Texas child care provider enrollment rates

December 4, 2020

TEXAS POLICY LAB

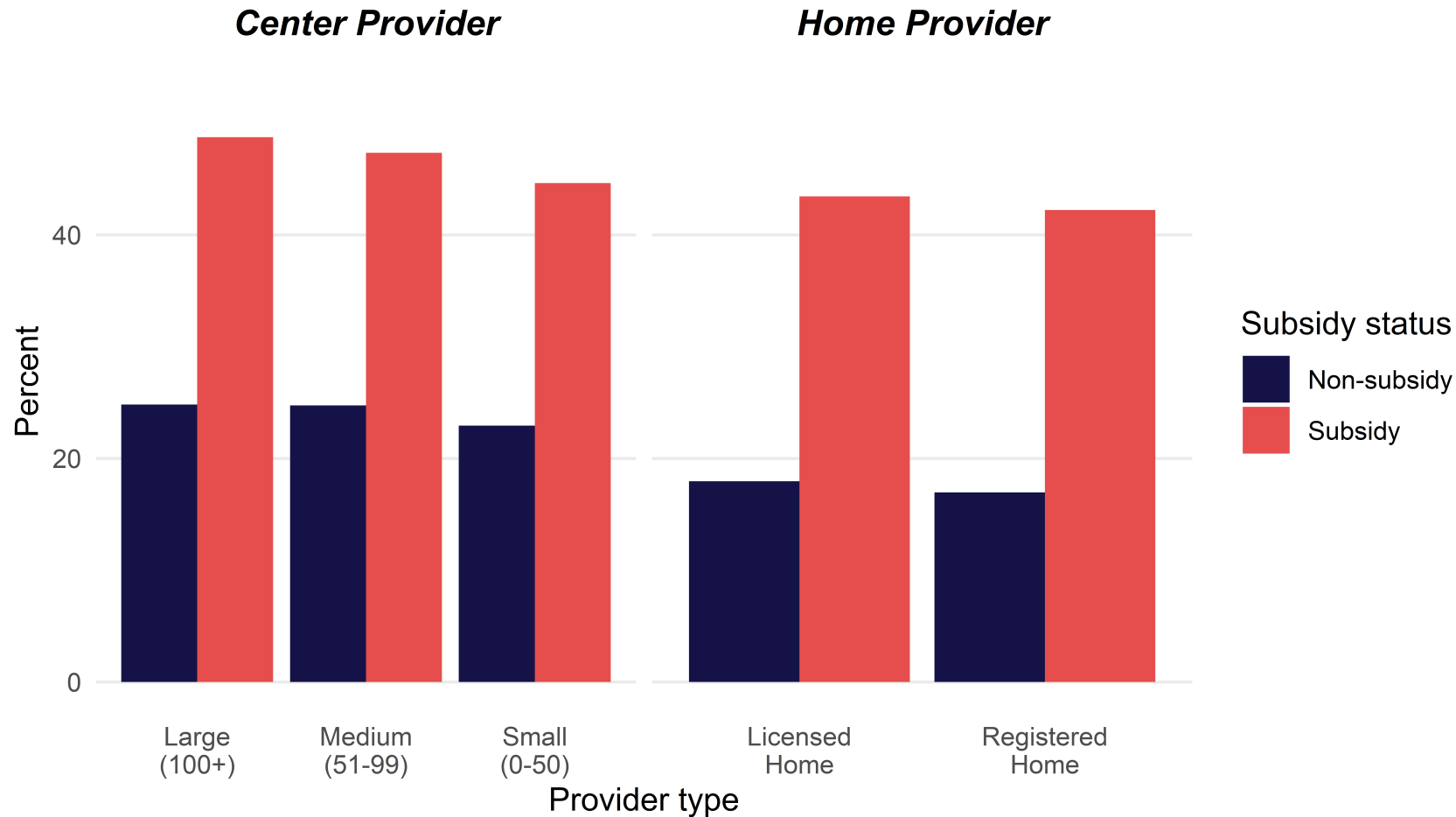RICE | SOCIAL SCIENCES

Approach

The creation of the Frontline child care data portal has been a major step in collecting rich information about Average Daily Attendance (ADA) and child care availability in Texas. Between September 30th and November 24th, ~4,400 of 13,141 open providers updated their records. This response rate (33.6%) is similar to the response rate from early August (July 28th to August 11th had a response rate of 33%), but notably spans a longer time period. The response rate for Fall 2020 (October and November) still does not allow us to fill-in missing ADA data using the modelling approach we used in previous months. Instead, we used the weighting technique that we used in August to create weighted averages of enrollment rate that are more representative of the population of child care providers.

To estimate Fall 2020 enrollment rates, we compute enrollment as a proportion of licensed capacity (ADA/licensed capacity) only for providers modifying their ADA values at least once between September 30 and November 24, 2020. If the provider responded multiple times in this time period, their responses were averaged to create an average enrollment percentage for Fall 2020.

In Fall 2020, we switched from using Frontline data to using TWC data for the provider attributes (open/closed status, subsidy and TRS status, provider type) because of data quality issues. This report has a slightly different population of providers than our previous reports.

Percent of child care providers who reported ADA between September 30 and November 24, 2020, by provider type and subsidy status

This analysis counts 4415 open child care providers reporting ADA between September 30 and November 24, 2020 out of a total of 13141 open child care providers.

Response rate was not equal across different types of providers in October and November. Consistent with previous months, providers which accept the subsidy have a higher response rate than providers which do not accept the subsidy. 46% of open, subsidy-accepting centers reported ADA, while only 17% of open, non-subsidy-accepting homes reported ADA.

Sampling bias

A major challenge for generating statewide enrollment rate and total attendance estimates is the disproportionate response to the survey by providers with different characteristics. Overall, 33.6% (~4,400 out of 13,141) of child care providers modified ADA at least once between September 30th and November 24th. However, our analysis indicates the responding providers are not a representative sample of child care providers in Texas. To assess potential biases in this sample, we ran a series of logistic regression models to predict whether an open provider reported ADA based on characteristics such as subsidy status, TRS status, location and provider type.

Consistent with results from previous months, responses from October and November indicated that subsidy-accepting providers are much more likely, 2.6 times, to report ADA compared to non-subsidy provider. 45% of subsidy providers reported ADA compared with 20% of non-subsidy providers. TRS providers are also more likely, 1.9 times, to report ADA than non-TRS providers. 57% of TRS providers reported ADA compared with 30% of non-TRS providers. TRS status and center type both have an impact on ADA reporting, but not nearly as large an impact as subsidy status.
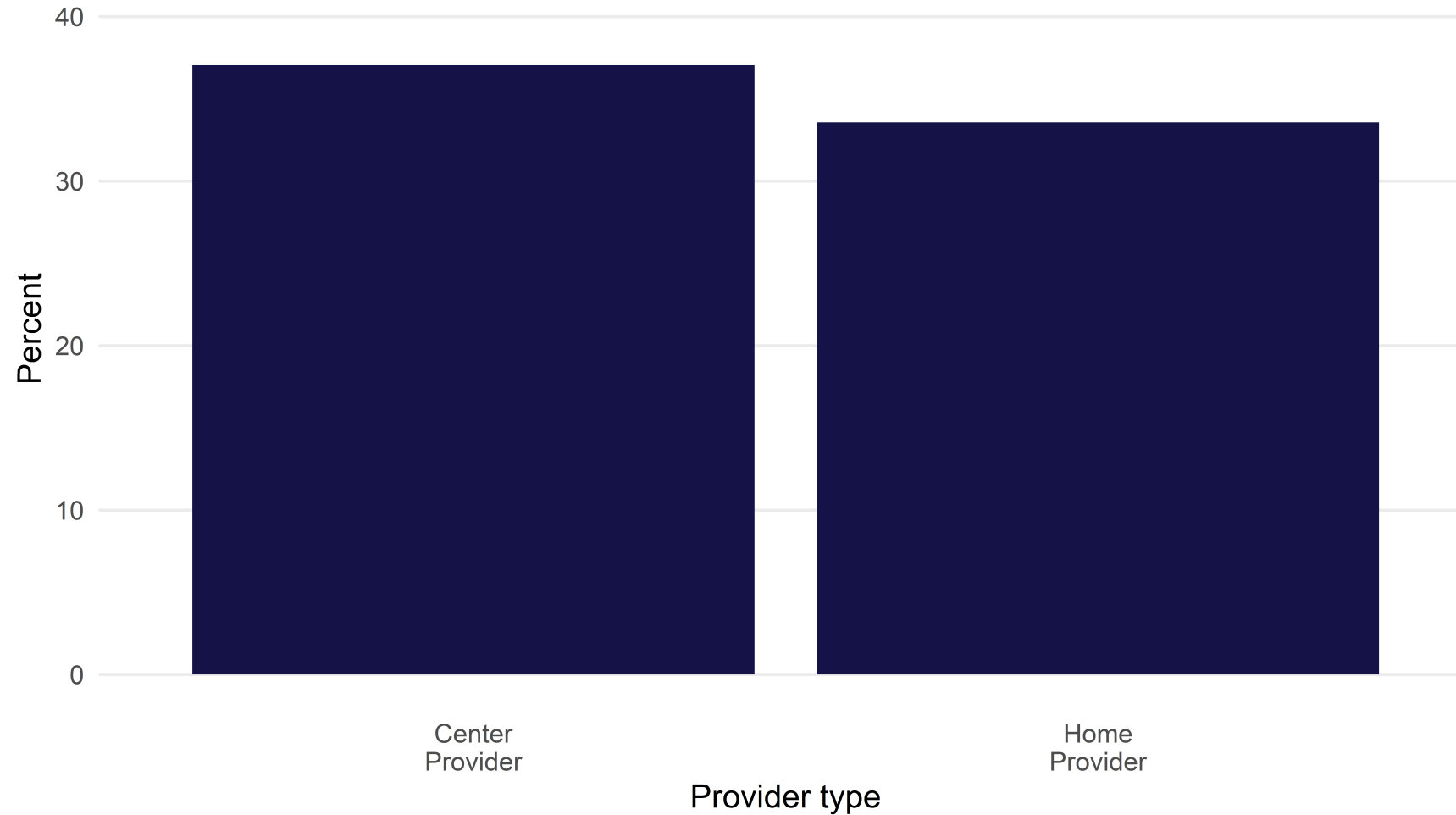
Weighting

ADA estimates in this report were adjusted using weighted averages to account for the disproportionate response rates between providers with differing characteristics. Weights were calculated as the ratio between the provider's probability of existing in the population of open providers and their probability of reporting ADA. The following grouping variables were used to create weights for each provider: subsidy status, TRS status, provider type and size, and location (workforce board).

The enrollment percentages visualized in the following slides are weighted averages of average daily attendance as a percent of licensed capacity.

Since the enrollment statistics in this report are weighted, they are not directly comparable to previously reported enrollment numbers (for example, those from July). Previous reports reported unweighted estimates of ADA, which were not representative of the entire population of open child care providers.
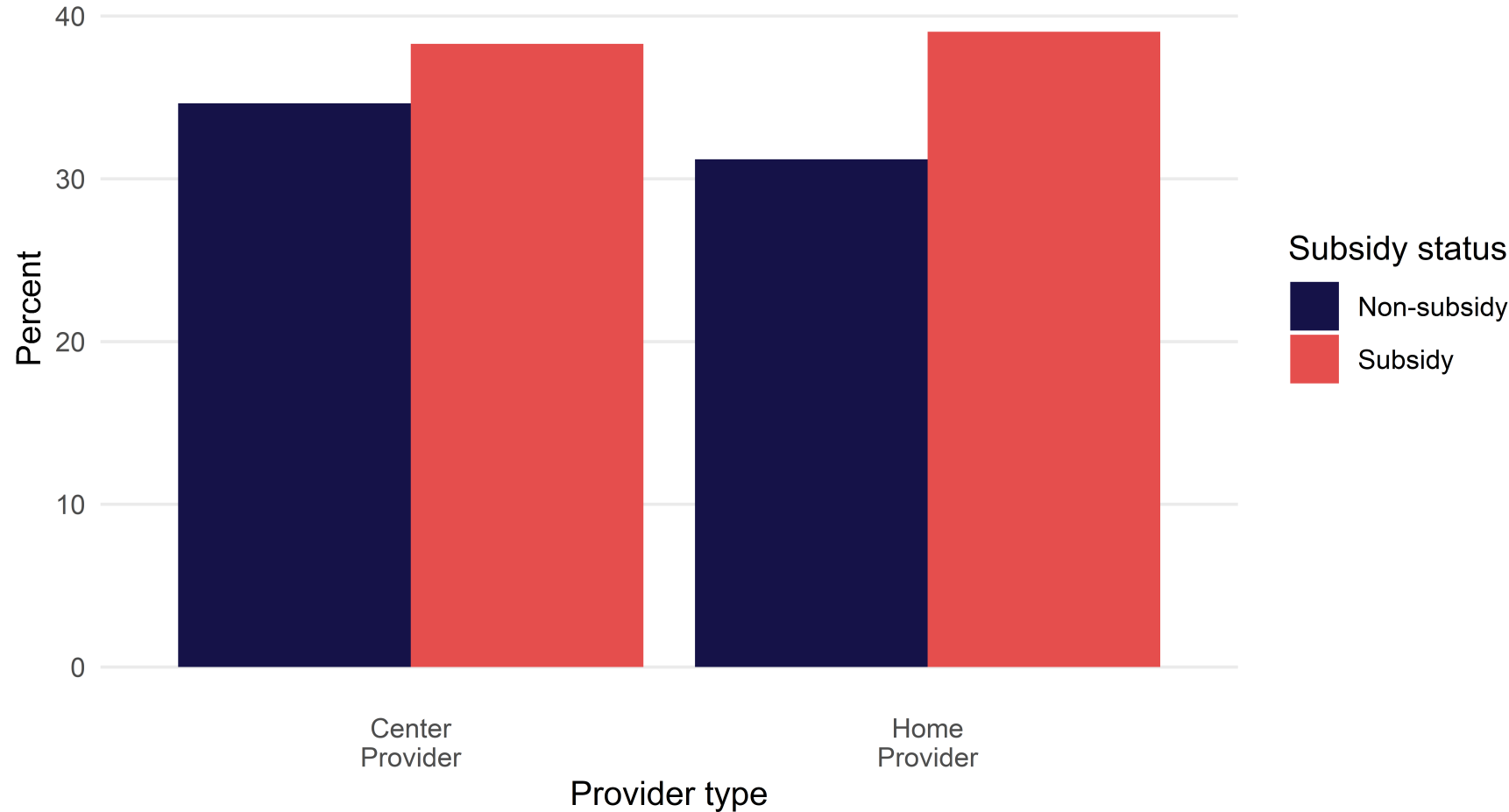
Estimated average daily attendance as a percent of licensed capacity by provider type

On average, center-based providers are seeing higher enrollment rates (37%) than home-based providers (34%)

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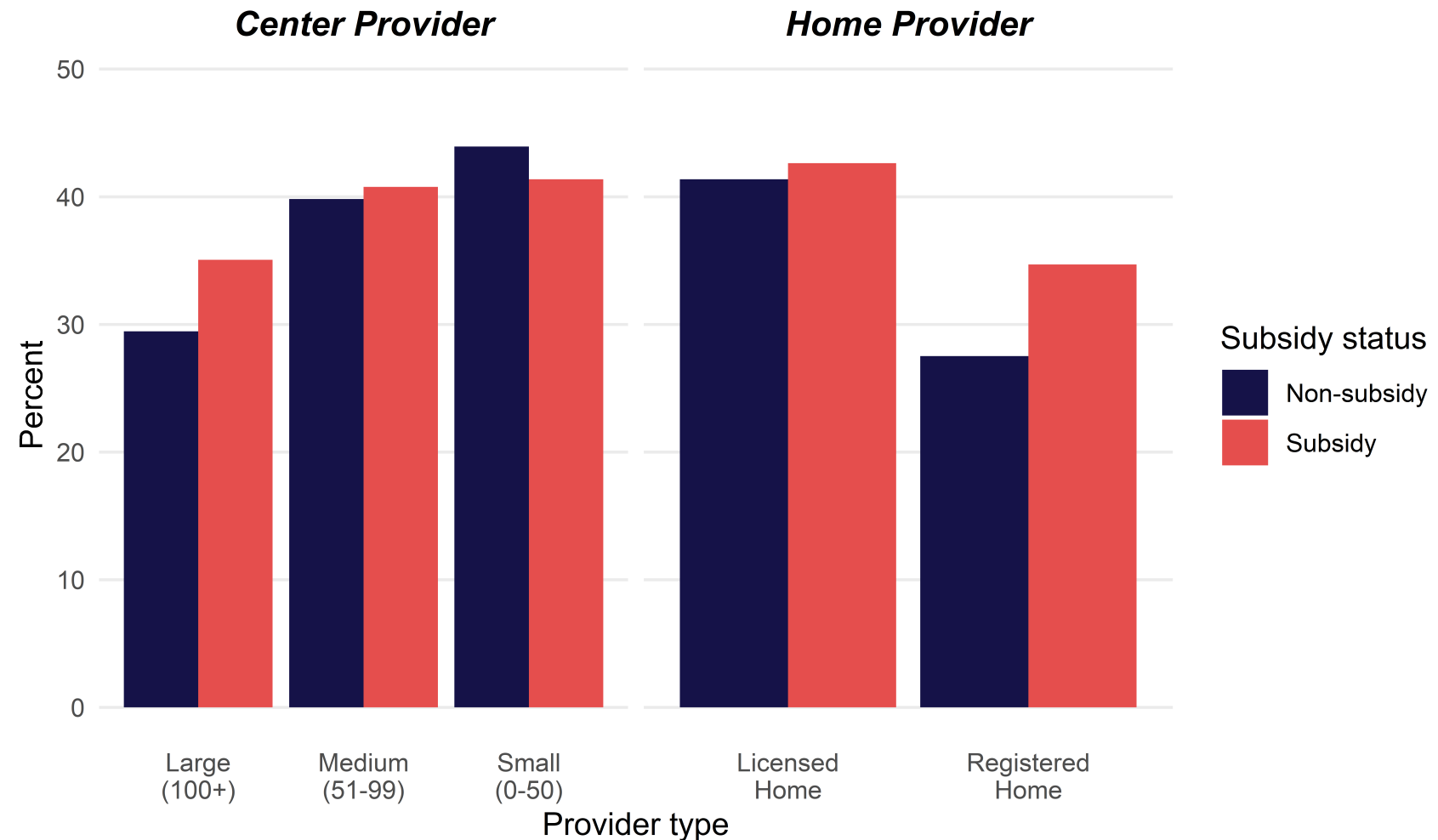Estimated average daily attendance as a percent of licensed capacity by provider type and subsidy status

Subsidy providers are seeing higher enrollment rates than non-subsidy providers.

Subsidy-accepting home-based providers have higher enrollment rates (39%) compared to non-subsidy accepting home-based providers (31%) and subsidy-accepting centers (38%) have higher rates than non-subsidy accepting centers (35%).

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Estimated average daily attendance as a percent of licensed capacity by provider type and subsidy status

Across all provider types, non-subsidy small center providers have the highest enrollment at 44%. Small centers accepting subsidy had 41%. Licensed homes, both subsidy and not, had similar enrollment at 43% and 41%, respectively.

Non-subsidy registered homes have the lowest enrollment rates of all provider types at 28%.

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