Case Study: Online Training as a Solution for Large Healthcare Network Vacancies

The healthcare industry has been plagued by a job vacancy crisis in recent years leaving many hospitals and health systems short-staffed, forced to hire expensive recruiting services and pay for employee overtime. The COVID19 pandemic has only exacerbated this problem. Now, we must search for new cost-effective, viable solutions.

> The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) predicts a growth rate of 16 percent for healthcare occupations over the next ten years, or 2.6 million new jobs between 2020 and 2030.

This case study will investigate the factors that led up to this nationwide problem, why the traditional solutions no longer work and the innovative strategy the 7th largest rural healthcare network in the US is using to handle its staffing needs.

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The Large Scale, Nationwide Problem

The healthcare industry is growing at a faster rate than any other occupation in the country. Two main factors are impacting that rise – the population's expanding healthcare needs and the lack of existing job candidates.

AGING POPULATION + RISING INSURANCE ACCESS = HIGHER HEALTHCARE NEED

The passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 has led to an increase in individuals with health insurance. According to a US Census Bureau report over 90% of Americans are now insured, compared to only 81.5% of individuals under 65 with insurance in 2010. This number has slightly shifted in recent years, but with more access to coverage – more people are seeking treatment.

In addition, the aging baby boomer population has caused a "grey wave" of older adults needing long-term and ongoing care. In 2018, the US spent $103 billion on home healthcare alone, out of a total of $3.67 trillion spent across the healthcare industry. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services predict home health numbers will rise to $173 billion, and total healthcare spending to $5.7 trillion, by 2026.

A CANDIDATE SHORTAGE – EDUCATION COSTS, OVERQUALIFICATION & TURNOVER

There are several factors contributing to the lack of candidates for allied healthcare positions – including notoriously high turnover rates, overqualified candidates and the cost of education options.

> *According to the 2021 NSI National Health Care Retention & RN Staffing Report, the average hospital has turned over 90.8% of its workforce since 2016.*

Both job seekers and the currently employed have options to choose from and can easily switch jobs, leading to more vacancies. Additionally, overqualified candidates aren't likely to accept positions with entry-level wages.

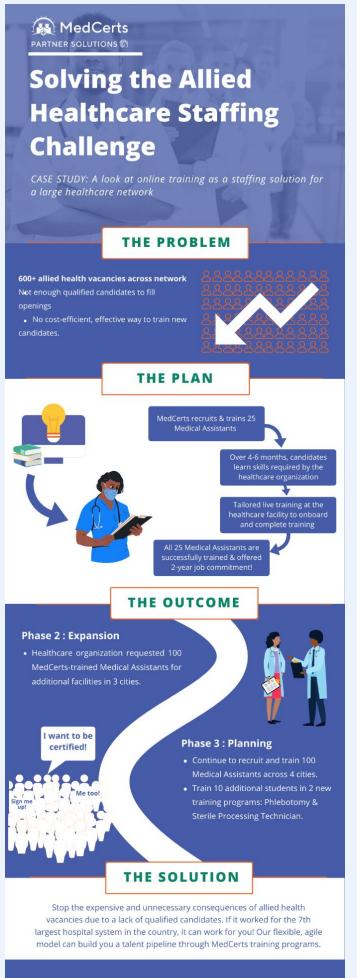## TRADITIONAL EDUCATION BARRIERS – A COST & TIME PROBLEM

The other major reason for the candidate shortage is the cost and limitations of traditional educational systems.

> *Entry-level healthcare training programs at a traditional school take two years to complete and cost between $10,000 to $15,000.*

Many students, especially adult learners, can't afford that and don't have the time for a program of that capacity, especially for a job with entry-level wages.

Even with those barriers, community colleges have long served as the lower-cost alternative to traditional universities. But now that solution is no longer viable for the rapidly growing number of vacancies. Most community colleges only accept students two or three times a year, and only reach a local population, limiting their potential student enrollments.

The combination of high turnover, the issues of traditional education's rigid calendar and its expensive price tag are leading to a lack of qualified candidates for the expanding number of job vacancies.

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Solving the Allied Healthcare Staffing Challenge

CASE STUDY: A look at online training as a staffing solution for a large healthcare network

THE PROBLEM

600+ allied health vacancies across network
Not enough qualified candidates to fill openings
- No cost-efficient, effective way to train new candidates.

THE PLAN

MedCerts recruits & trains 25 Medical Assistants

Over 4-6 months, candidates learn skills required by the healthcare organization

Tailored live training at the healthcare facility to onboard and complete training

All 25 Medical Assistants are successfully trained & offered 2-year job commitment!

THE OUTCOME

Phase 2 : Expansion
- Healthcare organization requested 100 MedCerts-trained Medical Assistants for additional facilities in 3 cities.

I want to be certified!

Sign me up!

Me too!

Phase 3 : Planning
- Continue to recruit and train 100 Medical Assistants across 4 cities.
- Train 10 additional students in 2 new training programs: Phlebotomy & Sterile Processing Technician.

THE SOLUTION

Stop the expensive and unnecessary consequences of allied health vacancies due to a lack of qualified candidates. If it worked for the 7th largest hospital system in the country, it can work for you! Our flexible, agile model can build you a talent pipeline through MedCerts training programs.

Contact Us:
partners.medcerts.com

SOLVING VACANCIES WITH A HIRE + TRAIN MODEL

Now that we've examined the major causes of the nationwide healthcare staffing problem, let's take a look at how the 7th largest rural healthcare system* in the US is using partnership and innovative staffing strategies to fill upwards of 600 allied health positions across their hospital network.

Much like other healthcare organizations around the country, this healthcare system found that they did not have enough qualified candidates in their area to fill vacancies nor did they have a cost-effective, efficient system in place to train new candidates.

This led to the exploration of new, innovative hiring techniques and a partnership with MedCerts, an online certification training organization with the education and recruitment resources that the healthcare system needed. Together, they developed a Hire & Train model.

In this approach, employers (the healthcare system) hire candidates new to the industry and then use a third-party (MedCerts) to provide them with comprehensive training to pass the certification exams and start their careers. A key component of Hire & Train is that employees are brand new to the industry and employers outsource training to a company that specializes in healthcare job preparation.

The healthcare system and MedCerts began Phase 1 of their Hire & Train program with a plan to recruit, train and hire 20 medical assistants. Now we'll dive into the implementation of that plan and the outcome.

IMPLEMENTATION & OUTCOMES

In the Hire & Train model, MedCerts handled everything for the healthcare system, including recruiting candidates, building access to a training portal, supplying all the required content, student support, certification exam prep, reporting and more. Everything to make sure new hires get a full introduction to the healthcare industry. The healthcare system paid a flat fee per trained employee to MedCerts. In some cases, employers opt to use funds set aside for tuition reimbursement programs to pay for new staff members' certification training.

MedCerts sourced and vetted a pool of 25 local candidates through marketing campaigns for this healthcare system to interview and approve. Once the 25 candidates were selected and hired, they began a 26-week online training program developed by MedCerts in alignment with the National Healthcareer Association's (NHA) national Certified Clinical Medical Assistant certification and the skills required by the healthcare system.

All MedCerts programs are designed to meet the needs of every type of learner and fit any schedule. Our 12 elements of eLearning education model teaches students through multiple touchpoints, including interactive games, 3D simulations, video tutorials and immersive environments to engage all learning styles. Students are assigned a personal student advisor to provide subject matter expertise, motivation and progress checkpoints throughout the online portion of their program.

After completion of the online learning, the new hires began a paid, in-person training at the healthcare system – where they were evaluated on their skills learned and were able to gain their hands-on, clinical experience in a real-world environment. The healthcare system added this short, in-person training to familiarize students to the processes and procedures unique to their facility. It also served as an orientation and ensured they would fit with the healthcare system's work environment.

At the end of the 6-month training, candidates that successfully completed their programs earned national certification and met the healthcare system's expectations were offered 2-year job commitments. The success of phase one led to the development of a plan to expand the partnership between the healthcare system and MedCerts over three years.

> *This expansion included adding **100 more MedCerts-trained medical assistants** for the healthcare system's facilities across four cities. As well as plans for 10 additional students in two new training programs for Phlebotomists and Sterile Processing Technicians.*

Solving Your Allied Healthcare Staffing Problem

As seen by the program developed with the healthcare system, the Hire & Train model can have an immediate impact on an organization. First, it allows employers to hire the type of person they want and get them trained to fit the specific needs of that facility. Employers can fill larger amounts of vacancies, no matter how concentrated they are or when their needs arise, by offloading the training to a third party.

This approach allows organizations to be involved with their new employees' training from day one while still enjoying the benefits of a hands-off approach. Finally, the Hire & Train model greatly expands an organization's hiring pool.

Our Workforce Solution Models

Our Hire & Train model is just one of the ways we've helped organizations resolve their staffing needs. Each organization faces unique workforce challenges, and MedCerts knows there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The expanding vacancies nationwide show that the traditional solutions organizations use to hire are no longer filling their needs and a training program can help with that problem. For some, it might be as simple as one apprenticeship cohort, for others, it might be a combination of solutions that fill widespread vacancies across multiple locations. MedCerts wants to work with you to figure out what works best for your organization - even if it is as simple as sending a few externs your way.

Our Career Training Programs

MedCerts offers over 40 training programs for entry-level positions in healthcare and information technology. Our catalog of programs isn't designed to fit a pre-existing industry template. Instead, we create our programs based on what employers are looking for. We even offer stackable credentials that equip learners to assume a range of positions and career paths within a single organization.

It worked for the 7th largest rural hospital system in the country, it can work for you!

Build your own talent pipeline with a MedCerts training program.

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