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Nursing homes boost local economy

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Wisconsin Health Care Association and Wisconsin Association of Homes & Services for the Aging hired NorthStar Economics, Inc., a Madison-based economic consulting firm, to analyze the nature, scope and impact of Wisconsin nursing homes on jobs and the state's economy.

Statewide, nursing homes spent almost \$2.9 billion on payroll, goods and services, and accounted for almost \$5.2 billion in economic activity in Wisconsin. They paid out \$1.8 billion in wages, salaries and benefits to employ 51,000 workers, and supported another 53,000 workers in supply industries. They spent more than \$342 million in state income, sales and property taxes, according to the study released in March.

The annual economic impact of Villa Marina Health and Rehabilitation and Middle River Health and Rehabilitation centers exceeds \$10.3 million for each of the facilities and both have direct expenditures that exceed \$4.6 million. Villa Marina supports 178.9 jobs and generated \$679,680 annually in tax revenue. Middle River's total jobs created is 212.9 and generates \$962,880 in taxes.

"It is a privilege to serve our community, and we look forward to meeting the skilled nursing and rehabilitation needs of seniors and those in need in our community for a long time to come," stated Lori Foley, regional administrator for Avanti Health Systems.

"Wisconsin's skilled nursing facilities are typically recognized only for their role as the home and provider of health care for the most frail and elderly members of their community.

Overlooked, but of immense importance in today's fiscal climate, is the enormity of their contribution to the economic health, vitality, and employment in the communities they serve," health care officials stated.

"We are proud that Avanti Health Systems is the second largest health care employer in northern Wisconsin and that we are able to significantly contribute to the economic status of the communities we serve.

The combined economic impact on northern Wisconsin from Avanti Health Systems four skilled nursing facilities —Villa Maria, Villa-Marina, Sky View and Middle River — is \$31,126,263," Foley said.

According to the Northstar Economics study, each nursing home, in addition to caring for Wisconsin's elderly, contributes to the health of local economies — and demand is growing as the state's population ages.

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