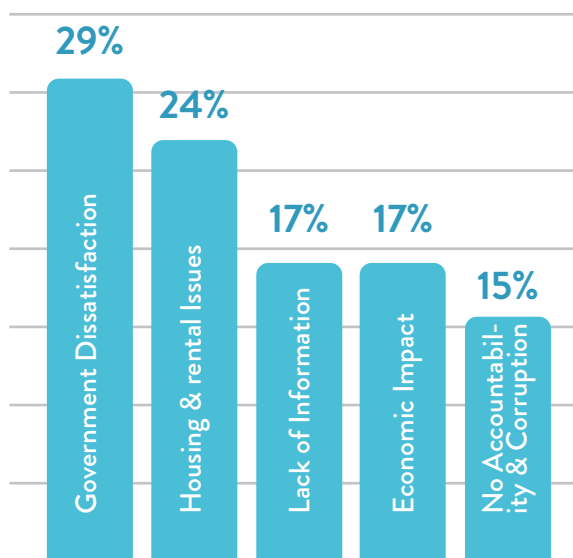
FIRE-IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS NOT CURRENTLY LIVING ON MAUI'S WEST SIDE ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO BE MISTRUSTFUL AND DISSATISFIED.

This is also true among college graduates, Native Hawaiian and Caucasians, and those under 55. **Trust and satisfaction levels are the highest in West Maui and with low-income earners.** Filipinos, especially women and younger respondents, are also among the most satisfied with the disaster relief assistance they have received.

"In what ways, if any, have you felt let down, frustrated, or ignored?"

Government dissatisfaction is atop the list, followed by housing and rental issues. In addition, frustration with FEMA, perceived lack of information, economic impact woes, and worries around lack of accountability and "corruption" when it comes to disaster relief efforts were sources of their ire.

FEMA frustrations center around their onerous and seemingly subjective application process and their rental assistance program which is seen as compounding the affordable housing crisis while homes that should be available to this community sit empty.



WAYS IN WHICH FIRE SURVIVORS ARE MOST LET DOWN & FRUSTRATED

"The way FEMA refuses to help so you must reapply over and over, then they give so much money to property management companies and landlords now that it's driven rents through the roof. So most disaster money is going to people not affected by the fire," complained a respondent.



THE WORRISOME STATE OF HEALTH CARE IN MAUI COUNTY: ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

“ Current clinics/physicians/medical providers have a long wait or are not accepting new patients and are difficult to reach. We need quality providers who want to live here long-term and provide consistency to our community. Cost of living needs to be evaluated and employers should compensate employees accordingly. ”

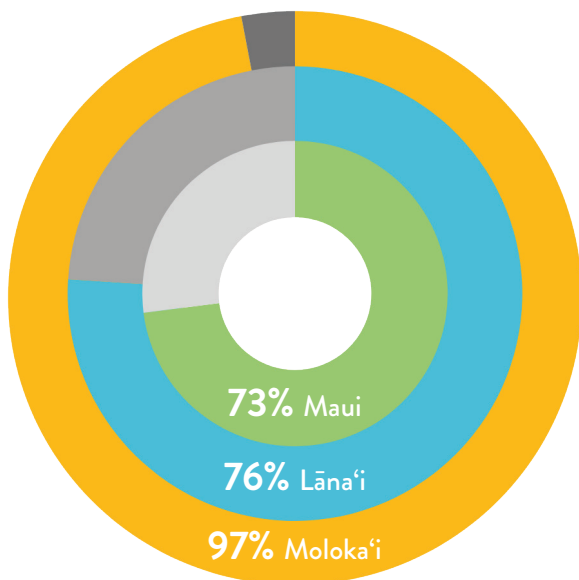
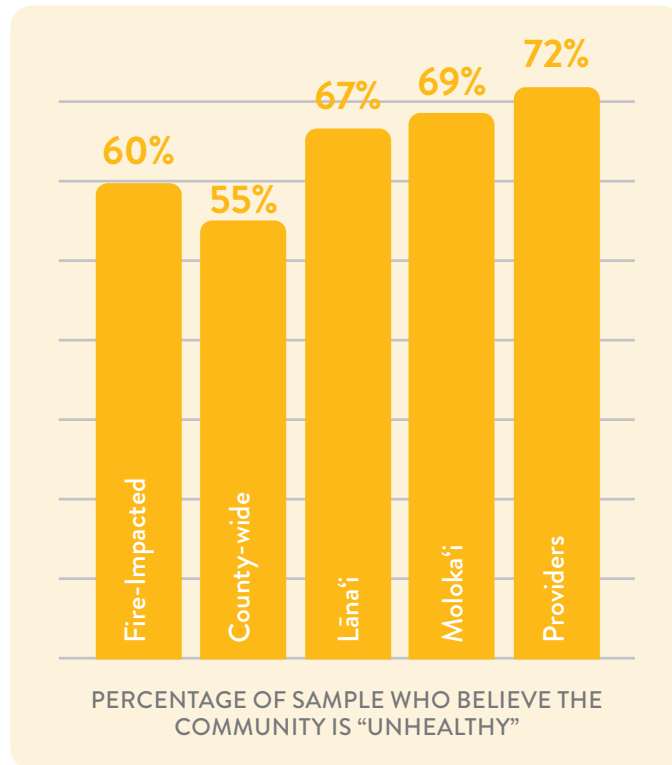


Health Care Across Maui County Needs Improvement

In some areas, is at crisis levels, especially the lack of providers.

MOLOKA'I RISES TO THE TOP OF "WORRY LIST."

A majority of county residents believe their community is unhealthy (55%), numbers that are higher among fire survivors (60%). This is even more true on Moloka'i and Lāna'i (67%) where close to seven in 10 characterize their community as being in "poor health." High numbers of health care providers (72%) also deem the community "unhealthy."



BELIEVE THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH PHYSICIANS ON THE ISLAND

A SHORTAGE OF PROVIDERS IS FRONT-AND-CENTER IN THE DATA.

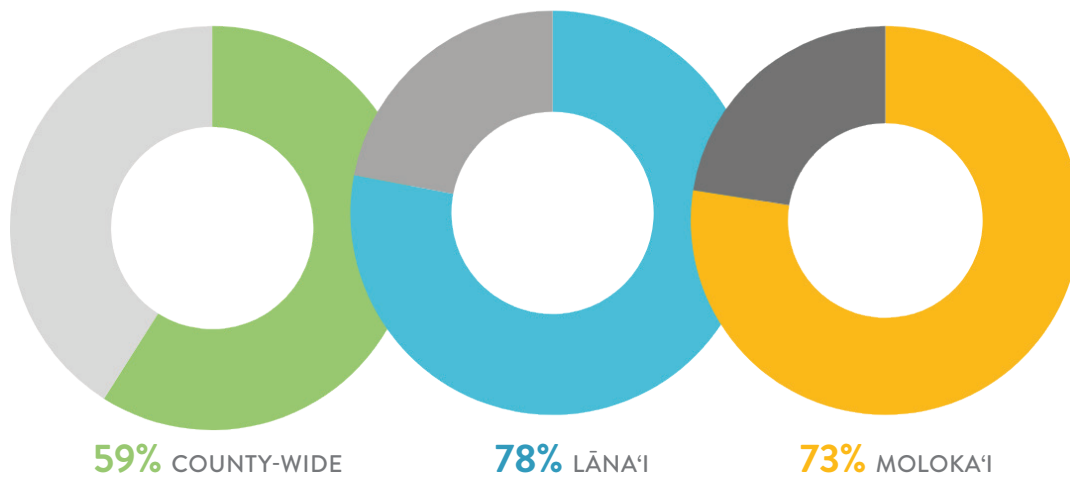
Roughly three-quarters of Maui (73%) and Lāna'i (76%) residents believe there are not enough physicians on their island.

The numbers are significantly worse on Moloka'i. In fact, **97% of residents there say their island lacks doctors** (the remaining three percent were unsure).

When asked to describe the state of healthcare on Moloka'i, one provider responded,

"What health care? If you need health care, don't come."

Health Care Needs Are Unmet

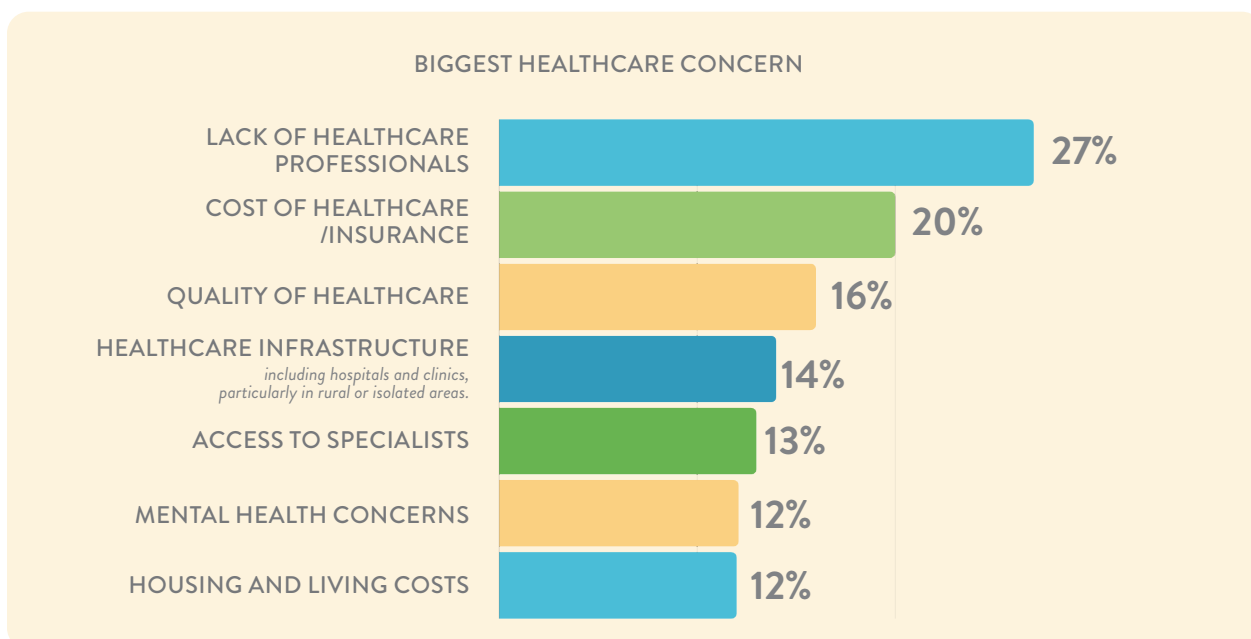


And while access to care is an issue across all three islands (59% county-wide say health needs are not met on their home island), **Lānaʻi (78%) and Molokaʻi (73%) residents are much more likely to say their health care needs are unmet where they live.**

HEALTH CARE CONCERNS, PUKAS AND CHALLENGES VARY.

County-wide, respondents worry most about the lack of health care professionals, followed by the cost of care. Among fire survivors, mental health concerns and access to infrastructure like hospitals and clinics top the list.

While lack of health care professionals is a dominant theme across the county, **fire survivors mention mental health concerns.** For Molokaʻi and Lānaʻi, health care transportation is the dominant concern, followed by access to doctors, including specialists.



THE WORRISOME STATE OF HEALTH CARE IN MAUI COUNTY: ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Delays in Care, and Inconsistency of Care are Commonplace

Healthcare delays are common – and on the rise. **Nearly seven in 10 (68%) report delays in receiving care.** This represents a double-digit increase from two years ago (56% reported delays in 2022).



As we found two years ago, the lack of appointments and too few providers were the dominant reasons for the delays county-wide.

“It took me over a year to schedule a mammogram,” said a respondent.

While one-quarter report having “significant delays” county-wide (25%), the numbers are 12 percentage points higher on Moloka‘i (37%) and double that number on Lāna‘i (50%).



OFF-ISLAND TRANSPORTATION IS A BIG FACTOR.

*“The Mokulele delays mean specialists can’t come in.
It’s harder to get out to appointments.
You have to spend the night before sometimes
if you want to make sure you’re there,”*

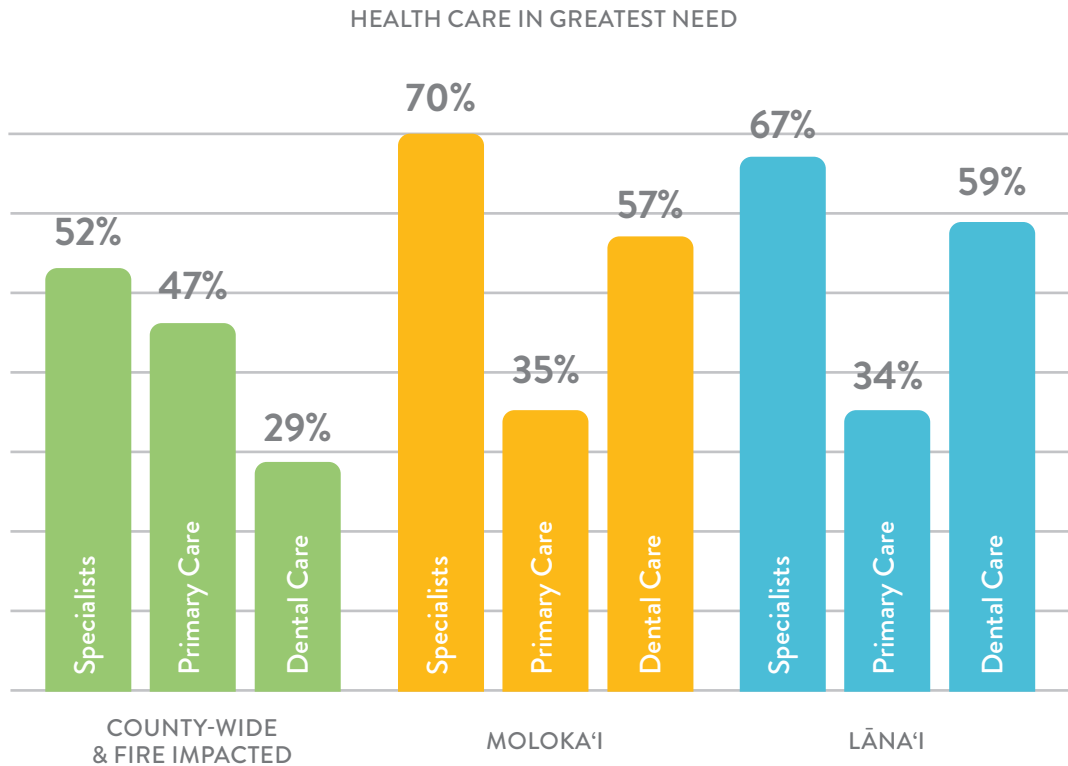
offered a respondent.

Airline delays were the top barrier to access on Moloka‘i and Lāna‘i (59%) with slightly fewer-- yet still a majority -- citing the hassles and missed work from having to go off-island (53%).

Primary Care and Specialists are in Greatest Need



For county and fire-impacted residents alike, **primary care (47%)** and **specialists (52%)** were the hardest types of health care appointments to book. On Moloka‘i and Lāna‘i, specialists and dental appointments were the most difficult, with considerably more of each island saying **dental care** is harder to get than among Maui residents (59% Lāna‘i; 57% Moloka‘i say dentist appointments are hard to schedule).



Consistency of care is a problem related to the provider shortage. Just over (53%) half regularly see providers who know their history, a number that is lower on Moloka‘i (46%) and with fire survivors (42%).

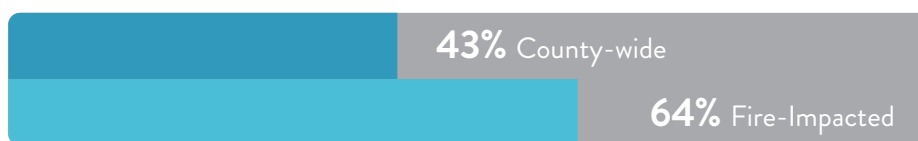
THE WORRISOME STATE OF HEALTH CARE IN MAUI COUNTY: ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

When it comes to behavioral health needs and access, respondents were much less clear

Both samples are more inclined to worry about doctor shortages than not having enough mental health providers in Maui County. Health professionals are equally concerned about a shortage of doctors and mental health experts.

Mental health care is currently considered a lower priority unmet need among fire survivors compared to other basic living and economic needs. It also doesn't rise to the top in an open-ended question about their biggest health care concern. Respondents are also less likely across the board to say behavioral health appointments are difficult to schedule.

And while they don't decry a behavioral health provider shortage like they do with doctors, **nearly half (47%) don't feel like there are enough mental health professionals on the island** where they live. The numbers are higher on Moloka'i.



FEEL THEIR MENTAL HEALTH HAS DECLINED

This is not to suggest there isn't a need. A plurality (43%) say their own mental health has deteriorated since last August, and more so for fire survivors (64%). In addition, roughly one-quarter reports needing behavioral health care, either for themselves or a household member.

Those expressing a need for mental health care are more likely to be younger, single head of household, lower-income, Filipino, Native Hawaiian, and Caucasian, and fire survivors who have re-located to South Maui.

“I do feel like mental health is like a huge issue now, and that should be a focus for a lot of people in recovery efforts, and now that people have a place that they can stay for a little bit, and they can have time to think, and maybe they're not working with insurance people every day, I feel like now people are realizing like, ‘Oh my gosh, this fire really affected me’” says a focus group respondent.



HOME-GROWN HEALTH CARE: IMPORTANT CAREER PATHWAY

*“ I have the privilege of serving the community that helped to raise me.
It takes a village to raise a child, now the child can serve the village. ”*



Interest in Health Care Professional Pursuits

In good news, there is interest by some, especially those in the fire-impacted community, to pursue a career in health care.

Roughly one in 10 (13%) say they or a member of their household are **interested in career training for a health care profession**. The numbers are a bit higher among fire survivors (17%).

When asked to provide contact information about potential opportunities, the vast majority of those interested in learning more about career pathways did so.

Most Interested:

- Have a High school diploma or secondary schooling Men and Women under 55
- Filipino and Pacific Islanders, including men
- Low-income earners
- Individuals with keiki in their household; unemployed
- 35-54 years old
- Med-QUEST patients.



The list of prospects includes those seeking to enter the field and current health care pros looking to up-skill.



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