

60.5% Surge in Skilled Nursing Facilities — Puerto Rico, 2026

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A hidden resilience strategy in the AI healthcare era

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THE DATA

60.5%

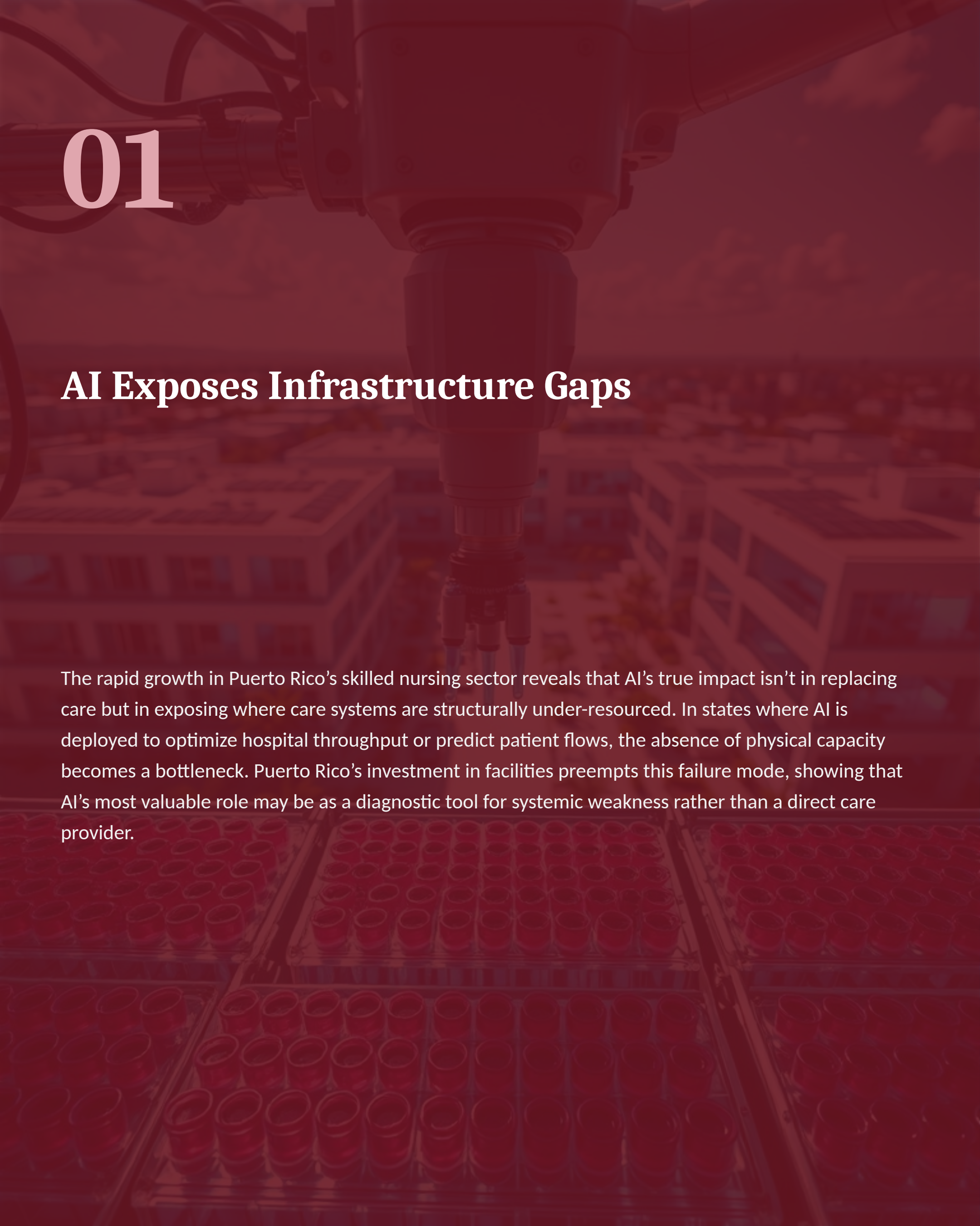
Change in Skilled Nursing Facilities Since 2019

Puerto Rico leads the U.S. in skilled nursing facility growth since 2019, outpacing even high-need states.

This 60.5% increase reflects a strategic reallocation of healthcare infrastructure toward long-term, AI-augmented care delivery. Unlike mainland states where AI is primarily deployed in diagnostics or administrative automation, Puerto Rico's expansion signals a foundational shift: investing in physical care capacity as a buffer against AI-driven system fragility. The growth is not driven by demand alone but by a deliberate, preemptive infrastructure strategy.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2019 and 2022, NAICS 623110 (Nursing care facilities (skilled nursing facilities)) · ALEX Intelligence computation
<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-18-ai-healthcare-igrow-623110-state>





01

AI Exposes Infrastructure Gaps

The rapid growth in Puerto Rico's skilled nursing sector reveals that AI's true impact isn't in replacing care but in exposing where care systems are structurally under-resourced. In states where AI is deployed to optimize hospital throughput or predict patient flows, the absence of physical capacity becomes a bottleneck. Puerto Rico's investment in facilities preempts this failure mode, showing that AI's most valuable role may be as a diagnostic tool for systemic weakness rather than a direct care provider.

02

Resilience Over Efficiency

The 60.5% growth in Puerto Rico contradicts the prevailing AI narrative of 'efficiency gains' through automation. Instead, it signals a counterintuitive prioritization: building physical capacity to absorb AI-induced volatility. As AI systems fail to scale in high-stress environments—such as post-pandemic recovery or natural disaster response—physical infrastructure becomes the true differentiator. This suggests that AI-driven healthcare systems will not succeed without parallel investments in human-centered, resilient infrastructure.



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