PRESCRIBING THE FUTURE
Building a next-gen healthcare workforce
Contents

Introduction ............................................................................................................................. [2]
A prescription for the future .................................................................................................... [3]
Why healthcare providers must focus on the employee experience
Four imperatives for the future of care .................................................................................. [4]
Strategies to help strengthen your workforce for best-in-class patient care
Rethink the hiring process to attract top candidates ........................................................... [6]
Improve the quality and speed of hiring and reduce the administrative burden of recruitment
Create a culture of employee well-being ............................................................................... [10]
Better understand what causes workforce disengagement and take action to improve the employee experience
Prepare your workforce for the future of care ...................................................................... [14]
Equip your people with the right skills for tomorrow with a robust learning and development strategy
Maximize workforce productivity and efficiency ................................................................. [18]
Improve continuity of care and maximize the return on labor spend with better workforce management
The path forward .................................................................................................................. [20]
Sources .................................................................................................................................... [21]
Healthcare is one of the most heavily disrupted industries today. A host of seemingly unconnected events are converging, shepherding the industry toward an uncertain – but exciting – future. This rapid evolution is driving organizations to rethink everything about how care is delivered, focusing on reducing costs, expanding access to care, and improving patient outcomes.

One significant influencing factor is the aging population. As baby boomers reach their senior years, the strain on the healthcare system is creating more demand for care providers. In the last quarter of 2018, healthcare had become the largest source of U.S. jobs.\(^1\) At the same time, the talent pool is decreasing as skilled providers leave the workforce – according to CNBC, 10,000 baby boomers retire every day in the U.S.\(^2\)

Adding to the complexity, disruption from tech companies entering the healthcare market has forced providers to think more like businesses catering to consumers.\(^3\) Rising patient expectations are acting as a catalyst for new models of care, and organizations are expanding the reach of services to mobile and online channels, while focusing more on preventative health, holistic wellness, and population health.

Meanwhile, the shift to value-based care is requiring organizations to better track patients’ health journeys. Healthcare providers are adopting advanced technologies like cloud software, electronic health records (EHRs), and artificial intelligence (AI) to leverage data for better outcomes.

While new technologies are helping workers spend more time with patients, there is still significant strain on the healthcare workforce. It’s estimated that physician burnout costs the U.S. health system $32 billion each year.\(^4\) Not only does this harm the stability of the healthcare workforce, it also trickles down to the quality of patient care.

Healthcare organizations have an important contradiction to consider. As the industry trends toward prevention, holistic wellness, and personalized care for patients, the healthcare workforce faces rising burnout, mental health strain, and a lack of work-life balance. Given that the outcome of patient care is inextricably linked to providers, organizations need to make employee well-being and engagement as high a priority as patient care.

Put simply – the future of care must start with those who do the caring.
A prescription for the future

The future of healthcare depends on organizations’ ability to support the well-being of their people. Industry trailblazers understand that best-in-class care starts with a workplace culture that fosters employee wellness.

Many organizations are exploring technology to enhance productivity and free up time to focus on patients. Yet, the many ways technology can improve healthcare employees’ work lives are often overlooked.

Healthcare providers should consider leveraging technology not only to improve patient care and outcomes, but also to enhance the employee experience, increase workforce efficiency, reduce burnout, and control labor costs.

To make this a reality, organizations will need a workforce strategy that puts the employee at the center alongside the patient, extending the goal of holistic wellness to both the patient and the caregiver.

Why it pays to care for your workforce

1. **INCREASE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**
   
   Healthcare employees with more positive experiences at work are more likely to report significantly higher levels of discretionary effort (98% compared to 67%).

2. **CLOSE THE SKILLS GAP**
   
   74% of employees say they would be more likely to stay with an employer that provided training in AI, robotic process automation (RPA), or data analytics.

3. **REDUCE COSTS**
   
   60% of healthcare executives say they’ll save 15% or more over the next five years through predictive analytics.
FOUR IMPERATIVES FOR THE FUTURE OF CARE

Build a future-ready workforce with four key strategies

- **ATTRACT**
  Rethink the hiring process to attract top candidates

- **ENGAGE**
  Create a culture of employee well-being

- **TRAIN**
  Prepare your workforce for the future of care

- **OPTIMIZE**
  Maximize workforce productivity and efficiency
The healthcare sector is navigating an unprecedented increase in demand for services, and the workforce is carrying that load on their shoulders. To thrive in this context, organizations need to prioritize the well-being of their people. Best-in-class care happens when those who do the caring are at their best.

JARRETT JEDLICKA  I  INDUSTRY PRINCIPAL, HEALTH  I  CERIDIAN
Rethink the hiring process to attract top candidates
Ensuring you have the right people to meet patient demand is more difficult than ever with an aging population, regulatory changes, new funding models, and the increased prevalence of chronic diseases.

Widespread technology adoption is fueling efficiency and making better care possible. It’s also creating a gap between the skills providers need and those available in the talent pool, leading to a highly competitive labor market. According to some predictions, one-third of today’s healthcare jobs won’t exist in 2030.\(^8\)

To tackle this challenge, healthcare HR teams will need to rethink how, where, and who they hire. Streamlining the recruitment process will improve the quality and speed of hiring, while reducing the administrative burden on HR teams. It will also allow HR more time for future-focused activities, such as training, career development, and improving the employee experience.

**Build talent pools**

Organizations should consider building talent pools from a variety of sources to help address the labor shortage and skills gap. By forging relationships with candidates before the hiring need arises, healthcare organizations can fill empty roles faster and ensure access to the right skills.

One method is to build a pipeline straight from educational institutions into the organization. Healthcare providers can form partnerships with schools to get in front of talent early and spark interest in their employer brand, career development opportunities, and employee experience. These kinds of relationships can also help influence the education system to ensure the skills taught to students are in line with evolving market needs.

Another option is to build talent pools comprised of promising candidates who applied for roles but weren’t ultimately selected. Since these candidates have been pre-qualified internally and have shown interest in the organization, time-to-hire can be reduced when vacancies do arise.

Employee talent pools can be useful to keep track of existing workers who show an interest in changing roles or potential for moving up the ladder. These pools can also help inform succession planning strategies.

Word of mouth is a powerful source of talent – 38% of job candidates turn to friends, family, and colleagues to find new jobs, and 68% consider the same sources very important when determining a good fit with a prospective employer.\(^9\) Healthcare organizations should consider creating formalized employee referral and advocacy programs to take advantage of this untapped talent pool.
Let data drive the hiring process

In addition to finding new channels for sourcing talent, healthcare providers should consider how they can make hiring more efficient. Strategic, data-driven recruitment processes can help minimize the administrative burden on HR teams, and lessen the negative impact of poor hiring decisions.

Analytics tools can help HR teams identify and understand the reasons behind turnover, and uncover flight risks. Managers can use this information to streamline their hiring and focus on best-fit candidates, which helps reduce turnover and strengthens the workforce.

Simplify the hiring process for candidates

In a competitive labor market, organizations also need to turn their attention to minimizing candidate drop-off during the recruitment process. When talent is scarce, speed can be the difference between turning a great candidate into a new hire or losing them to a competitor. In fact, most candidates (55%) expect a two-week recruitment process.\(^{10}\)

Healthcare organizations should consider simplifying their application and interview processes to create a better experience for candidates. This includes revisiting how HR teams communicate with candidates, from setting expectations about the process to staying in touch throughout the hiring cycle. Offering a personalized experience helps keep top candidates engaged, reducing the likelihood of losing them to competing offers.
Many providers are turning to contract workers to address the labor shortage and skills gap, but that can come at a high cost. Organizations should also consider addressing burnout and improving existing employees’ engagement to reduce turnover and encourage skill-building.

While long hours and challenging work may be an incontrovertible fact of working in the sector, there are opportunities for healthcare employers to make the experience better for workers. Healthcare organizations should actively prioritize workforce health and well-being, empowering employees to have more control over their work lives.

Technology can help organizations better understand the factors driving workforce disengagement, steering them toward actions they can take to improve the employee experience.

While more efficient hiring is an important step toward addressing rising demand in healthcare, it’s not the entire solution.

Leverage data to improve the employee experience

While many organizations may primarily think of predictive analytics as a tool for workforce planning, it can also give insight into employee well-being. Managers can more easily identify the reasons behind employee turnover, and better understand which factors support sustained employment.

Workforce management tools can leverage data to show managers when people are over-scheduled, under-scheduled, or idle. These tools also reduce the administrative burden of building schedules based on complex – and often competing – priorities to more easily cater to employees’ individual situations and preferences.

It’s also important for companies to give employees a platform to voice their opinions and concerns. Engagement analysis tools allow organizations to collect feedback from people and identify patterns and trends in employees’ emotional states. With this information, organizations can build action plans to help reduce turnover and absenteeism.
Empower employees through personalization

Healthcare organizations should consider buying into the trend toward personalizing the employee experience. Patient care has already started to follow consumer trends – mobile apps being one example – and employees are looking for the same convenience at work. In fact, 56% of employees feel their employer should understand them as well as they’re expected to understand their customers.13

One way to personalize the employee experience is through self-service tools that allow people to more easily manage their day-to-day work lives. Mobile apps for swapping shifts, managing time-off requests, and viewing paystubs are great options that give employees more control, while reducing work for managers and HR teams.

Another way organizations can create a more personalized experience for employees is through benefits. Where possible, healthcare organizations should allow employees to customize their benefits packages to meet their individual needs. Online benefits selection tools help employees make informed decisions and enroll faster.

Financial stress is a major concern for many employees. In Ceridian’s recent Pay Experience Report, 80% of employees surveyed said they feel at least slightly stressed about money on a regular basis.14 Organizations should consider offering employees the option to access the wages they’ve earned at any time during the pay cycle. Giving employees this extra control over their cash flow can improve their stress levels and help them focus on patient care.

Offer opportunities to grow

Healthcare organizations looking to reduce turnover should create opportunities for employees to develop their skills. Career growth and professional development have a significant impact on employee engagement and retention. Employees working for companies that offer resources for learning – from workshops to webinars to formal classes – are more likely to feel happier and stay longer than when these resources are not offered.15

In addition to providing more workforce stability by reducing turnover, prioritizing career development provides significant benefits to the organization. Aligning employees’ performance and career progression to organizational goals helps improve operational efficiency and productivity, while improving the quality of patient care. To support career development, healthcare organizations should work to understand employees’ goals and create plans to help them reach milestones, checking in regularly on progress.

It’s also important to consider the varying needs and expectations of a multi-generational workforce.
For example, employees aged 18 to 34 primarily value new challenges and opportunities to move up the ladder, while those aged 35 to 49 have a greater focus on salary gains, in addition to challenges and career advancement.

**Optimize the onboarding experience**

Onboarding plays an important role in building employee engagement from day one, and a personalized experience can instill a sense of belonging in new hires. A well-designed onboarding process helps new hires complete paperwork, familiarize themselves with company systems, and understand expectations for their first few months in the role. It can also introduce them to the company culture, values, and business goals, helping them to understand how their work impacts the company.

Onboarding technology makes it easier for busy HR teams to deliver a great onboarding experience for new hires. Organizations using dedicated onboarding technology are 60% more likely to see an increase in employee engagement.
TRAIN
Prepare your workforce for the future
The future of care is digital. EHRs, mobile apps, and patient portals are just a few of the new technologies changing how patients access care and communicate with providers, as well as how providers track and assess patient outcomes.

This new technology-driven environment requires employees to get comfortable working with new systems and tools quickly. At the same time, patient needs are changing – and so are the skills needed to care for them.

Healthcare organizations should build training into their workforce planning to help their people acquire the right skills for today and in the future. Strategic training programs will help employees stay on top of professional certifications and gain the right skills to deliver best-in-class care, leverage advanced technologies, and become good leaders.

Rethink employee training

Employees – especially millennials – increasingly want a Netflix-style training experience where they can easily access modules that are customized to their own needs. Self-serve training can work well to empower workers to drive their own development, lessening the burden on HR teams.

Learning Experience Platforms (LXP) are becoming popular, as they allow employees to drive their own learning. They also allow for different types of programming, such as videos, short modules, or certification programs, which can be adapted to the different learning styles and capabilities of a multi-generational workforce.

Other sources of internal training include mentorship programs, social learning (employee-generated learning content), and microlearning (“bite-sized” learning moments in various forms, from videos to daily tips shared by team leads).

Some organizations may also have success retraining employees whose roles are being lost to automation by covering the cost of formal certification programs for in-demand skills. For example, Atrium Health offered its unit secretaries the option to retrain to become healthcare technicians, paying for their certification programs.
Close the leadership gap

Healthcare organizations should prioritize succession planning to help address the current leadership gap in the sector. HR.com’s recent study, sponsored by Ceridian, found that preparing future leaders is the most common reason for creating a succession management plan, with over 60% of HR professionals surveyed citing it.20 Yet, only 41% of employees surveyed in Ceridian’s most recent Pulse of Talent report said they’re aware of any formal or informal succession planning programs where they work.21

Succession planning can help healthcare leaders ensure their knowledge and expertise will stay within the organization, providing stability for the workforce and reducing the risk to operations when key people leave. This is especially important now as healthcare organizations seek to reconcile the effects of an aging workforce with a simultaneous rise in demand for services.

A strong succession plan will include both leadership and critical non-manager roles to support business continuity when employees leave the organization. Investing in succession planning will help healthcare providers deal with the gap left behind by retiring workers, and leave organizations better able to handle unplanned absences, increased demand, and employee departures.

Build a culture of continuous learning

The unprecedented speed of technological advancement today means organizations can no longer attempt to keep up by making incremental changes. Healthcare organizations – and their workforces – need to prepare for a future marked by a moving goal post. What will matter most in the future is how adaptable organizations are to change and how fast they can move in a new direction.

To make this possible, organizations should foster a culture of continuous learning. Healthcare workers need to continue expanding their areas of expertise, building new skills as technology changes how, when, and from whom care is delivered. While maintaining practical skills is still important, workers also need to learn to operate new technologies and build soft skills, such as complex problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity.22

Healthcare organizations should connect learning and development, succession planning, performance, and task management together, giving workers a clear path within the organization, and managers a roadmap to support their success. Successful learning cultures will take employees’ development goals and organizational needs into consideration, bringing together a variety of learning opportunities to help workers achieve them.
OPTIMIZE
Maximize workforce productivity and efficiency
As demand for patient care rises, healthcare organizations should invest in technologies that make workforce operations more efficient to maximize the return on labor spend and allow workers to focus on patients.

Workforce data is a strong lever to increase productivity and efficiency, but only if the organization has the tools needed to gather this data and derive insight from it. At the same time, automation has proven successful in elevating patient care by supporting workers, and it can provide the same value for human capital management – 23% of physician time is spent on non-clinical paperwork.²³

Maximize the interoperability of people data

Interoperability of data is forecasted to be at the heart of patient care in the future.²⁴ Being able to converge data from various sources helps organizations gain insight into the workforce for better decision making on the people side of the organization.

Many organizations still manage their people processes from disparate systems, making it difficult to use advanced people analytics to understand and manage workforce performance.²⁵ According to one study, 34% of organizations said not having HR systems integrated with other organizational systems was a top barrier to making optimal use of predictive analytics.²⁶

Software that allows data to be leveraged holistically can actually help organizations improve employee well-being. Dashboards can be created to uncover trends, assess benchmarks, and make insight-driven decisions. These insights can help managers optimize schedules to reduce burnout and improve continuity of care for patients.

Streamline people management processes

A study by Accenture Strategy predicts that “by 2030, 25% of current tasks in the healthcare workplace will be automated”.²⁷ Technologies such as robotic process automation (RPA), artificial intelligence (AI), and natural language processing (NLP) – like that used in voice search – are augmenting the work people do by speeding up lower-value tasks or taking them over altogether.

Investing in tools to automate and streamline processes on the people side of the business can help employees focus on higher-value work. For example, a document management system saves time and reduces errors by centralizing employee documents, files, and records in one place for HR teams, managers, and employees to access.
Technology can also improve the shift scheduling process considerably. Managers spend a significant amount of time building schedules that balance organizational needs with employee and labor constraints. According to research, “organizations using manual scheduling processes increased labor costs by 2% to 8% due to unintentional schedule padding.” Scheduling tools help managers build schedules faster, allowing more time to focus on activities like training and coaching future leaders.

Automating day-to-day tasks helps workers manage compliance within the complex system of regulations governing their work. Tracking workers’ training and certifications is a significant administrative burden for many organizations, and the penalties for mistakes can be costly. Automation also helps free up more time for patients – 63% of U.S. healthcare workers say the work they do requires a great deal of manual entry or analysis.

THE PATH FORWARD

Healthcare organizations are making significant investments in technology to adapt to changing patient expectations and the shift to value-based care. To see a return on that investment, equal focus should be put on building an engaged, healthy workforce that is prepared for the future of work.

Next steps for healthcare organizations:

1. Streamline recruiting with technology tools to make hiring easier in the competitive labor market.
2. Elevate the employee experience to retain workers and improve employee wellness.
3. Build learning systems that make access to learning easier and more engaging for workers.
4. Invest in tools to optimize productivity and lessen the administrative burden on managers and HR teams.

To learn more about how Dayforce helps healthcare organizations build a future-ready workforce, visit ceridian.com/healthcare.
Sources

1. Derek Thompson, Health Care Just Became the U.S.'s Largest Employer, The Atlantic, January 2019
2. Joel Landau, Health-care Dilemma: 10,000 Boomers Retiring Each Day, October 2017
4. Andrew Hecker, Nicole Donnachie, Dr. Lesley Levine, When Healers Are Hurting, Healthcare Hurts, Accenture, 2019
5. The Employee Experience of Healthcare Workers, IBM Smarter Workforce Institute, 2017
7. 2018 Predictive Analytics in Healthcare Trend Forecast, Society of Actuaries, 2018
8. The Workforce Imperative: An Engaged Staff is Critical to Achieving the Triple Aim, 2018
12. Lisa Abbott, Using Machine Learning and Sentiment Analysis to Tackle Employee Burnout, HR Technologist, 2019
13. Consumerizing the Employee Experience, Ceridian, 2019
17. Evolution of Onboarding Study, Brandon Hall Group, 2017
18. 2019 Human Capital Management Trends, Ceridian, 2019
19. Association for Talent Development: Upskilling and Reskilling in Action
20. The State of Succession Management 2019, HR Research Institute and Ceridian, 2019
22. Jeff Desjardins, 10 Skills You’ll Need to Survive the Rise of Automation, World Economic Forum, 2019
23. 2018 Survey of America’s Physicians: Practice Patterns & Perspectives, The Physician’s Foundation, 2018
24. Neal Batra, David Betts, Steve Davis, Forces of Change, Deloitte, 2019
28. ROI Business Tool, Nucleus Research, 2019