

Health Provider Recruitment and Retention
Best Practices in Small or Rural Hospitals
Cases from www.healthcareworkforce.org

Allen Memorial Hospital

Lincoln, IL

25 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Nurse Retention](#)

Tuition Reimbursement: Allen Memorial Hospital offers tuition reimbursement to every employee. The employees are reimbursed based on the grades they earn, receiving 100 percent reimbursement for an A, 90 percent for a B, and 70 percent for a C. An employee must work for Allen Memorial for two years to qualify for the program or receive a waiver if the position the employee is interested in is difficult to fill. Participants in the program make a work commitment between 18 months and five years, based upon their tuition costs. Employees have taken advantage of this program to advance their careers in a wide variety of areas from radiologic technology, ultrasonography, registered nursing, business administration, information systems, and health information technology degrees.

Train From Within: Allen Memorial has established four internal training programs for scrub technicians, nurse aide, recreation technologists, and phlebotomists. The program is a combination of basic orientation, a multi-media academic training session, and clinical training with a mentor

Outreach Programs Through Accredited Universities: The hospital has contracts with several local and state schools to provide clinical rotations for students. Study subjects include imaging, CT mammography, radiologic technology, and nursing.

Dr. Dan C Trigg Memorial Hospital

Tucumcari, NM

25 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Community Scholarship Program](#)

To increase recruitment and retention of nurses, Dr. Dan C. Trigg Memorial Hospital developed a community scholarship program. The program's goal is to train and hire nurses from the local community, knowing that nurses from the community are more likely to stay at the hospital for an extended period of time. The hospital's scholarship funds 100 percent of tuition, books and supplies, as well as a \$250 monthly stipend for months when students are enrolled in school.

Two to four students are sponsored each year through the program. In exchange for the funding, participants make a month-for-month work commitment. An average participant takes 3.5 years to complete the degree, and therefore makes a 3.5-year work commitment after graduation.

Glendive Medical Center

Glendive, MT

25 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Recruitment & Visions in Hiring](#)

Train From Within: Glendive Medical Center decided to pursue the recruitment of foreign nurses by working in consultation with a well-connected physician experienced in overseas recruitment.

Vision in Hiring: Glendive Medical Center employs a hiring process that seeks to identify employees in all areas of the hospital that have the potential and the desire to advance in their career, continue their education, and become a visionary leader at the hospital. The program is geared toward, but not limited to, individuals that are hired as aides in nursing and other allied health professions.

Hamilton Hospital

Webster City, IA

49 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Recruiting and Retention Plan](#)

Recruiting Plan: Hamilton began a major recruiting campaign by posting job openings on a national website as well as their own hospital website (which includes an on-line application) and developing and mailing a recruiting brochure to all RNs in the state. In addition, the hospital began paying new employee relocation expenses and developed and implemented employee recognition, manager training, and employee referral programs. The hospital offers a loan forgiveness plan to current employees who are interested in studying for a new career in a profession that is difficult to recruit and fill.

Retention Plan: The hospital posts financial information monthly for employees to review, and administration began holding quarterly meetings to inform employees about current issues affecting the organization. The hospital offers an alternative scheduling program in which employees can work a set of weekend shifts (three out of four or seven out of eight weekends) which employees apply for—and, depending on the package, will receive 135 percent to 155 percent of pay. If a clinical employee is called into work on a day off, they are paid "Day Off Premium Pay." The hospital also pays for continuing education and certification classes. The hospital even developed a performance recognition initiative for rewarding employees on individual, departmental, and organizational levels for outstanding job performance. Employees are rewarded with pizza parties, gift bags, and free snacks in the cafeteria. Every employee is also eligible for a free half-hour massage monthly.

Hereford Regional Medical Center

Hereford, TX

35 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Employee Referral Bonus](#)

Hereford Regional Medical Center has utilized agency nurses to assist its staff during previous winter seasons. The hospital recently decided to hire additional nurses to minimize the need for agency nurses and is implementing an employee referral bonus to assist in the recruitment process. Employees that refer a nurse through the referral bonus program will receive \$150. In addition to the referral bonus program, Hereford Regional Medical Center will provide scholarships to employees who are interested in seeking a health care degree in a hard-to-recruit position, such as diabetic teaching or nursing. Employees that accept the scholarship agree to a work commitment after graduation.

Lucas County Health Center

Chariton, IA

15 acute beds, 10 swing beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Radiology Technologist Recruitment](#)

Limited Radiology Technologist Program: Lucas County Health Center partnered with Des Moines Area Community College to provide basic training for radiology technologists. Participants meet one day per week for four months and, upon completion of the program and board registry, may go to work for a hospital. These employees are able to perform limited procedures and help share the workload.

Grow Your Own Program: Lucas County Health Center and Indian Hills Community College determined that the program should accept additional students in order to address the growing radiology technologist shortage. The college identified a need for additional clinical rotation sites in order to increase enrollment, and the hospital agreed to open its doors to radiology students. The partnership provides students with the opportunity to develop relationships with hospital staff, and increases the likelihood that they will return to the hospital to work upon completion of their degree. The hospital offers scholarships and forgivable loans to employees who are interested in becoming radiology technologists and works with students to provide a flexible work schedule.

Memorial Community Hospital & Health System

Blair, NE

28 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Retention Bonus](#)

While sign-on bonuses for new hires in certain critical need areas are a market norm, Memorial Community Hospital & Health System recognized the need to reward current employees who remained loyal to the organization in a competitive market. The hospital implemented a retention bonus program for

certain identified need areas that has improved morale and demonstrated a commitment to retaining good employees. The retention bonus is currently available only to employees in radiology and physical therapy. The \$6,000 bonus, which is equal to the hire-on bonus, is paid every six months over a three-year period in return for a three-year work commitment. Any employee who breaks the contract, either for voluntary or involuntary termination, must pay back the amount given to that point.

Muleshoe Area Medical Center

Muleshoe, TX

28 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Employee Training and Enhancing Grant](#)

Muleshoe Area Medical Center recently received a \$160,000 grant from the Texas Workforce Commission to train new and current employees. With fewer than 5,000 residents and a need for educated health care employees, the hospital is using the grant to educate existing employees as well as community members interested in the health care field. Participants in the education programs are not required to make a work commitment to the hospital, but many of the students have chosen to work at the hospital after they complete their education. In addition to the courses, Muleshoe Area Medical Center also established a computer lab and has a program in place to enhance the computer skills of current employees.

St. John's Medical Center

Jackson Hole, WY

49 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Resort Community Recruiting](#)

The hospital's recruiting efforts focus on attracting the type of individual who seeks recreational activities, and on highlighting the attractive pay and benefits package required to draw people to the area. The hospital has also identified the importance of creating a positive work environment, and has put more emphasis on surroundings and the ability for staff to enjoy their jobs and peers. The hospital relies on the use of traveling employees during peak winter and summer tourist seasons, but has identified the need for a core group of employees who are given the opportunity for overtime when they want it but who are also able to deal with census fluctuations.

Swisher Memorial Hospital

Tulia, TX

20 beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Recruitment and Retention Plan](#)

In January 2002, Swisher Memorial Hospital's nursing workforce was unstable, and there was a high reliance on agency nurses. Although many local individuals

were nurses, they were commuting 25 to 50 miles to work for higher pay and the opportunity to work in more specialized areas. As a small community, the hospital prefers to pay local residents to further the local economy. As a result, the hospital adjusted its starting scale to be close to that of larger hospitals and used the attraction of a short commute, lower cost of living, and being close to home to make it attractive. Swisher Memorial Hospital is also providing current and newly hired nurses with leadership and program opportunities. While the program was started solely to reduce costs, the hospital is benefiting from increased morale and patient satisfaction. The hospital has also learned that while some nurses want leadership roles and opportunities, many are happy to come to work and take care of patients. Swisher is conscious about being flexible and adapting the work environment to each nurse's strengths as much as possible.

Twin City Hospital

Dennison, OH

15 primary care beds, 10 swing beds

REFERENCE LINK: [Referral Payment](#)

To recruit and retain competent, skilled, and energetic personnel to fulfill the hospital's mission, Twin City Hospital began involving their employees in the recruitment process. They developed a referral system in which their employees would receive payment for referring a quality candidate who was subsequently hired.

Open positions at the hospital are posted internally first, which allows employees to recommend potential candidates. If an employee recommends a certified, licensed, registered, or supervisory staff person who is still employed after their 90-day orientation, they receive \$100. Six months from the date of hire, the referring employee receives \$150 if their recruit is still employed. For all other positions, the referring employee receives \$25 following the 90-day orientation, and six months later they receive another \$25. In addition, if the hospital is having a difficult time filling a professional position, they distribute an internal posting and offer \$500 to anyone who refers a candidate that is hired for that position.