



How Families Find Home Care In 2026

What search data reveals about family decision-making, seasonal demand, and where most agencies are invisible.

- 891 keywords analyzed
- 1.1M+ monthly searches reviewed
- 53 weeks of data
- 5 big takeaways for home care agency owners



Executive Summary

Most home care agencies are marketing to the wrong moment. They invest in campaigns built around the assumption that families search for an agency when they need care. The data tells a different story.

Read on for the 5 big takeaways.



- 1 Families don't start by searching for an agency.
- 2 Summer is peak season – not January.
- 3 Caregiver recruiting is a massive missed SEO opportunity.
- 4 Families are comparison shopping more than ever.
- 5 Cost questions are everywhere.



Families don't start by searching for an agency.

Only 33,566 monthly searches are decision-stage queries like "home care agencies."

Meanwhile, 795,000+ monthly searches are general care terms — people figuring out what they need. Most agencies are optimizing for the last step and invisible at the first.



Summer is peak season – not January.

The widely-held belief that January drives the most inquiries is only partially true. Yes, searches jump 21% post-holiday. But July is the single highest month of the year — 75% above December's low. Agencies who coast through summer are missing their biggest window.



Caregiver recruiting is a massive missed SEO opportunity.

114,000+ monthly searches around caregiver jobs and training. "Caregiver jobs" alone gets 17,000 searches/month with a 93% click-through rate. Agencies ignoring recruitment SEO are leaving applicants — and census capacity — on the table.

A large teal circle containing a white number 3, positioned on the right side of the slide.

Families are comparison shopping more than ever.

"Best home care" is up 100% year-over-year.
"Affordable home care" is up 110%. "24-hour home care" is up 80%. Families in 2026 are vetting agencies before they call — not asking for the nearest option.



4

Cost questions are everywhere.

48,000+ monthly searches around cost, pricing, and Medicare/Medicaid coverage. Agencies that answer these questions on their website get the inquiry. Agencies that don't lose it to directories and aggregators.



Finding 1: How Families Actually Search

When a family realizes a parent needs help, they don't start their search with "home care agency near me." They type "caregiver" or "in home care" or "help for elderly parent." They're in research mode, not buying mode — and they can stay there for weeks (unless it's an emergency situation).

FINDING 1 — HOW FAMILIES ACTUALLY SEARCH

Where families are searching — monthly volume by intent



The agency search gap

Only 34K monthly searches are decision-stage queries. The other 961K are families who haven't found you yet — and most agencies aren't present at that stage.

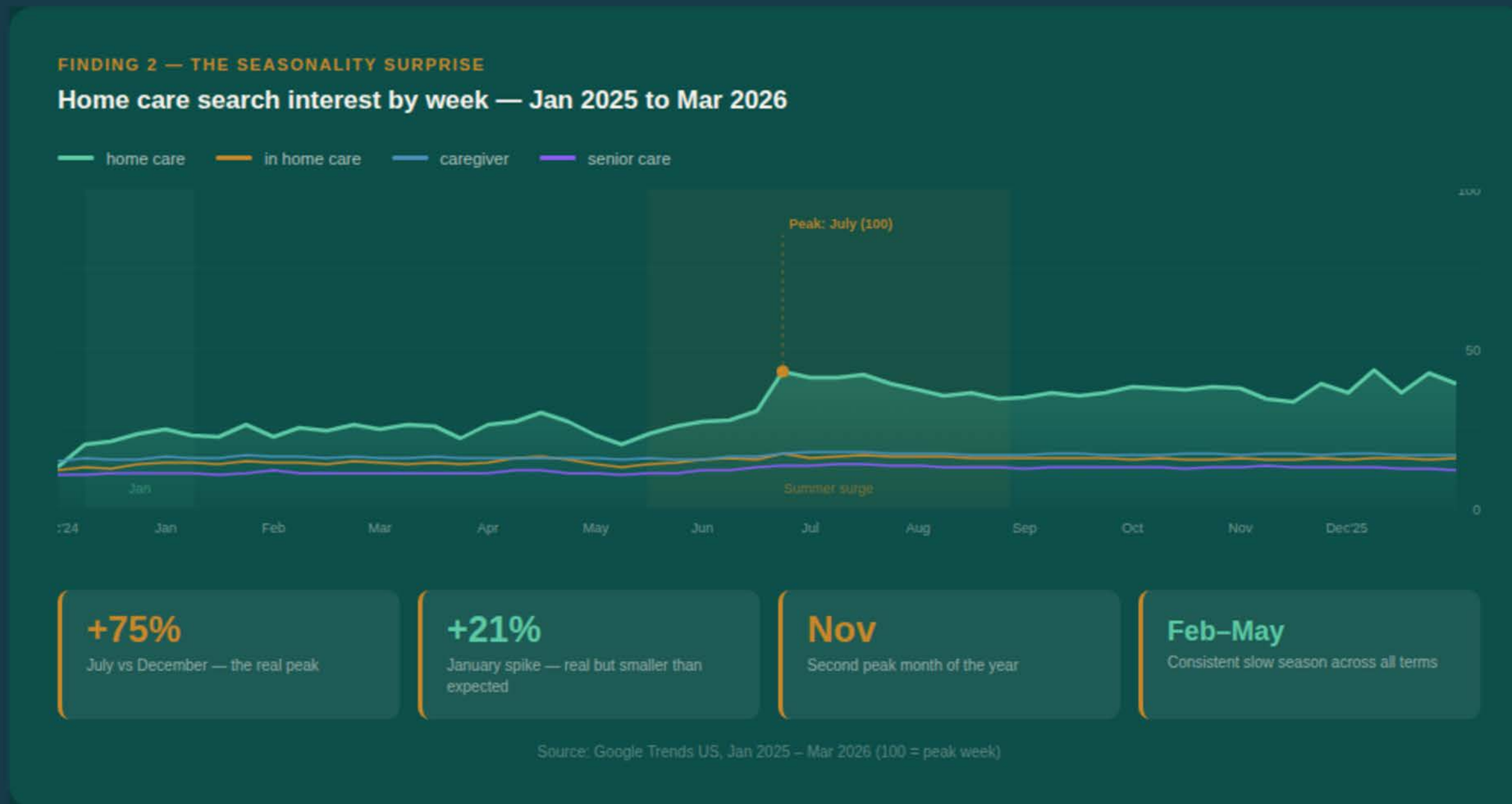
Source: Moz Keyword Explorer, March 2026

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR AGENCY

- The research phase is your biggest opportunity.
- "Near me" searches are low competition and high intent. Directories are eating your decision-stage traffic.

Finding 2: The Seasonality Surprise

The home care industry talks about a January spike. The data confirms it exists — but it's not the story. The bigger story is what happens in summer.



SEE WHAT YOUR AGENCY IS LIKELY
MISSING ON THE NEXT PAGE



THE AGENCY CALENDAR MOST AGENCIES ARE MISSING

FINDING 2 — AGENCY CALENDAR

The agency calendar most agencies are missing

SEASON	SEARCH TREND	WHAT FAMILIES ARE DOING	WHAT AGENCIES SHOULD DO
Nov–Dec	Rising	Family gatherings reveal care needs	Publish content for adult children
January	+21%	Post-holiday decisions being made	Follow up on Q4 leads aggressively
Feb–May	Slow	Lower urgency, longer research phase	Build trust content, don't go quiet
Jun–Jul	Peak +75%	Summer transitions, school year ends	Max ad spend, referral outreach surge
Aug–Oct	Tapering	Families settling into fall routines	Harvest summer leads, prep for fall

Jun–Jul is your single biggest search window — 75% above December's low. Most agencies coast through summer. That's the gap.

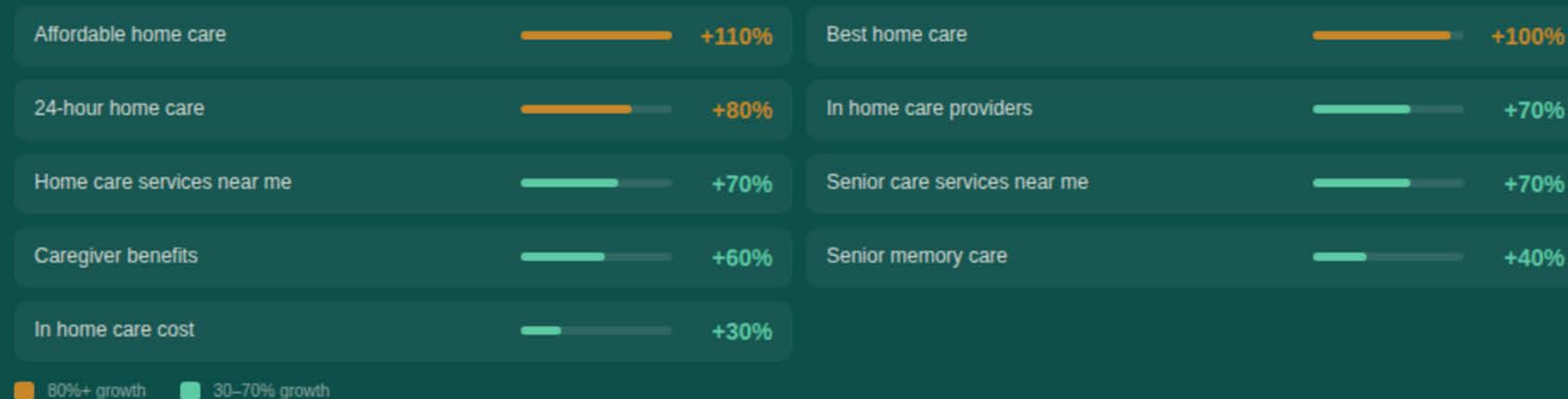
Source: Google Trends US, Jan 2025 – Mar 2026

Finding 3: The Family that's Searching Now is Different

The fastest-growing searches reveal a more demanding, comparison-oriented family. They're not just looking for care — they're looking for the best care, at a price they can understand, available when they need it.

FINDING 3 — THE FAMILY THAT'S SEARCHING NOW IS DIFFERENT

Fastest-growing home care searches — year-over-year



Source: Google Trends US, 2025–2026

3 SIGNALS WORTH ACTING ON NOW

1. “Affordable home care” (+110%). Families are cost-conscious and searching for it.
2. “Best home care” (+100%). Families are vetting before they call.
3. “24-hour home care” (+80%). Care needs are intensifying.

Finding 4: Your Recruiting Gap is also a Search Gap

One of the most overlooked findings in this data: caregiver recruiting and client acquisition are being driven by the same search engine — and most agencies are only optimizing for one of them.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR AGENCY

The 93% click-through rate on "caregiver jobs" and "home health aide jobs" is one of the highest in the entire dataset. People searching these terms are actively looking to apply - and they click. Agencies whose websites rank for these terms are building their caregiver pipeline through SEO, not just job boards.

Your agency's next steps:

THIS WEEK

- Claim and fully complete your Google Business Profile if you haven't already. "Near me" searches have difficulty scores under 30 — this is your fastest win.
- Search your own agency name and the top 3 care terms in your market. Note what families actually find.

THIS MONTH

- Add a pricing or cost FAQ page to your website. 48,000 monthly searches are looking for cost information.
- Optimize your careers page for "caregiver jobs [city]" and "home health aide jobs [city]." These are high-volume, high-CTR, low-difficulty keywords.
- Ask three satisfied families for a Google review this week.

BEFORE SUMMER

- Plan your June–July content and ad spend now. Summer is peak season.
- Build one piece of early-stage content targeting the research phase: "Signs your parent needs home care."
- Review your intake SLA. Summer surge means more inquiries competing for your team's attention.

Want to know how your agency stacks up?

Take our free Home Care Growth Scorecard —
5 questions, 30 seconds, immediate results showing
exactly where your agency's growth gaps are.

GET YOUR SCORE

RaisedCare

GROWTH STRATEGY FOR HOME CARE AGENCIES

We bring two things most consultants don't: five years of experience working inside a home care agency, and original research — including a 2026 study conducted with the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology — on how families actually find and choose care. The result is strategy grounded in data and built for how home care actually works.

RaisedCare.com

