



Health
Carousel



A CLINICALLY LED PARTNER CAN
RELIEVE THE BURDEN OF STAFFING

—

SO YOUR FOCUS
REMAINS ON **QUALITY**
PATIENT CARE



A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE FROM WORKING WITH, HIRING, AND SUPPLYING NURSES

Healthcare in the U.S. has struggled for years to recruit and retain enough staff to cover its needs. The system is not built to handle a surge in patient load or quick reductions in staffing due to turnover. When care facilities and hospitals are overwhelmed, nurses must juggle an unmanageable load of patients who all need essential care.

There are two clear themes emerging in the USA. First, it's clear that hospitalized patients are the sickest they have ever been. Patient acuity, as measured objectively by case mix index (CMI), is up considerably. Secondly, the nursing shortage is expanding. As we watch an aging nurse workforce inch closer to retirement, our country faces a nursing shortage the likes of which hasn't been seen in decades.

The gap between available and necessary nurses becomes even wider when you take into account the expanding scope of requirements and executive role consolidations impacting nurse leaders. This is a problem in the best of times, but it becomes untenable when outside forces further stress the system. Enter the COVID-19 pandemic.



Stretching an Already Stressed Care Delivery System

The COVID-19 crisis stretched the country's healthcare delivery model so much that it has been unable to handle any type of surge capacity. Whether it's natural disasters, COVID-19 hot spots, or a simple patient surge, many people struggle to get the care they need and deserve.

New York is a perfect example of this struggle. The facilities in this part of the country were trying to care for people in an area devastated by COVID-19 to the tune of 90,000-plus hospitalizations and more than 25,000 deaths. Our existing healthcare system is simply not capable of handling that sort of a surge in patient needs.

The resources and capacity of healthcare facilities are limited. Hospitals might only have 25 to 30 beds in their ICUs — the part of the hospital that houses patients on ventilators and those who are struggling to breathe — during regular times. But as the coronavirus hit, some facilities had to increase that capacity to 80 in a matter of days. The Wall Street Journal quotes that the peak of the pandemic caused NYC to see three times the number of ICU patients it would have during a busy flu season.

In addition to a lack of beds, ICUs grappled with a lack of nurses. Like medicine, nursing is broken into specialties. Just as medical-surgical nurses and labor and delivery nurses concentrate on those areas, ICU nurses have specific skills and training that help them meet the needs of that unit.

That specialized training makes ICU nurses in heavy demand. As most ICU nurses are gainfully employed, the virus made it nearly impossible to find permanent ICU nurses on short notice — particularly for ICUs that had just tripled in size. To maintain a consistent level of quality care, hospitals needed more staff to handle a daily load that had ballooned tenfold. Healthcare organizations needed nurses — and they needed them quickly.





A True Partner in Patient Care

The urgency of addressing critical staffing gaps requires a balance of speed and diligence. Often, too much time passes between the moment nurse managers recognize staffing needs and when nurses arrive at their facilities. In the case of COVID-19, census volumes were nearly impossible to predict. Internally finding nurses, assessing their skills, and then placing them can take a lot of time – valuable time that’s necessary for quality patient care. This is where a staffing partner with an experienced clinical team can make an impact in a hurry.

Through a unique blend of attention to detail, agility, and clinical competence, a staffing partner can dramatically shorten hiring time by doing the work on behalf of the hospitals and care centers that need help. This starts with a clinically led understanding of the unique needs of the facility and applying hands-on clinical experience to address the root cause.

Given the spread of COVID-19, even healthcare providers that traditionally like to interview and vet their staff members before hiring required help to address the immediate need. Many healthcare facilities and managed service providers turned to Health Carousel’s clinical team to interpret the situation and ensure they were able to get the nurses they needed. During the coronavirus pandemic, these nurses were successful additions to many organizations and played integral roles in helping thousands upon thousands of patients heal.

“Our ability to interview and place nurses at a rapid pace earned us the trust we needed to make the impossible possible,” said Health Carousel CNO Earl Dalton. *“My team was proud to get the call from New York to help. We could see that our nurse brothers and sisters needed support to continue caring for their patients and communities, so we worked day and night to meet that need and answer that call. My clinical team understands that on the other end of their efforts are patients who needed care, and we take that responsibility very seriously.”*



Help When It’s Most Needed

For a long-term care facility in the New York area that serves as home to many elderly patients, COVID-19 created an overwhelming need for additional nurses. This facility had nowhere to send patients because every hospital was overrun, which meant that the strength of the nursing team determined whether people lived or died.

Health Carousel immediately stepped in to help by taking complete control of the hiring process – identifying nurses who matched the organization’s culture and then onboarding them as quickly as possible. This took work, especially during an unprecedented pandemic that flipped normal processes and timelines on their heads. But Health Carousel’s clinically led teams embraced the challenge and worked harder than ever to provide quality care to patients whose lives were hanging in the balance.

“The facility had an extraordinary need for nursing staff and not a lot of extra resources to help facilitate the transition,” said Health Carousel CNO Earl Dalton. *“Our efforts*



TOGETHER,
WE HAVE
CLOSE TO A
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EXPERIENCE
ON MY TEAM.

Earl Dalton, Health
Carousel CNO



with this care facility illustrate the value Health Carousel provides. We supported an organization that needed top-notch and talented traveling nurses, and everyone was able to pull together to save lives.”

“Health Carousel was able to fill our needs extremely fast with qualified nurses who had wonderful customer service and worked well with our current staff during a crisis. They were able to jump in quickly and efficiently when we needed it the most! I am truly grateful for their services!” - Nursing home administrator



Time Saved, Placements Made

For some major health systems, Health Carousel serves as a subcontractor to fill needs as they arise. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was critical to place nurses in a matter of hours instead of days.

Health Carousel's clinical teams interviewed 50 to 75 nurses a day, with an average turnaround time of one day between an offer being submitted and accepted. From a recruitment perspective, the typical 12-day turnaround was reduced to less than two days because recruiters prioritized offers vetted by Health Carousel based on their quality.

"We're proud to have earned this level of respect in the industry," said Health Carousel CNO Earl Dalton. "Other agencies partnered with those companies but didn't get that opportunity. We have worked to prove our value, and the numbers show it; Health Carousel nurses are hired permanently 60% of the time."

A Foundation of Trust and Support

In addition to serving clients more effectively, Health Carousel worked with client partners to ensure nurses placed received the support they needed to do their jobs.

Health Carousel doesn't believe in a cookie-cutter approach to onboarding and training. We give each facility partner attention for its uniqueness. For example, many nurses working during the pandemic didn't have enough PPE to stay safe while treating their patients. Serving as an early advocate for hospitals, Health Carousel shared training and campaigned for nurses to get the protective equipment they so desperately needed.

In addition to advocating for proper equipment, Health Carousel worked with nurses who had to self-isolate for two weeks after contracting the virus. They were far away from home in some cases, so finding them places to quarantine where they felt safe and protected was important.

About Health Carousel's Clinical Team

Ultimately, the success of any staffing partnership boils down to trust.

At Health Carousel, we take our work seriously because we have been there: short-staffed with patients who needed us to do better for their care. Our unique perspective comes from working with nurses, hiring them, supplying them, and – more than anything – being in their shoes while caring for patients. We understand the immense responsibility healthcare professionals have to their patients; this is something we don't take for granted.

"Together, we have close to a century of experience on my team," said Health Carousel CNO Earl Dalton. "I'm always amazed at how much wisdom they have to share when we are collaborating on an issue for resolution."

That knowledge allows us to be true partners to the hospitals and care centers that we serve. Recruiters are phenomenal, but they will struggle to handle some issues without firsthand nursing experience. In contrast, our clients can lean on us to understand what they need. We're able to handle anything from clinical questions to issues with a nurse who might not be meshing with a hospital's work culture.

If clients need help to create a staffing plan or address a staffing shortage, we have the resources and expertise to help them build a successful strategy. Not only do we promise to communicate quickly and thoroughly, but we also resolve issues within 24 hours – whether the nurse or the hospital generates those issues – and then follow up to ensure that resolution holds.

While other companies staff nurses, we go beyond. For the same cost, our clients are part of a relationship, have access to unparalleled education and expertise, and know they always have advocates in their corner.



DOES YOUR FACILITY NEED HIGH QUALITY NURSING **SUPPORT?**

Contact us at WorkforceSolutions@healthcarousel.com
to learn more and set up a consultation.