## **5. Recommendations and Next Steps**

1. **Investigate the June 1 Non-Nursing Spike**
   * Confirm whether this is a **reporting anomaly**, a policy change, or a real operational event.
   * Compare prior months’ data or contract vendor changes for clarity.
2. **Examine Facility Subsets**
   * Segment facilities by high vs. low contract usage to see if patterns correlate with **ownership type**, **geography**, or **quality metrics** (from nh\_survey or nh\_quality\_mds).
3. **Shift-Level Analysis**
   * If data is available, break down contract usage by shift (day/evening/night) to see more granular patterns.
   * This may reveal peak times for contract usage, which can inform more targeted scheduling solutions.
4. **Quality and Cost Impact**
   * Correlate these ratios with deficiency citations (nh\_citations) or external cost data (if it becomes available) to evaluate potential financial or quality implications of higher contract usage.
5. **Longer-Term Monitoring**
   * Track these metrics over additional quarters to see if patterns persist or respond to policy changes (e.g., new minimum staffing regulations).