

Performance Strategies



Empower Nurse Staff with Workforce Management Tools

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Use Tools to Empower Staff and Reduce Costs



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The graying of America (including nurses) is contributing to a shortage of healthcare providers – now critical in many areas of our country – and the impact is beginning to show in the area of patient safety. In 2006, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) reported strong evidence linking inadequate staffing with adverse events. This and other reports suggest that appropriate staffing correlates with lower death rates and shorter hospitalizations.

I'm sure you've seen the effect of these pressures in your own organization, with increased staff vacancies and longer time to fill those spots with qualified personnel. This staff shortage results in greater use of traveling and agency health staff at greater expense to your organization. Nurse managers and department heads may experience burnout as they work longer hours to ensure they are staffing appropriately for patient needs.

As basic laws of supply and demand play out, staffing and workforce recruiting and retention are a top concern for most executives. The use of integrated workforce management tools can help you attract and retain the best staff while improving clinical outcomes for your patients.

Increase Workforce Satisfaction with Web-based Tools

Solutions that empower your staff and managers and assist with their work/life balance are in high demand today. One of these solutions is the ability to provide a Web-based self-scheduling system. The ability to offer care providers the option to manage their own work schedule can be an attractive tool for recruiting and retention.

As younger Web-savvy workers enter the workforce, they expect the flexibility and instant access to information that Web-based applications provide. Web functionality also works well for communicating with and scheduling per diem staff. By deploying Web-based technology, your organization can offer employees 24/7 access to key information, such as job postings, company and unit announcements, benefits, payroll and schedules.

Managers appreciate the convenience and increased productivity that results from using a toolset that streamlines communication and reduces the pressures associated with managing staff schedules.

Promote High-Performance Care with Clinically Relevant Shift Management

While communicating and filling open shifts is vital to your operation, other factors also contribute to a high-performing culture of care. A top staff scheduling and productivity system provides visibility into patient needs so you can provide the appropriately credentialed staff to meet current patient requirements.

Having staffing, budget and actual hours worked in one comprehensive system enables managers to constantly monitor and adjust to changing patient and workload needs. In addition, a high-performance system should provide the opportunity to model the budgetary and productivity outcomes of staffing decisions before they're implemented.

A staff scheduling system also provides the basis for monitoring productivity and improving performance. The system can be used to measure the effect of changes so that processes can be improved and fine-tuned. In addition, leaders can monitor results using Web-based analytics tools.

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Ensure Your System Pulls It All Together

As you evaluate the benefits of using integrated workforce management tools, here are some key questions to ask:

- How well does your payroll system communicate with your scheduling system?
- Is patient acuity considered in managing workload?
- Does the system help manage budget and financial information?
- Can the system present key metrics in an easy-to-read dashboard to help you make staffing decisions on a daily basis?

By linking scheduling and productivity information to the time and attendance and HR systems, payroll can be automatically generated, FMLA and FSLA calculations can be seamless, and even the most complicated work rules can be readily configured and deployed. A comprehensive, connected workforce management system greatly reduces data entry and manual calculations.

Today's fast-paced care delivery environment demands high-quality data from all components – data that is synchronized and readily available on demand – to ensure that you consistently have the right staff to care for the right patients at the right time. And more than ever, it's important to also equip your organization with a workforce management solution that serves the needs of those you entrust with the care of your patients.

Karl Straub is vice president and general manager of workforce management solutions for McKesson Provider Technologies. Karl re-joined McKesson in 2007, when it acquired Per-Se Technologies. At Per-Se, Karl led the resource management business for its Hospital Solutions segment. Karl has 26 years of experience in the healthcare industry.

Web-based Staffing: A Better Way for Meridian Health

Envisioning a better way to communicate with its employees, in 2006 [Meridian Health](#) began using the Web for self-scheduling and posting of extra shifts for its facilities in central New Jersey. The increased presence of generation Y in their workforce influenced the formulation of this strategy, which called for Web-based access to information, communication and scheduling around the clock. Constantly looking for ways to empower its staff and improve quality of care, this three-time ANCC Nursing Magnet®-designated health system took advantage of a new ASP technology that provides Web-based open shift management.

Employee Perspective:

Before shift scheduling became available on the Web, staff members had to come to the hospital in order to manually sign up for their schedule preferences. Those who were not on the unit when sign-up began had to drive to the hospital on their day off. Nurses who wanted to work extra shifts had to come to the hospital to sign up for open shifts and then return again to retrieve their revised schedules. Now staff can access the Web-based scheduler from patient care units throughout the hospitals as well as via a secure Internet browser from virtually anywhere.

Management Perspective:

In the manual scheduling environment, nurse managers spent countless unproductive hours calling staff to fill scheduling holes rather than focusing on quality patient care. There were also seniority issues with collective bargaining units when managing open shifts. Now, Web-based scheduling enables managers to quickly get in touch with their teams from the hospital or from home. Meridian Health has even incorporated the solution into their disaster plan — enabling managers to send messages to staff that are needed back at the hospital.

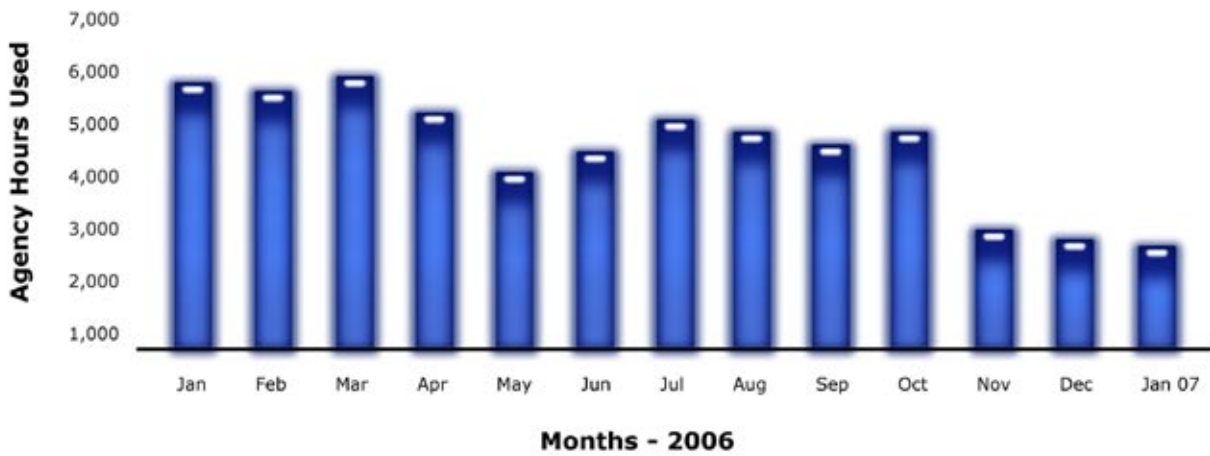
Executive Perspective:

[McKesson's e-shift™ Web-based scheduler](#) has achieved impressive results:

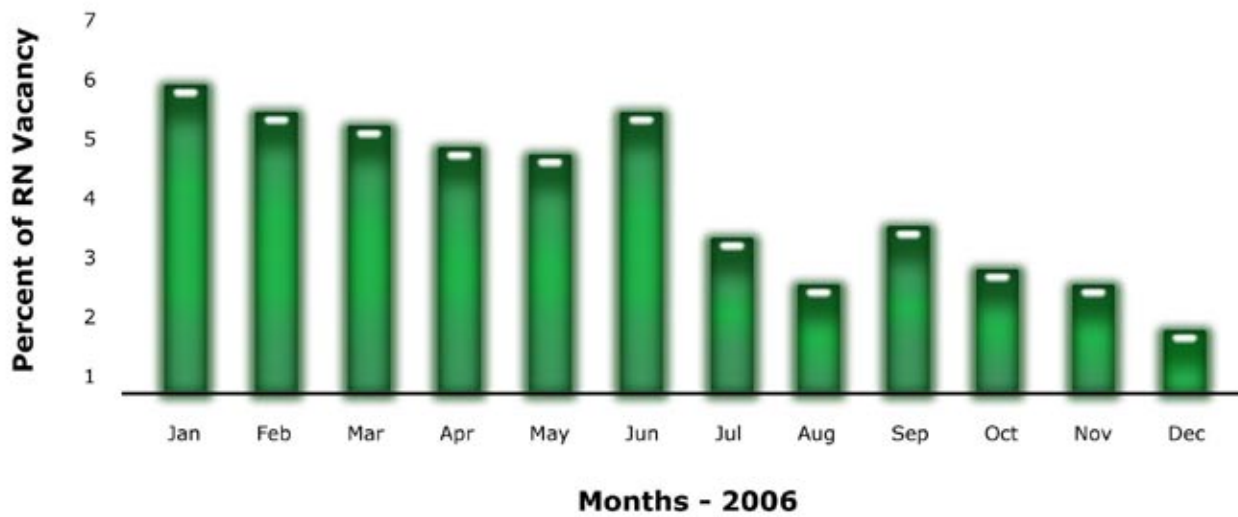
- The majority of open shifts are now filled via the Web using existing staff
- The solution enables nurse managers to focus more time and energy on patient care.
- Premium pay to agency nurses has significantly decreased, resulting in a savings of \$1.2 million during the first seven months of use.
- The nurse vacancy rate has dropped from over 6% to under 2%.

Results Scorecards

**Reduction in Agency Hours
(More Shifts filled by Per Diem & Unit Staff)**



Reduction in RN Vacancy Rate



Related Solutions

[Workforce Management Solutions](#)

[ANSOS One-Staff™](#)

[eShift™](#)

[McKesson™ Time and Attendance](#)

[Horizon Human Resource Management™](#)

[Workforce Performance Analytics](#)



[See McKesson's Workforce Solutions at Booth 3035](#)

For a private demo, call
1-800-442-6767, option 2

Other Upcoming Events

[AONE](#), April 25-29

[HFMA ANI](#), June 23-26

[ASHHRA](#), October 12-14

[ANCC Magnet](#), October 15-17