

# Combating the Rehab Talent Shortage

## Strategies for Acquisition, Retention and Engagement

A rehab program is only as good as its staff. Acquiring, retaining and keeping rehab talent engaged is critical for program effectiveness. Staffing issues can burden providers with additional costs and make it hard for them to deliver a consistently high quality of care, but there are key strategies to help relieve the staffing burden.

The medical industry is facing a growing talent shortage. Recent estimates predict that America will be short of more than 130,000 doctors by 2025.<sup>1</sup> Specialized departments will suffer especially high shortage rates.

If healthcare providers want to minimize the impact of this shortage, they must optimize their recruitment and retention practices. This guide details the best strategies for making that happen.



### CHALLENGE Talent Acquisition

**Acute rehab programs must be sufficiently staffed if they are to meet the growing demand.** America's aging population is more susceptible to neurological and cardiovascular conditions that require intensive rehabilitation. The population 85 and older is the fastest-growing segment in the United States and is set to triple by 2050.<sup>2</sup>

**The increasing scarcity of physicians, nurses and therapists is stoking competition between employers.**

**A survey showed that 46% of graduating residents were contacted by recruiters more than 100 times.**<sup>3</sup> As many as 76% of residents received signing bonuses in 2016, which averaged \$32,636 (a 21% increase from the previous year).<sup>4</sup> Other common incentives included relocation, CME and loan forgiveness.

Based on these trends, compensation alone is no longer sufficient to attract quality talent. To recruit the best physicians, nurses and therapists, rehab programs need to offer packages that also feature training and educational opportunities, reduce regulatory burden and support greater work/life balance. Today's candidates

seek assurance that they will have impactful work where they will not be isolated from mentors or medical management support.



### SOLUTIONS

#### Engage Top Recruiters

Using recruitment best practices and professionals experienced in rehab recruiting enables identification of the most qualified candidates. By reaching out to both active job seekers and passive candidates, recruiters can find the best fit for each role.

#### Fulfill Interim Needs

Outside staffing solutions allow providers to maintain program capacity and effectiveness while recruiters look for permanent employees.

#### Showcase Your Culture

Candidates have more information at their fingertips than ever before. During the interview process, or even before they apply, candidates are likely to research information about your program online through sites like Glassdoor. Review your online presence and ensure it is an accurate reflection of your workplace culture.





## CHALLENGE Retention and Engagement

Rehab programs that fail to keep their employees engaged risk serious staffing instability. Close to half of disengaged hospital employees surveyed plan to seek new jobs within the next 12 months.<sup>5</sup>

To retain quality rehab personnel, providers must develop and maintain a positive culture that enables medical directors, nurses, therapists and other staff to perform at their best.<sup>6</sup> Achieving high engagement is an integral component.

One of the strongest drivers of engagement is access to advanced training and continued education. Yet when surveyed, hospital employees reported lowest satisfaction rates with training and career development opportunities. Other significant contributors include factors such as healthy team relationships, sufficient work resources, feeling valued by superiors and employer, and clarity of objectives.



## SOLUTIONS

### Supply Tools for Success

Offering regular training and educational opportunities is critical for keeping staff qualified and engaged. Rehab professionals perform best when they're equipped with industry-leading tools for treatment and administration, as well as productivity-enhancing technology.

### Provide Regular Feedback

Providers stay motivated when they have a clear idea of how they can improve. To drive better outcomes, implement a Monthly Medical Director Dashboard and an Annual Performance Review. In addition, cut through the negative noise directed at physicians by sharing positive feedback regularly.

### Reduce Administrative Burden

On average, physicians spend 24% of their time at work on administrative duties, according to a 2017 study by the AAMC.<sup>7</sup> In addition, two-thirds of study respondents reported that administrative duties negatively affect their ability to deliver high-quality care. Identifying opportunities to reduce administrative burden through leveraging scale, optimizing processes and obtaining the latest technology can drive greater physician job satisfaction and even improve quality of care.

### Seek Third-Party Management

Some providers express hesitance over a third party managing rehab staff. However, qualified and experienced partners have the insights and focus to effectively engage staff, increase their levels of job satisfaction and empower them with the industry's most impactful tools and training.

### Additional Staffing Resources

Overcome staffing challenges with the help of a proven partner. Kindred Hospital Rehabilitation Services (KHRS) enables over 150 hospital-based programs to drive greater job satisfaction, reduce vacancies and improve care quality. Their national pool of recruiting and operational experts allows KHRS to reduce its partners' management vacancies by more than 99% and clinical liaison vacancies by 60%. To learn how KHRS can help your acute rehabilitation program reach even greater success, visit [kindredrehab.com](http://kindredrehab.com).



## How KHRS Can Help

To learn how KHRS can help you overcome today's staffing challenges and help your acute rehabilitation program reach even greater success, [visit kindredrehab.com](http://kindredrehab.com).

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