

Re-engineering Workforce Scheduling: A Success Story in Boosting Efficiency & Staff Satisfaction for a Large Health System

At a glance

A large mental health hospital system was facing staffing shortages, excessive overtime, and staff burnout. With Health Workforce Edge's help, the hospital system reset its scheduling ecosystem to find fewer unfilled shifts, reduced overtime, and increased staff satisfaction.

The organization used the scheduling vehicle to drive a dramatic culture change and operationalize its values.

Background

The project focused on Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Nursing Assistants/Aides. The mix of full-time, part-time, and casual per diem workers varied across units, specialties, and locations.

 **375**
Beds

 **1600**
Employees

Benefits

25-35% reduction in OT

20% increase in capacity utilization by the current workforce

30% reduction in vacancies

100% of nurses reported that schedules were fair & equitable after implementation (40% prior)

15% increase in full-time positions filled

87% of surveyed employees were satisfied with the new processes


CHALLENGE

A leading, highly specialized health organization faced significant staff scheduling inefficiencies, such as deficient relief staffing, dissatisfied staff, and excessive overtime and agency costs. Staff reported that scheduling was unfair, lacked transparency, and was used to bully some staff. An employee engagement survey showed that staff and managers were dissatisfied and blamed the scheduling ecosystem.

Baseline staffing, as per agreed models of care, was rarely achieved, and different skills were supplanted for what the staffing office could find at the last minute. Ultimately, staff began to leave the organization, exacerbating an already difficult situation.

STRATEGY

In partnership with Health Workforce Edge, the health organization embarked on a scheduling ecosystem redesign to address the fundamental causes of staff scheduling dysfunction. Key steps included:

-  Analyze current schedules to identify efficiency & utilization
-  Design master rotations to address equity issues & foster transparency
-  Design & promote future shift-filling to prevent impending short-term vacancies
-  Implement a relief workforce strategy to address vacancies, PTO needs, and skill deficits
-  Deploy unit-specific decision-making tools
-  Leverage & tune existing technology to streamline the auto-call process & increase employee satisfaction

RESULTS

- Filled More Shifts**
By optimizing the hospital's advanced shift-filling function, the organization increased its total **shifts filled percentage by 24%**.
- Improved Work/Life Balance**
88% of employees using the scheduling function state that **"improvements in scheduling have improved my work/life balance."**
- Increased Vacation Availability**
The improvements in the scheduling function have enabled 30% more vacation requests.

Ready to Transform Your Scheduling System?
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