



What Families Actually Say About Senior Living

An analysis of Google Reviews from senior living communities and CCRCs across 25 US metros.

- National data — 25 metros analyzed
- 14,734 reviews classified
- 537 communities reviewed
- 5 findings for senior living leaders



The Core Finding

Families praise staff quality most. They complain about care quality and health management most. And the gap between what families praise and what they fear is wider in senior living than almost anywhere else.

Read on for the 5 big findings.



- 1 Staff quality dominates praise.
- 2 Care quality failures drive most complaints.
- 3 Communication with families has the worst praise-to-complaint ratio of any theme.
- 4 Activities and engagement is the safest theme.
- 5 Most communities don't respond to negative reviews about care.



Families praise staff quality above everything else.

45.9% of all positive reviews nationally are about staff quality — the highest of any theme by a wide margin. Families write about specific staff members by name, describe acts of genuine warmth, and credit individual team members with making a difficult transition feel safe and dignified.

"THE STAFF HERE TREATED MY MOTHER LIKE FAMILY FROM HER VERY FIRST DAY — SHE WENT FROM SCARED TO AT HOME WITHIN A WEEK."



Care quality failures drive most complaints.

39.6% of all negative reviews nationally cite care quality and health management — the top complaint theme by a wide margin. Families describe medication errors, falls that weren't reported, health declines that went unnoticed, and clinical staff who weren't responsive to changing needs.

"MY MOTHER FELL THREE TIMES IN ONE MONTH AND NO ONE CALLED ME AFTER THE FIRST TWO. I FOUND OUT FROM HER ROOMMATE."



Communication with families has the worst ratio of any theme.

Only 1.6% of positive reviews mention communication with families — but 11.3% of negative reviews do. A praise-to-complaint ratio of 1.24 is the lowest in the study. Families don't write thank-you reviews because a community kept them informed. But when something goes wrong and no one calls, they write reviews that last for years.

"IT TOOK THREE CALLS AND TWO DAYS TO FIND OUT MY FATHER HAD BEEN TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL. I HAD TO FIND OUT FROM ANOTHER RESIDENT'S FAMILY."



Activities and engagement — the safest theme in senior living.

Activities and engagement has a praise-to-complaint ratio of 74 to 1 — the highest in the study. 11.6% of positive reviews mention programming, enrichment, and quality of life. Only 1.3% of negative reviews do. When communities do programming well, families notice and say so. Almost nobody complains about it.

"MOM HAS MORE OF A SOCIAL LIFE NOW THAN SHE DID AT HOME — THE ACTIVITIES TEAM GENUINELY CARES ABOUT KEEPING RESIDENTS ENGAGED AND HAPPY."



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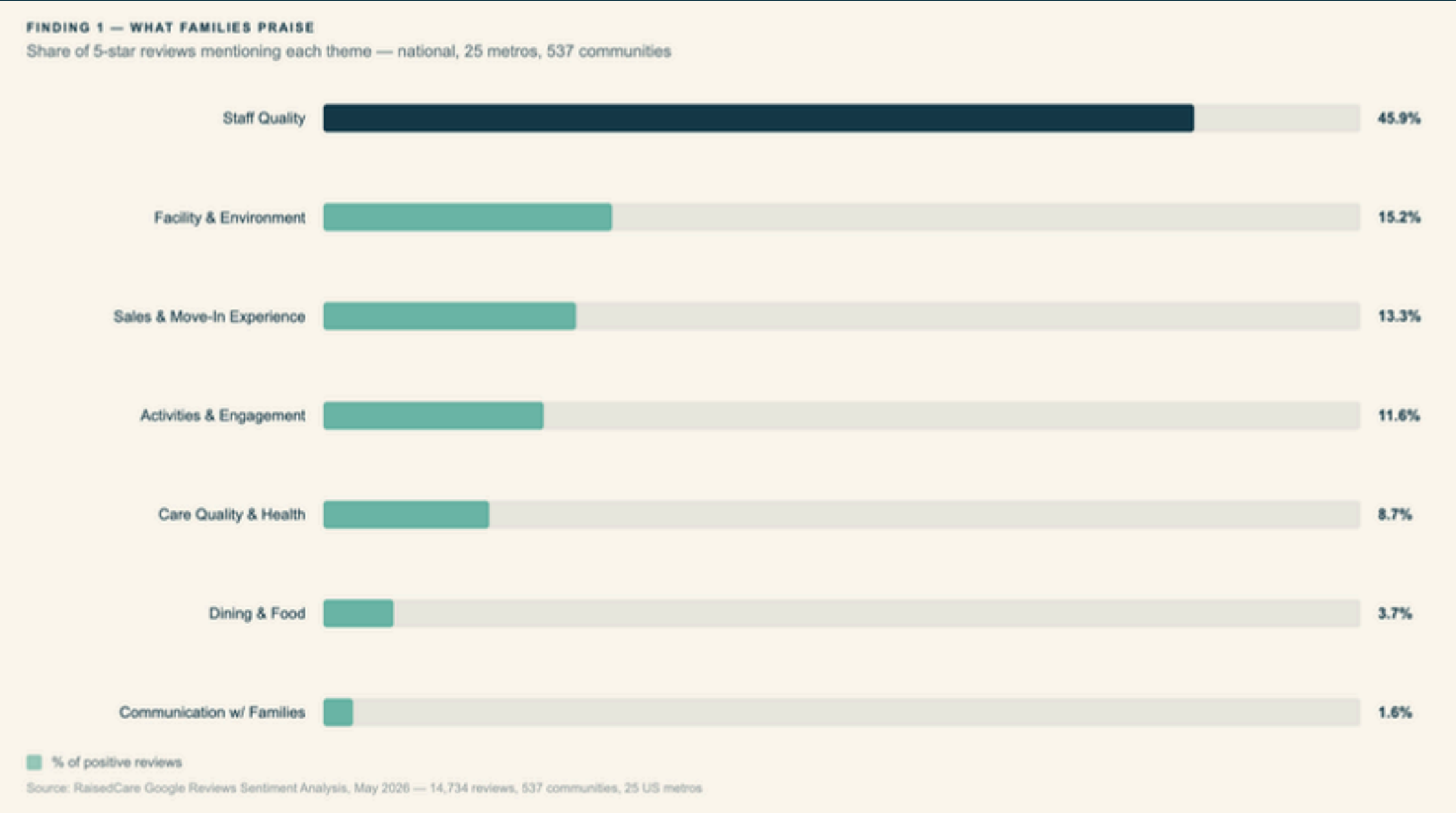
Most communities don't respond to negative reviews about care.

Across 537 communities and 14,734 reviews, response rates to negative reviews vary dramatically by market — and care quality complaints, the most common and most serious, are the ones communities respond to least. In a category where families are making irreversible financial commitments, an unanswered review about a health incident carries significant reputational weight.



Finding 1: What Families Praise

Staff quality accounts for 45.9% of all positive reviews nationally — nearly triple the next highest theme. Families write about staff members by name, describe moments of genuine human connection, and credit individual team members with making the transition to senior living feel safe and dignified.

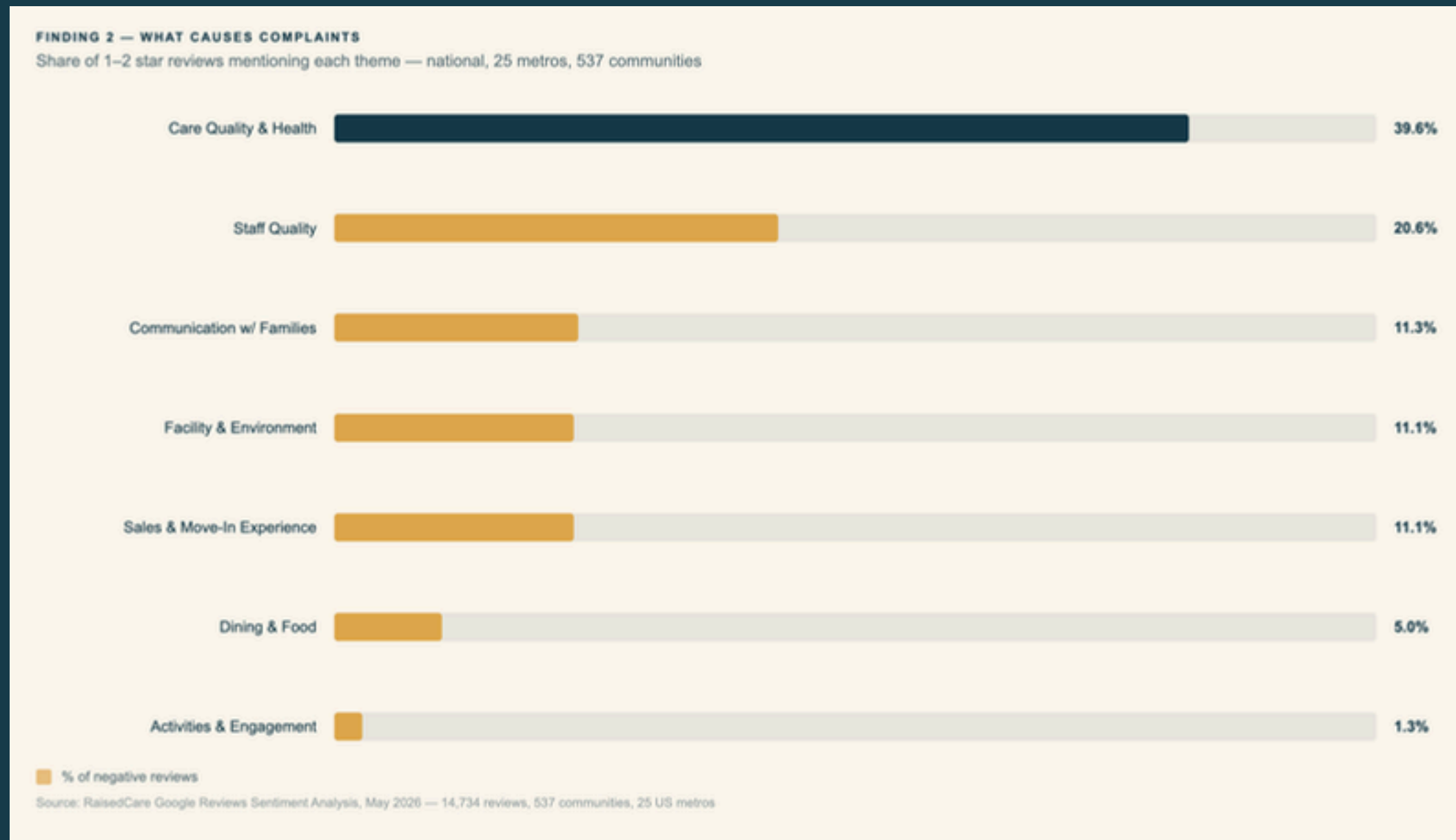


WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Your staff are your marketing. Their names appear in reviews more than any other element. Feature real team members — with their permission — in your website, social content, and sales materials. It is the highest-ROI trust signal available to you.

Finding 2: What Actually Causes Complaints

Care quality and health management accounts for 39.6% of all negative reviews nationally — nearly double the next complaint theme. Families don't write bad reviews about the lobby or the activities calendar. They write them when something goes wrong with their loved one's health and no one seems to be managing it.



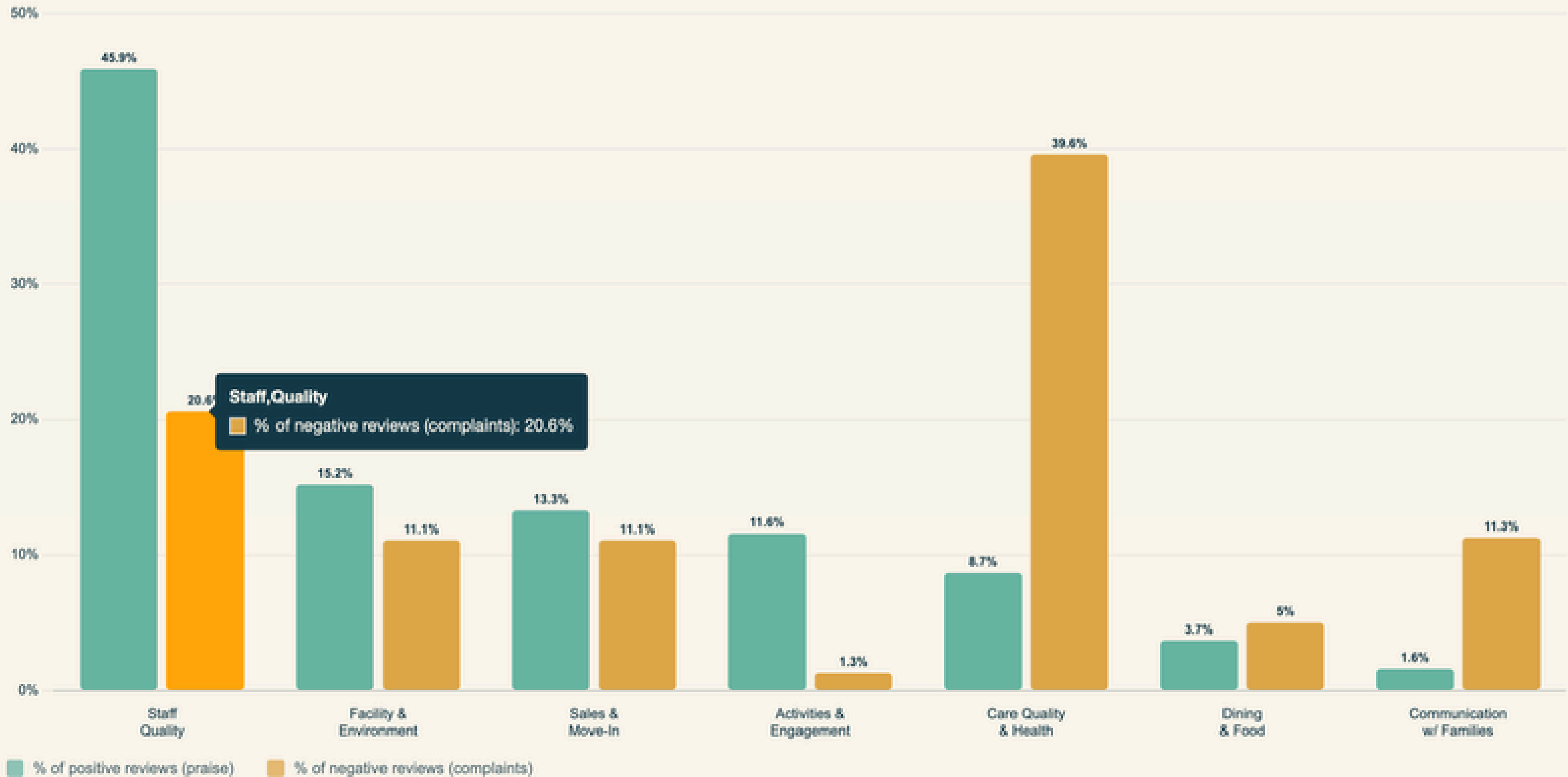
SEE THE FULL PRAISE VS.
COMPLAINTS BREAKDOWN ON THE
NEXT PAGE



NEGATIVE REVIEW THEMES — NATIONAL BREAKDOWN

FINDING 2 — NATIONAL BREAKDOWN

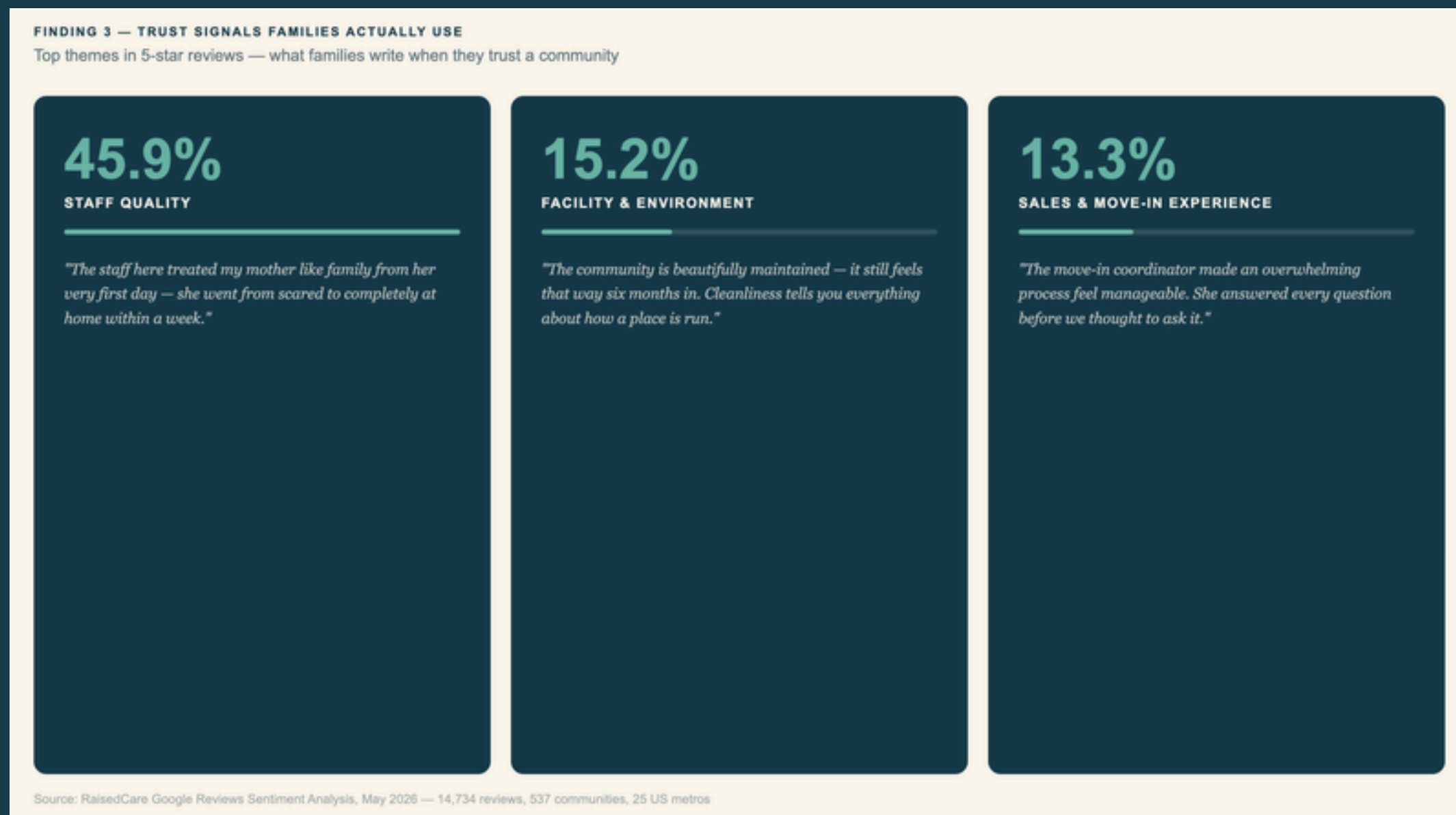
Praise vs. complaints by theme — % of reviews in each category



Source: RaisedCare Google Reviews Sentiment Analysis, May 2026 — 14,734 reviews, 537 communities, 25 US metros

Finding 3: The Trust Signals Families Actually Use

When families write positive reviews, three themes dominate: staff quality (45.9%), facility and environment (15.2%), and sales and move-in experience (13.3%). These are the signals families use to decide whether to trust a community — and two of them happen before a resident ever moves in.

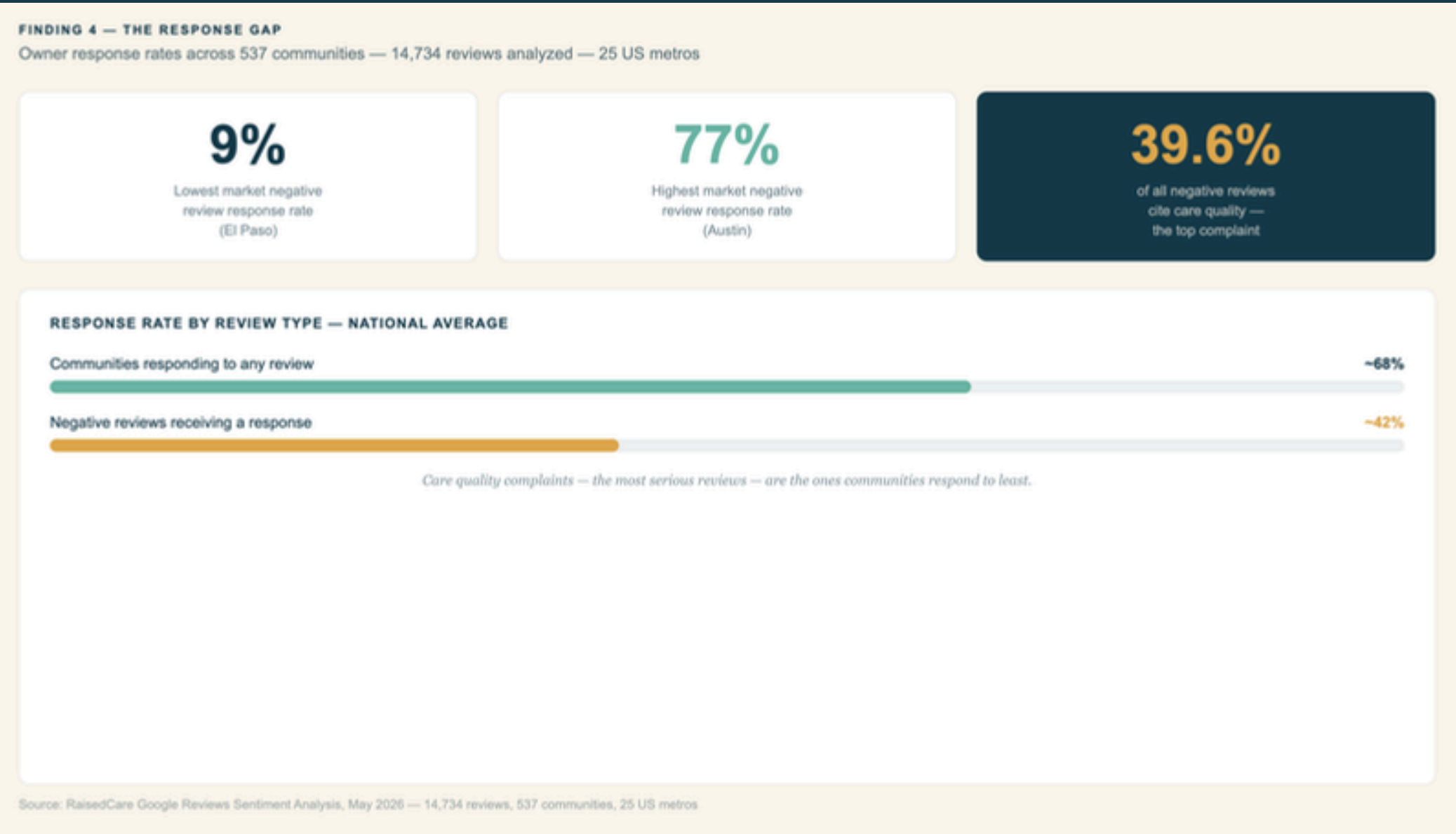


3 TRUST SIGNALS WORTH ACTING ON NOW

1. Staff quality (45.9% of praise). Feature real staff by name in your marketing.
2. Facility & environment (15.2% of praise). Families notice cleanliness, maintenance, and the feel of the space — make it visible in tours and photos.
3. Sales and move-in experience (13.3% of praise). A great first impression builds trust before care quality can prove itself.

Finding 4: The Response Gap

Response rates to negative reviews vary dramatically across the 25 markets in this study — from 9% in El Paso to 77% in Austin. Nationally, care quality complaints — the most serious and most common — are the reviews communities respond to least. Families researching communities read these unanswered complaints and draw their own conclusions.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

A response to a negative review about care — even an imperfect one — signals that clinical leadership is paying attention. Prospective families comparing communities will notice which ones engage with serious complaints and which ones go silent. This is one of the most visible and lowest-effort reputation moves available.

Your community's next steps:

THIS WEEK

- Search your community name on Google and read your last 10 reviews as a prospective family would.
- Identify every unanswered negative review about care or communication and respond this week.

THIS MONTH

- Audit how your team communicates with families after incidents or health changes — this is the top complaint gap nationally.
- Ask three satisfied families for a Google review. Feature a staff member by name in the ask.
- Review how your website and sales materials talk about your staff. Do they have names and faces? They should.

THIS QUARTER

- Build a family communication protocol — define how and when families are notified of health changes, incidents, and care plan updates. Make it a visible commitment.
- Create a staff spotlight series for your website and social media.
- Review your sales process — the move-in experience ranks third in praise nationally. A great start builds trust before care quality can prove itself.

Get your Clarity Score.

12 QUESTIONS, INSTANT RESULTS.

A snapshot of where your growth strategy, trust signals, and intake process stand today — benchmarked against what families told us they actually want.

GET YOUR CLARITY SCORE

RaisedCare

GROWTH STRATEGY FOR AGING SERVICES

RaisedCare helps senior living communities, CCRCs, and home care agencies grow through strategy grounded in original research. We bring five years of insider experience and original data — including this study and a 2026 research partnership with the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology — on how families actually find and choose care.

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