

RURAL RECRUITING: Best Practices for FINDING & RETAINING the Right Talent

As the demand for providers in rural locations grows at a fast pace, the healthcare staffing industry continues to refine the process for attracting, engaging, securing, and retaining talent.

The following are tips and best practices for successful rural provider placement.



Attract

A clearly defined mission can be the difference between finding a provider who is the right fit instead of a “quick fix.” Healthcare staffing firms work with hospitals and facilities to communicate the mission and vision for the organization, focusing on advertising the organization’s strengths (economic, political, growth, enriching, unique, or industry advantages). It’s also recommended that the facility establish a timeline for staffing needs to ensure that the positions are filled before the need is critical.

Referrals from the organization’s provider networks can produce promising candidates. However, efforts like posting ads on your website or placing local ads usually only work for providers who are already located in the area. Healthcare staffing firms can help organizations by providing resources to get the word out nationwide.



Engage

Providers are approached by recruiters on a daily basis, and the game is competitive. This is why time is always a critical part of recruiting. By having swift, well-defined consideration processes, organizations can retain a prospect’s interest and efficiently advance candidates. Should you work with a contingent firm? That depends. Contingent firms tend to focus their efforts on commonly desired areas or positions with the highest compensations. This approach often leads to high interest, but many of the candidates won’t be a true fit. An organized initial screening and thorough onsite interview can validate the candidate’s resume. We also recommend the facility have a dedicated member of the medical staff available to answer clinical questions and reinforce the organization’s vision and strategic healthcare plan.



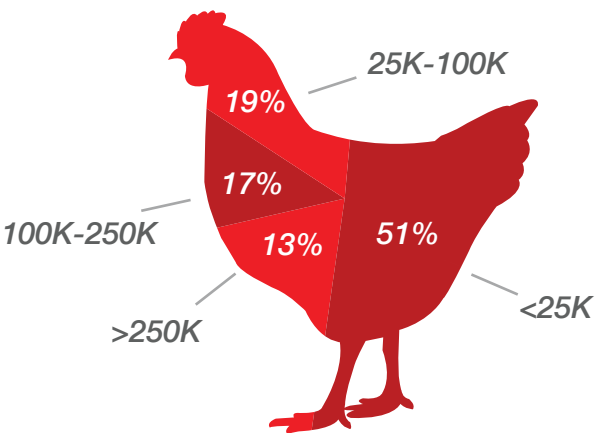
Secure

For many candidates, money isn’t the driving force. Quality of life, work-life-balance, opportunities for the family, and ties to an area have become important incentives. Armed with this knowledge, organizations need to have these incentives outlined before the recruitment process begins so they can reach a decision on a candidate and make an offer quickly. A streamlined approach can be the difference between securing the right person—or missing the boat.



Retain

Retaining a provider is the most difficult part of the process, which is why it’s imperative that organizations welcome, support, and engage all new medical staff members. Promoting social interactions among the medical staff and their families can help them become better acquainted and establish a sense of community. Providers who feel included in the decision-making process for patient access, referrals, and on-call scheduling strategies are the best advocates for improving rural population health.



PLACEMENTS BY POPULATION

Data indicates the percentage of placements made from July to December 2025 by the population of the search facility’s metropolitan area.

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