The future of healthcare:

How to attract and retain top talent

talent lms

CONTENTS

Introduction

A well-resourced and high-functioning healthcare system is an essential part of a safe and successful society. Directly impacting the lives of individuals from all walks of life, its remit is vast, covering both physical health and mental wellbeing, prevention, detection, and cure.

And it takes professionals with different skills and from a range of specialist sectors to keep it running successfully. From administrative support and financial management to frontline delivery, clinical governance, and patient care, attracting and retaining the right mix of talent is vital.

But there are various challenges related to this. An aging global population is putting more pressure on an already overwhelmed system. Technological advances are prompting the need for new skill sets. Higher operational costs mean lower hiring budgets. And a general shortage of talent, plus the fallout from the ongoing COVID pandemic, are additional influencing factors.

In this ebook, we'll cover all of the above. We'll scope out what the future holds. What this means for healthcare recruitment. And how to redesign your hiring process to meet the changes taking place.

Retention, too, gets its own investigation. How can you keep hold of talent once you've hired them? In chapter 4, we share practical ways healthcare organizations can retain great people rather than rehiring and replacing them. Of course, training plays a big part in retention. And in our final chapter, we look at what kind of employee training you should prioritize and the best ways to deliver it.

But we start with COVID-19. What impact has a global pandemic had (and in many places is still having) on recruitment and retention strategies in healthcare?

Let's take a look.
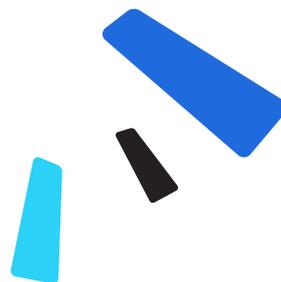
Chapter 1.

The state of the healthcare industry in the post-pandemic era

The COVID-19 pandemic, which spread across the globe in 2020, impacted every aspect of society. But the healthcare industry took a particularly powerful hit. Operationally stretched, resourcing became a major issue. Delivery, too, changed, with many areas of the industry forced to reinvent systems and service providers for safer and more reactive alternatives.

Two years on and the effects are still being felt. A ripple effect of the pandemic, recruitment and retention are now two of the biggest challenges facing the industry. But what specifically is the legacy and how is it impacting employment across the sector?
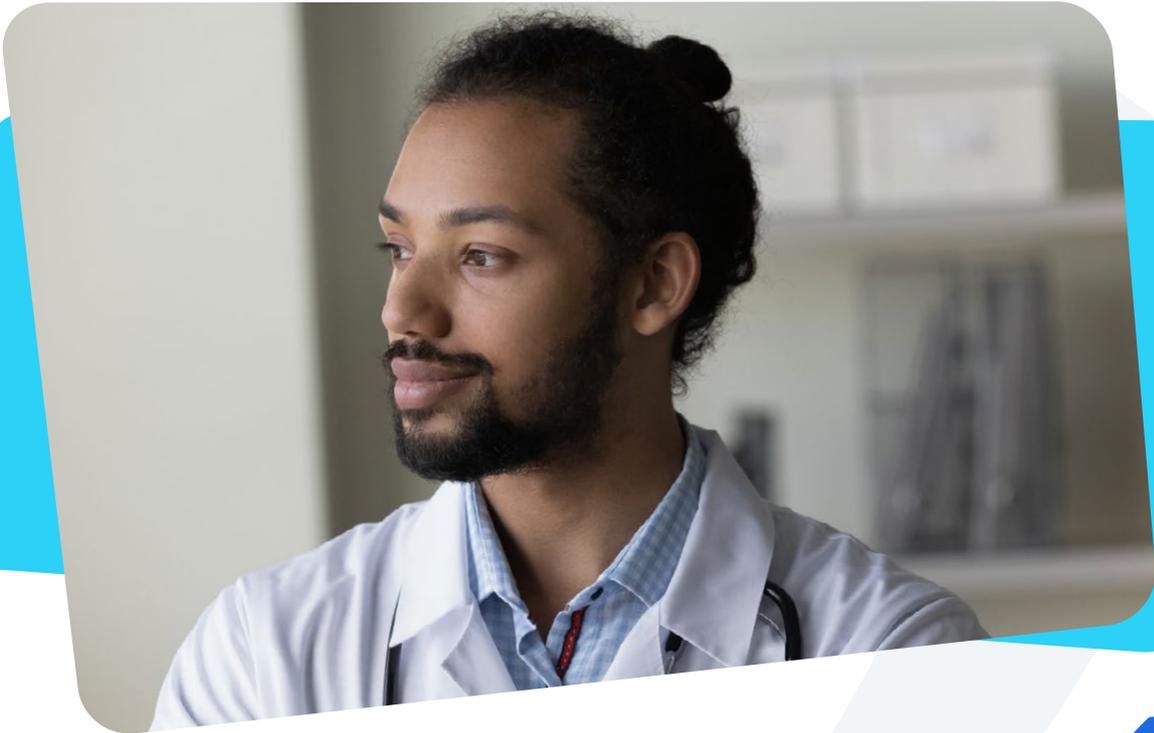
The Great *Resignation*

Since early 2020 and the arrival of COVID, the healthcare industry has had to balance an unprecedented demand for its services with equally high levels of employee sickness or absenteeism. Overworked, mentally and physically exhausted, it's no surprise healthcare workers are leaving their jobs in higher volumes than ever before.

The "Great Resignation" (fuelled by COVID-19), affected most industries. But the impact on the healthcare sector was more stark. By October 2021, the number of people leaving the healthcare and social care industry was 35% higher than before the pandemic, compared to 29% of resignations among all workers in the same period.

Of the 18% of healthcare workers who've quit since the pandemic, many are retiring earlier than expected. Others (around 19%) are leaving their jobs for a role in a different field entirely.

No surprise then that stats from the Job Opportunity & Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) show a 51.9% increase in job openings since before the pandemic.

A shift in *mindset*

Possibly the most significant legacy left by COVID is the rise in remote working. At the height of the pandemic, millions of white-collar workers either chose or were forced to remain at home rather than commute to an office. And this legacy has driven a permanent change across many desk-based industries.

Pre-pandemic, only five percent of office workers worked mostly from home. Recent data reveals that 20 to 30% is now the average. In fact, given a choice, post-pandemic employees would choose to spend at least 40% of their time working from home.

The move to remote working as a main-stream business model has sparked more than a physical change. It's driven a mental shift too. People have since reassessed and reevaluated aspects of their working life and opted for a more balanced and flexible approach. When looking for jobs, quality of life is a key motivator. And the option to work remotely, for all or at least part of the time, is a big deciding factor.

This change in perspective looks set to bring significant challenges to healthcare recruitment. With a large proportion of its roles requiring a physical presence in either a hospital or other care facility, remote or hybrid working simply isn't an option. Not only that, but long shifts and anti-social hours (considered the antithesis of balanced working) are an inherent part of many healthcare roles.

All of these factors could explain why, with more than 6.5 million healthcare workers forecast to leave the industry over the next few years, only 2 million are expected to actively seek to fill those roles.

- -

Spoiler alert: *The good news is, there are lots that can be done to address this. We cover recruitment and retention strategies in healthcare and how they meet these challenges in chapter 3.*

Digital transformation

The healthcare industry isn't known for its groundbreaking advances in digital technologies. Its primary focus has always been the care and safety of patients using the service. So the emphasis has traditionally been placed on providing reactive, hands-

on treatment when needed, with other infrastructure and process advances following at a slower pace. COVID, however, changed that. Faced with a situation that required a more strategic and pragmatic approach, it shifted focus almost overnight.

With the help of investors, digital health startups got to work. Earning more in the first three quarters of 2020 than ever before, new digital healthcare trends emerged. Systems and services became digitized. Diagnoses, consultations, and primary care became virtual. And the use of apps, tools, and platforms to monitor and mobilize health, gather and analyze data, became more commonplace.

During the pandemic, demand for tele-medicine consultations in Sweden doubled, while elsewhere in Europe, it grew by thirty times the previous rate. Something recognized by the European Parliament in its 2021 report:

"The pandemic is redefining how and what care is delivered," it states. "Digital tools can provide effective support for institutions during a pandemic, allowing the deployment of novel digital healthcare models at different stakeholder levels—from healthcare and research to government and general population."

It may have been an unplanned, knee-jerk reaction to the pandemic, but virtual care reform looks set to become a permanent feature of the healthcare industry. Providing resilience, transparency, accessibility, and continuity of care, eHealth has moved from being a "nice to have" to a "couldn't live without."

New skills, new roles, *old faces*

Building a more robust structure through digitization makes sense. But there are implications for healthcare recruitment. With an emphasis on new technologies comes the need for additional skill sets and fresh ways of thinking. Candidates and employers across the healthcare industry now have a new set of goals and objectives to familiarize themselves with. And a new catalog of digital skills to include in job descriptions, advertisements, and assessments. Not to mention new specialized roles to create that support the development and maintenance of its digital agenda.

Tech transformation aside, the COVID-19 pandemic has also created job opportunities in areas of the healthcare sector that were previously underrepresented. Pharmaceuticals, vaccinations, testing, and mental and behavioral health are four of the most obvious. But there are other clinical and non-clinical roles that have emerged.

In the UK, for example, the National Health Service (NHS) introduced a new medical support worker role designed to provide fast-track opportunities for international medical graduates or refugee doctors resident in the UK. And across the globe, other roles have been created to manage the additional admin, outreach activities, and data collection and analytics tasks associated with the pandemic.

Faced with a shortage of staff as a result of COVID, the UK also introduced an initiative aimed at widening its talent pool. The Return to Practice program offered qualified, but non-practicing, doctors a supported pathway back into work.

It remains to be seen if these initiatives will continue beyond the next few years. And if these new and resurrected roles are still in high demand. But the sentiment and strategy behind them is something that will, undoubtedly, endure.

Rising operational costs

Most businesses ([76% in the UK](#)) incurred higher (albeit temporary) operating costs due to COVID. PPE, routine testing, social distancing, hygiene and sanitization measures, and all of the additional associated admin put pressure on already

-stretched budgets. But while those costs are beginning to lessen now for most businesses, in the healthcare industry the impact is still being felt. In hospitals and other care institutions, these additional safety measures have become permanent, making the delivery of frontline services higher. In the UK, for example, the cost of running frontline NHS services has risen by £4-5bn a year since Covid.

Higher wages, increased use of bank or agency workers, and an unprecedented emphasis on scientific discovery and research have also put pressure on budgets.

Chapter 1.

Let's recap this chapter:

COVID left a lasting impact on the healthcare industry. There was a positive impact in many areas. Digital transformation and the move to telehealth made healthcare more accessible for patients. And a more flexible working approach was good news for some staff.

In others, the impact was less positive, with resignations fuelled by workload, stress, and burnout, rising operational costs, and skill and staff shortages some of the main challenges.

Chapter 2.

What the future holds

In its "2022 Global Healthcare Outlook" report, Deloitte connects the stresses placed on healthcare by the pandemic with an opportunity to "reimagine" its future. But what does that future look like? According to Deloitte, a need for better resilience and inclusivity, stronger partnerships across different providers, and a more human-centered approach all feature highly.

External factors too look set to influence a transformation. These include a growth in new technologies and delivery models, evolving economic factors (costs and funding), and a shift in demographic trends and consumer preferences.

If you're a healthcare executive, recruiter, HR professional or manager, you'll want to know how some of these changes will impact the workforce. Here's a rundown of some of the key trends and challenges.

Staffing *shortage*

In the US, the number of jobs in healthcare looks set to rise from 153.5 million in 2020 to 165.4 million in 2030, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This figure outweighs the growth in employment across all other occupations and is closely linked to an increasingly aging population.

The highest proportion of open roles is expected to affect nursing. With more open positions now than any other profession and 500,000 of its workforce expected to retire this year, this field of healthcare is particularly vulnerable. To avoid a severe staffing shortage, 1.1 million Registered Nurses will need to be hired over the next few years.

But an analysis of projected healthcare workforce supply and demand across the United States carried out by Mercer, reveals another major area of concern. Fuelled by an older, sicker, and more sedentary population, lower-skilled healthcare support roles will be in high demand. And this, in turn, could lead to a shortage of 446,300 home health aides, 95,000, nursing assistants, and 98,700 medical and laboratory technologists and technicians.

Another healthcare recruitment challenge is the nature of the job. Many positions are becoming increasingly hard to fill. According to Indeed.com, the top 10 most difficult positions to hire for range from highly specialized roles such as cardiologists, radiologists, and psychiatrists to more generalized roles including agency nurses and nurse practitioners.

All of these factors present challenges for employers and recruiters in the field. And explains why the average time to fill a position is higher in healthcare than in any other industry (48.3 days compared to 20.5). But knowing where the critical occupation gaps are is extremely useful. It means organizations can plan and prioritize those gaps. And focus medical recruitment strategies (training, hiring, employee engagement tactics, retention, and recruitment advertising efforts) in the areas where they most matter.

A *control* shift

Encouraged by the growth in healthcare digitization, cloud technologies, and a more self-serving mindset, consumers are expected to take a more active role in managing their own healthcare.

This "management" encompasses everything from home-based care to tracking and monitoring existing conditions. And the early detection and even prevention of new illnesses.

By 2027, the global remote patient monitoring (RPM) systems market will be worth over $1.7bn. With 30 million US consumers using RPM tools by 2024. So, how will it work? Using remote patient monitoring tools (RPMs), individuals will be able to send real-time health data directly to healthcare professionals. Wearable technology such as Fitbitsand smartwatches will also play a more informal role in this, giving individuals the power to pick up on health abnormalities or changes.

The benefits of this self-serving culture are two-fold. Medically speaking, ongoing monitoring and early detection lead to better long-term health predictions. Community and home-based care also lead to better patient outcomes, particularly in the area of mental health and the elderly.

Good news for individuals, this approach also leads to better business outcomes. It relieves pressure on certain areas of the healthcare profession (resources and staffing, for example). It reduces unnecessary outpatient visits. And it lowers costs. In the US, for example, Medicare's Chronic Care Management program, saved $88 million in a year.

But what does it mean for future healthcare recruitment and retention? Well, a shift in deployment from in-person patient visits to data management and analytics is inevitable. Education and marketing around this new consumer-led world will also need to be factored in. But there will, no doubt, be other areas of impact and change that it's harder to predict right now. In fact, that's a role in itself. So be prepared to spend some time observing developments and get ready for change as trends emerge.
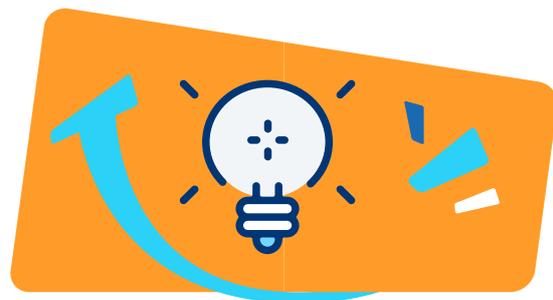
Technological developments

COVID kickstarted a digital revolution in healthcare by providing an immediate and defined purpose. But it also exposed its general potential. And, now, thanks to advancements in 5G technology, that potential looks set to dominate the future of healthcare in a variety of ways.

● **Virtual care**

Using mobile technology, nonessential in-person appointments may well become a thing of the past. Trialed during the pandemic outbreak, telehealth had proved it has a purpose above and beyond social distancing. A convenient and cautious approach, allowing virtual access to a

doctor or healthcare professional through a smartphone or computer offers a practical and safe solution for many groups of people. From patients in rural locations, or those without easy access to transportation, to individuals with social anxiety or caring responsibilities, it improves accessibility and equality of care across the board. And, according to PwC's Global Health Consumer survey, will challenge the traditional delivery of care in the future.

● Digitizing data

The sudden growth of telehealth during COVID had many benefits. But it exposed one major flaw. A lack of interoperability (or the sharing of data across different providers and organizations). Why does it matter? It matters because better interoperability supports faster diagnosis and leads to better health outcomes, according to 95% of doctors (Google Cloud's July 2021 Physician Healthcare Interoperability survey). It also enhances the patient experience and lowers costs.

So how will technology help in the future? Electronic Health Records (EHRs) are one example. Stored in a digital format, EHRs mean patient data can be located more easily. And shared across a wide range of stakeholders, from health services, medical researchers, and community organizations to pharmacies, life science industries, tech producers, and government departments.

● Digital therapies Therapeutics (DTx)

Chronic or long-term, untreatable conditions are on the rise. To combat this, mobile health apps that provide therapeutic treatment are emerging on the scene. Strictly regulated, the Digital Therapeutics (DTx) market is growing fast, spurred on by COVID, and is predicted to be worth $56 billion by 2025.

All of these technological shifts bring benefits. But they also raise a number of future challenges for staffing across the healthcare industry. Existing employees will need to be upskilled to work with the new technology on offer. As skills gaps are identified, they will need to be covered by new, digital specialists. And all employees will need support and training to help adjust to changing work practices.
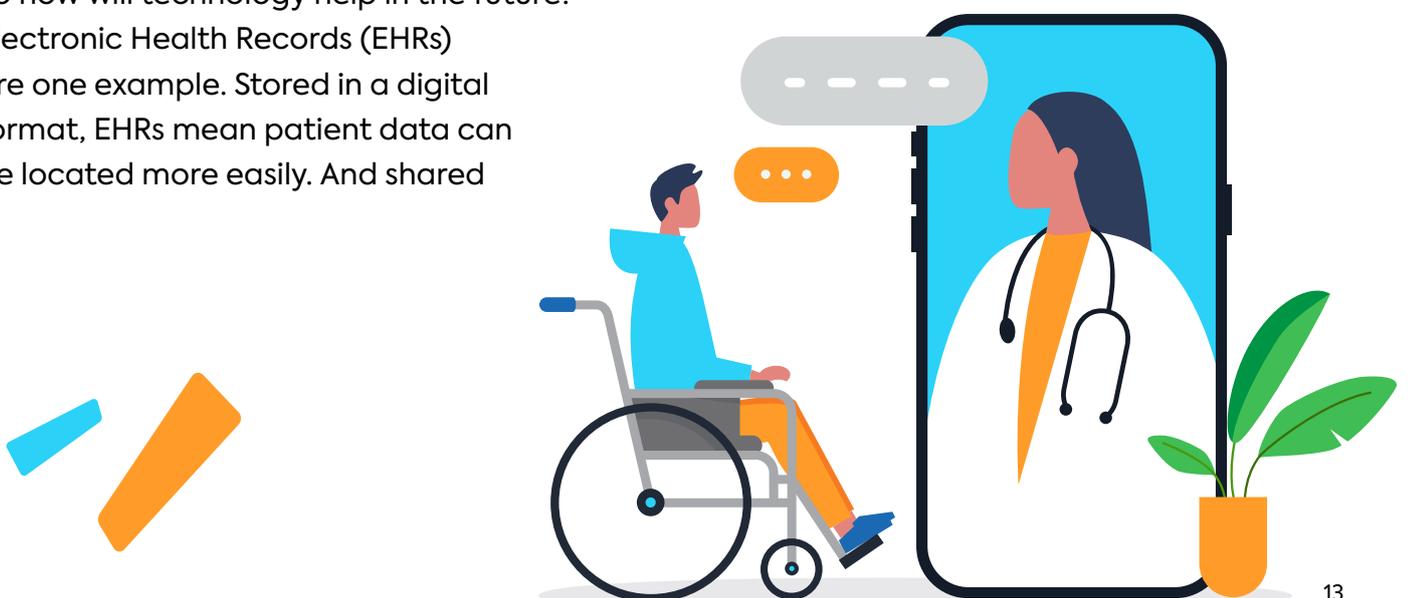
Chapter 2.

Let's recap this chapter:

The future of healthcare holds a number of challenges as well as opportunities. A vast, global staff shortage is on the cards, which will affect nursing and healthcare support roles in particular. Technological developments are set to continue at pace. And a self-serving culture of care will change the way the healthcare model operates in many aspects of its provision.

Hiring healthcare staff: Redesigning the process

Training customers isn't a new concept. But most companies have evolved their approach over recent years. But why change? What was wrong with the traditional methods most companies used to support customer enablement?

Here we look at how organizations used to manage customer training. And find out what challenges or limitations prompted them to change direction.

If the healthcare sector is to succeed and thrive in the future, it needs to attract new talent. The stats we've seen so far are clear and consistent on this point. Easier said than done, perhaps with perceptions of the industry focused on low pay, long hours, and lack of flexibility in working conditions So how can the hiring process help combat those perceptions? And appeal to a new generation of employees it so desperately needs?

Streamline *checks* and *assessments*

•• **The Challenge:** Depending on the role, there's often a long list of checks, assessments, competency tests, screenings, and qualifications to check out before you can make an offer to your healthcare candidate. All of which takes time. And it's this prolonged and draining process that causes candidates to drop out mid-way or not apply in the first place.

✔ **The Solution:** Review the criteria for individual roles, identify aspects of the hiring process that are essential and remove those that are unnecessary. And use HR recruiting software, such as an applicant tracking system (ATS), to organize, structure, and automate processes. Many ATSs integrate with background check and screening platforms or provide their own similar

service. Through the use of pre-populated data, duplications and errors are minimized, and the whole process becomes faster, for candidates and recruiters.

Get the *balance* right

•• **The Challenge:** The education vs experience dilemma is a common one in any industry. But in healthcare, it's a particularly difficult one to answer. Get it wrong, and it can lead to a confused, slower, and potentially biased hiring process. You can waste time and money attracting the wrong type of candidate. And risk alienating the right ones.

✔ **The Solution:** Treat each vacancy uniquely and avoid a generic, one-size-fits-all approach. Some roles might require a lot of experience on top of the appropriate qualifications. For other roles, it may be perfectly acceptable for candidates to gain experience on-the-job, as long as they have the basic educational background. Not only will this approach help answer the 'education vs experience' question. But it will lead to a more diverse and varied workforce.

- -

Tip: *The filtering options in recruiting software will apply consistency to the process. And reducing hiring bias by depersonalizing the approach.*

Make it *virtual*

•• **The Challenge:** The process used for recruiting healthcare professionals is historically clunky and cumbersome, with multiple steps and interview stages to endure. Organizing and conducting interviews, assessments, and career fairs is admin-intensive. And if you're hiring healthcare staff at scale and having to look further afield for the right talent (as is the case with healthcare), the steps involved can create pipeline bottlenecks, no-shows, and missed opportunities.

✔ **The Solution:** Virtual recruiting lends solutions to many of healthcare hiring's challenges. It offers speed—video interviews and pre-employment assessments can be arranged and completed faster. It provides reach—candidates can be sourced and recruited from any location. It's scalable—virtual career fairs don't have to limit numbers. And it's affordable—travel, venue-hire, and staffing costs are reduced. Yes, there are limitations.

An entirely remote hiring process may work for entry-level or support roles. But clinicians, consultants, and other practitioners may require a blended approach of both virtual and on-site experiences.

Bring hiring *teams together*

•• **The Challenge:** In healthcare, the bulk of the healthcare recruitment process is managed by hiring managers in specific departments, rather than being centralized by HR. This can lead to a disjointed, inconsistent, and potentially non-compliant approach.

✔ **The Solution:** An applicant tracking system brings all hiring stakeholders together. HR can oversee and organize the process by assigning roles and responsibilities. Hiring managers can take ownership of the stages that require their specialized knowledge and input. And candidates receive a smooth, consistent, and organized experience, which aligns with industry standards and employer branding.

Publicize and *personalize* benefits

•• **The Challenge:** While the healthcare sector comprises a wide range of roles, it can be broadly divided into two distinct areas: clinical and non-clinical. To attract talent, it needs to compete with organizations in the same sector as well as those outside its industry. This is particularly tough when many of those organizations are able to offer benefits such as flexible and remote working that healthcare often can't.

✔ **The Solution:** Use the hiring process to promote and sell your unique and competitive package of benefits. Tailor these to each

17
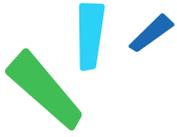
role where you can. If some roles (clerical positions, for example) come with the option of working from home, highlight that. For others, for example, roles with long shifts or a highly-pressured environment, highlight flexible working hours, mental health and wellness packages, sabbaticals, and training and development opportunities.

Stand out from the competition

•• **The Challenge:** In healthcare, its reputation precedes it. It's an industry that impacts almost everyone at some time in their life. And most people have already formed an opinion about it either from first-hand experience or through word of mouth before they even consider it as a place of work. There are a lot of old assumptions and perceptions about the industry that will prevent many, primarily those looking for non-clinical work, from applying. Not only that but, faced with a supply and demand problem, competition for talent across the healthcare sector is fierce.

✔ **The Solution:** Give candidates a reason to apply. Put branding front and center throughout the hiring process. Use well-designed career pages, mobile-optimized job postings, and a tech-driven hiring process to challenge expectations, promote

benefits, and demonstrate inclusivity. Elevate the role of technology to create a modern and consistent candidate experience and showcase your commitment to the digital agenda. And project a tone of voice that accurately communicates your vision and values.

- -

Tip: *Include quotes, photos, and videos featuring employees, on your careers page. And in your onboarding package. Make sure they represent a range of different roles.*

Grow your *talent pool*

The Challenge: With high levels of competition and low levels of supply, relying purely on traditional , mainstream routes for advertising won't attract the required quantity or quality of candidates.

The Solution: A more proactive and creative approach is required to attract active candidates as well as passive ones (those who aren't actually looking for a new job). Niche job boards, employee referral schemes, and social recruiting campaigns can attract larger pools of both. Reaching out to like-minded groups such as medical students, dental professionals, retirees, and the military, is also a powerful strategy.

Chapter 3.

Let's recap this chapter:

Historically clunky, healthcare recruitment needs to change if it's to attract new talent and address negative perceptions of what it's like to work within the industry. There are practical changes that can improve processes.

These include virtual recruitment and the use of an applicant tracking system to fast-track background checks, bring hiring teams together, and filter applicants. And strategic shifts (branding and publicity, for example) can challenge those perceptions.

How to retain employees in healthcare: 10 ways to hold onto talent

On the day it came to write this chapter, the UK published its projections of future NHS workforce supply and demand in England. The stats were shocking, but no great surprise. They echoed the global figures we've already quoted. What did stand out, though, was an emphasis on the damage being caused by short-termism or "a preference for expediency over requirement." Only by investing in, and committing to, a long-term workforce strategy, it states, can the industry hope to resolve its deeply entrenched workforce challenges.

This makes absolute sense. You can't control what's going on externally. And there will always be a need in healthcare to be reactive. But hiring healthcare staff to fill a gap and then moving on to something else isn't enough. It takes a proactive, future-focused strategy to keep them. And that means giving time and thought to the following:

1. Offer an optimized and meaningful *compensation package*

Money is by no means the only motivating factor when it comes to employee retention. This is particularly evident in healthcare, where funds are limited and pay rarely competes with other industries. But that doesn't mean finances should be ignored.

Where roles (home health aides, for example) crossover with those in other sectors , health systems need to mirror the pay expectations offered externally. And, where costs are limited, use [financial wellness schemes](#) to offer support and share practical ways to make money go further. Financial wellness schemes demonstrate a duty of care. From training around saving, budgeting, pensions and managing debt, to practical benefits such as lifestyle support, collective buying, and retirement planning schemes, they all work together to raise engagement.

Formal reward and recognition schemes are another effective way of providing financial compensation on a low or limited budget.

2. Provide opportunities for *career growth*

To visualize a future in an organization, employees need to feel that they're progressing. And that they're valued. Here's where professional development programs make a difference. They give staff opportunities to grow and reach their potential.

Whether it's through feedback, coaching, mentoring, secondments, work shadowing, upskilling, research conferences or succession planning, prioritizing professional development provides a high ROI. The day-to-day demands of healthcare delivery may be tough and feel relentless. But it's important to allocate time for professional development and stick to it. So remember to formalize it in a policy or strategy document. And make sure promotional opportunities are accessible to all.

## 3. Give proper support for *wellness* and *mental health*

Against a backdrop of burnout, stress, anxiety, and unprecedented workloads, the healthcare sector has emerged limping from the fallout of Covid. Taking steps to look after the health and wellbeing of healthcare employees has never been more important. As well as being simply the right thing to do,
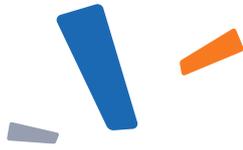
a thoughtful and considered wellness program shows employees you're invested in them and that you care. It leads to lower absenteeism, as well as higher retention rates, and a better functioning delivery model.

But some wellness programs just pay lip service to the concept. It takes time to create a wellness program that makes a tangible difference. Here are some ideas of ways to elevate yours:

- Encourage exercise by rewarding workers who meet activity goals
- Design insurance plans that include telehealth appointments and preventative screenings
- Offer free mental health checkups and stress management programs
- Schedule on-site fitness classes or provide reimbursement for classes attended
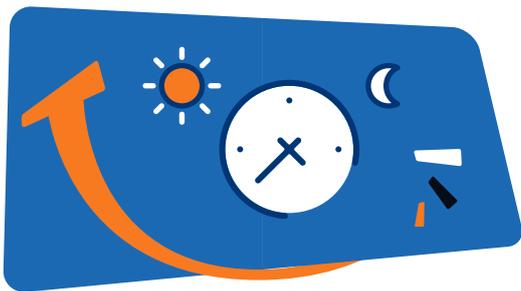
4. Design *flexible work* schemes

Commuting and childcare put added pressure on employees. Adapting to a more accommodating and personalized work schedule, where possible, is a powerful way of acknowledging and addressing this.

Yes, some healthcare positions are tied to an on-site location. But not all of them. Many non-clinical roles (HR, IT, appointment bookings, and finance, for example) can effectively operate remotely. The same goes for some clinical roles, too, especially with the rise in virtual care. But where remote working isn't an option, there are still other ways of offering a better balance. Compressed hours, flexitime, part-time, or even a combination of these can all make a tangible difference to levels of pressure and stress.

5. Re-think *overtime* and *vacation* days

Overloading employees to the point where they burn out, runs a high risk of them not wanting to do their job anymore. And, even if they did, they might not be able to. Notorious for a culture of overtime, staffing inefficiencies, and poor timetabling, healthcare has a poor track record when it comes to work-life balance. Not something that will change overnight, perhaps, but it's important to take steps to address it today to nurture employees who'll be around tomorrow.

The first step is to recognize the importance of balance. Monitor and manage workloads and working hours. Set limits on overtime. Make sure vacations and days off are taken and not canceled. And prioritize and plan realistic staffing levels.

6. *Communicate* with transparency and openness

Whether it's promoting benefit plans, accessing HR information, or sharing staffing changes or updates, keeping communication channels open keeps employees engaged in their surroundings. And in their work. Timely, two-way exchanges at a team or department level are important too. As are one-to-one meetings with managers.

- -

Tip: *Adopt and adapt the method of communication to match the message. Use intranet articles, email newsletters, and presentations for top-level messaging. And webinars, team meetings, employee apps, and discussion boards for more granular, interactive communications.*

7. Prioritize and promote *workplace safety*

Keeping employees safe and secure in the workplace has always been important. But since COVID, it's been placed permanently in the spotlight, especially in the healthcare industry. If workers feel unprotected and exposed, they'll leave for somewhere else that makes them feel less vulnerable.

Make sure you take all of the appropriate workplace safety measures to mitigate risk. And promote these clearly across your workforce.

8. Uphold standards for *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)*

80% of employees are quite clear about it. They want to work for an employer that prioritizes inclusivity in all of its forms. For Millennials and Gen Zers, the expectations go beyond hiring a diverse workforce. They demand that employers commit to a proactive and ongoing approach to diversity once hired. Facilitating (potentially awkward) conversations about tough subjects such as unconscious and conscious bias, privilege, and prejudice.

23

Building an organization around the principles of DEIB is a good thing. It creates a more welcoming culture and a sense of belonging, which aids retention. And, in the world of healthcare, it helps create a stronger bond and trust with patients. But it's also the right and only thing. Commit to it for that reason, and the rest will follow.

9. Set the scene with *great onboarding*

There's a direct link between good on-boarding and higher retention. Compare the stats. More than 40% of staff turnover occurs in the first month of employment, according to a study by Equinox. Provide a strong and structured onboarding experience, however, and it's a different story. The figures show that investing in onboarding raises new hire retention by 82 percent, with 58% of new hires more likely to still be with the organization after three years.

Focus on the practical side (this is your chance to showcase your training and benefits package, for example). But don't shy away from "softer" subjects. Remember to "sell" your culture, reminding your new employee of how they can contribute and thrive in it. And make onboarding last. The longer you support them as they settle in, the better. Yes, this kind of onboarding is a commitment. But the ROI (higher retention, faster productivity, a boost to your branding and, in the long-run, lower costs) is huge.

10. Make training an *ongoing priority*

Stats show that employees (76%) are more likely to stay with a company that offers continuous training. But in healthcare, the stakes are a lot higher. Without the right training, lives are at risk. Healthcare employees need to know they've got the right level of knowledge in the right areas to be able to perform their jobs correctly. The right training goes hand-in-hand with retention. Let's look at it in more detail.

Chapter 4.

Let's recap this chapter:

Hiring great people isn't enough to solve the healthcare staffing crisis. You need to know how to keep hold of them. Starting with great onboarding, employee retention is also linked to strategies that promote training and development, wellbeing, diversity, health and safety, communication, and a culture of openness and transparency.

Chapter 5.

Why employee training can make a difference

Learning & development is possibly the biggest influence on how long an employee stays at a hospital or other healthcare institution. But what other benefits does it bring? What kind of training is important? And how can it be delivered so it's both accessible and effective? Answers follow...

Why *training matters*

In the previous chapter, we touched on how training underpins retention. But it brings other benefits, too.

Upskilling is particularly important in today's climate of almost constant technological innovation. It gives employees the ability to operate using new tools and platforms. And the ability to adapt those tools to perform more effectively.

Training also improves performance by addressing weaknesses, Employees aren't perfect. But having a formal and proactive approach to learning and development means they can address gaps in knowledge or areas where they lack confidence. Given the staffing shortage impacting healthcare, this is a far better approach than leaving them to flounder and then watching them leave.

At the other end of the scale, providing training opportunities also encourages employees to become experts in their field. As well as improving their status and sense of self-worth, this, in turn, raises the profile and credibility of your organization. In the competitive world of healthcare, having a reputation for clinical excellence helps healthcare recruitment. Not only are more

candidates more likely to apply for roles, but the caliber of those candidates is also likely to be higher.

Engagement is another area where training adds value. Whether it's a connection with your organizational values, colleagues, customers, patients, or processes, L&D has the power to spark emotional connections and create a strong sense of understanding and ownership. Which leads right back to retention.

What training is needed: *12 courses* for healthcare training

There are roles in healthcare that require high levels of education and specific formal qualifications. There are roles where experience and a general set of competencies are more relevant. Workplace training transcends both of these groups, giving all employees additional soft and hard skills to help them function more effectively in their job and their environment.

But what soft and hard skills are best suited to the healthcare profession? If you're designing a training program, you'll need to prioritize skills that will provide the best ROI for your organization. Our pick includes the following:

1. MINDFULNESS
Frontline delivery in healthcare's often

fast-paced and unpredictable. And this atmosphere affects staff in supporting roles too. Mindfulness training teaches employees tactics they need to remain calm and focused. It's also useful for achieving balance and a sense of fulfillment.

2. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Helping employees learn about discrimination in all its forms and giving them the skills and confidence to confront it, creates a positive working environment. From recognizing privilege to understanding unconscious bias, DEI training in healthcare improves patient outcomes too.

3. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The role of tech is changing the way healthcare is delivered and managed. Digital transformation training helps employees keep pace. From understanding why the adoption of new technologies matters to learning how it works to streamline services and processes, training encourages a digital mindset.

4. TEAMWORK AND COMMUNICATION

Good healthcare requires a holistic approach that spans prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and aftercare. And that means different teams, departments, and groups of individuals working together. Teamwork

training keeps channels of communication open and functioning. It supports a culture of mutual trust and promotes interdependence and collaboration. Good for your employees. Great for your patients.

5. WORKPLACE SAFETY

Ironic, perhaps, but safety in the workplace can often take a back seat in the healthcare industry. Prioritizing patient care, employees can get forgotten. But workplace safety is essential. It represents a duty of care for employers and makes employees feel secure and comfortable in their surroundings. And in healthcare, it sets the right tone for an industry that measures success in wellbeing.

6. CYBERSECURITY

With the rise of digital technologies, particularly the growth in virtual care, data protection has become a hot healthcare topic. Cybersecurity courses give healthcare employees the skills to protect confidentiality, identify potential cyber attacks and prevent data breaches.

7. COMPLIANCE

Healthcare is tightly regulated and litigation-heavy. Compliance training is both knowledge and skills-based. It protects employees (and you) by helping them

understand the legislation that applies to their job positions and formal company policies. But it also covers the "softer" side, such as professional ethics, harassment, and bullying.

8. HYBRID AND REMOTE WORKING

If you're offering remote or hybrid work options (and evidence suggests you should if you can), it's important your employees know how to make the transition. How to use technology to its full effect. And how to maximize the benefits of a flexible approach. Relatively new to healthcare, a course that covers all of these options shows commitment to a more modern and progressive approach to working.

9. PERSONAL FINANCES

Big bonuses may not always be possible in the world of healthcare. Providing training and practical tips to help employees manage their money more effectively is one way of balancing this out. Particularly, if it's combined with a financial wellness scheme that offers tangible money-saving benefits.

10. WELLBEING

The resilience of the healthcare industry rests with its people. Wellbeing training is important for so many reasons. From staying productive, achieving potential,

and maintaining balance to showing recognition and growing retention, it helps individuals and organizations thrive.

11. NURTURING TALENT

Keeping hold of good employees means investing in them and helping them grow. And your managers play a big part in this. Provide them with training that supports a culture of nurture and development by offering courses in areas such as coaching and mentoring, building trust, active listening, and setting goals.

12. LEADERSHIP

Most healthcare organizations are large, complex, and busy environments. Designed for everyone (not just managers), leadership training gives individuals the soft skills they need to flourish in this context. Breed emotionally and culturally intelligent leaders by teaching them about confidence and humility, delegation and decision making, bravery and authentication.

How to deliver healthcare training

When it comes to healthcare training, you can't just shut the shop early so all of your employees can attend a course, conference, or seminar. So, what's the answer? Move it online.

eLearning platforms centralize training. They gather all of the relevant modules and materials together and make them accessible on one online platform. Supporting a blended learning (synchronous and asynchronous) approach, online training works for all types of healthcare workers. Employees can attend live, virtual webinars, simulations, or demonstrations to learn specialized practical skills. And complete other theoretical or generalized courses at their own pace, as and when they have time in their schedule.

Optimized for tablets and smartphones, as well as PCs, eLearning can also be done anywhere. Microlearning (short, succinct training nuggets) is an ideal format for on-the-go, online training. Not only is it easier to fit into a busy working schedule, but it's also better for knowledge retention.

A repository for knowledge, eLearning's ideal for informal collaboration and knowledge-sharing, as well as more formal, mandatory training. Healthcare's constantly evolving, with new treatments, innovations, trials, and testing scenarios emerging all the time. By establishing a database of information online in a learning management system (LMS), healthcare employees can share news, check information, and stay updated.

Chapter 5.

Let's recap this chapter:

Great training is a big motivator when it comes to employee retention. But healthcare training requires a very specific portfolio of courses. And a delivery method that works for busy, frontline staff as well as office-based teams. Use an online learning approach to make training manageable for all. Include courses that cover soft skills such as leadership, teamwork, and communication. And provide hard skills and mandatory training such as compliance and cybersecurity.

The future is bright

Healthcare's in a vulnerable position. As an industry, it's capable of meeting any challenge (COVID taught us that), and there will always be a demand for its services. But at the moment, it's struggling to find the staff it needs to thrive. And the energy it needs to convince good employees to stay.

It's not enough to find the right people to keep it functioning on a day-to-day basis. It needs the right people to put strategies in place to meet future demands. And the right people to help it grow and adapt as the world around it grows, too. Once it's found those people, it needs to engage them through training, through a meaningful wellbeing package. And through a culture of care, diversity, flexibility, and transparency. Plus, it needs to use technology to its advantage.

Recruitment and retention strategies in healthcare matter, because the future of healthcare matters. And the future of healthcare's in their hands.

The LMS designed for your **success**

<u>TalentLMS</u> is the LMS built for success, enabling organizations to create a culture of continuous learning by delivering training designed with adoption in mind. With an experience that's fully customizable, easy to manage and a joy to use, teams embrace training while feeling right at home.

TalentLMS makes it easy to provide the right training for any team and context while giving expert guidance and support every step of the way. Backed by Epignosis, a global leader in learning technologies, TalentLMS is on a mission to democratize training, serving over 70,000 organizations worldwide.

www.talentlms.com