

Annual PDHCA Leadership Summit Jan 19, 2009 Roundtable Discussion

Table Topic: Caregivers Across the Spectrum: How do we recruit and retain them?

Problem: Finding GREAT caregivers

- Low pay
- Mandated training requirement (costly, fewer qualified instructors)
- Lack of dependable hours (lots of work and then no work)
- Lack of benefits
- Transportation issues – no vehicle, bus route
- Passing criminal background checks
- Other employment
- No heart for the job
- Stressful work
- Cultural differences
- Lack of agency dollars for recruitment activities
- Lack of management time for recruitment activities

Problem: Keeping GREAT caregivers

- Low pay
- Lack of benefits
- Not enough hours or too erratic
- Burnout
- Lack of loyalty to agency
- Stressful personal life

Solutions for Retention:

- Expectations communicated up front – hire with corporate culture in mind
- Benefit program based on hours worked and length of employment, ie paid vacation
- Work toward good caregiver/client match
- Personal recognition
 - “4 Penny Program” – put 4 pennies in R hand pocket in the am. When you recognize someone’s positive behavior, put a penny in L hand pocket. When you go home at night, all pennies need to be in your left pocket.
 - Recognition dinner
 - Newsletter recognition

- Picnics
- Spirit of homecare annual award
- Pins for years of service

Caregiver support and education

Career ladder (peer mentor, geriatric aide, C.N.A.)

Financial incentives (bonuses)/ gift cards after certain number of hours worked

Caregiver support groups

LISTENING

“Coffee with Cathy” – informal open door time with supervisor

Provide transportation – van service

Extra hourly pay for working from 31-40 hours

Raise for satisfactory completion of “introductory” period

Pre-employment screening tools (behavior/personality testing)

Employee Assistance Programs

Regular staff meetings

Solutions for Recruitment:

Hire with corporate culture in mind

Career Builders

Craig’s List

Participate in C.N.A. graduations

Offer agency for C.N.A. clinical practice experiences

Senior Center job fair

High School Career Day

Nursing Schools

Community Colleges

Newspapers

Current employee referrals/referral bonus

Internet classifieds

Social network on internet

Employment agency

Company DVD with music in agency to greet applicants

Community job fairs

Share testimonials from happy employees

Personalized direct mail

Provide company vehicles

Churches (church secretary)

Civic groups

Support groups

Small Business Administration – networking

Guarantee certain number of hours which are paid

Christian radio ads

Sign on bonus

It was suggested that a solid retention plan has to be in place prior to attempting to recruit staff.