

CASE STUDY: Transforming Staff Scheduling & Workforce Stability at Ocean View & The Birches

AT A GLANCE

Facing high turnover, agency reliance, and non-compliance with care-hour mandates, Ocean View & The Birches partnered with Workforce Edge to overhaul its staff scheduling ecosystem.

Through strategic process redesign, advanced software optimization, and predictive analytics, Workforce Edge unified scheduling operations, extended office coverage, and implemented data-driven master rotations.

The result: reduced vacancy and agency use, improved staff satisfaction, and restored confidence in operational efficiency.

BACKGROUND: ✓

For over 50 years, Ocean View Continuing Care Centre has remained committed to its mission to provide person-directed care with compassion and grace. The organization offers a supportive and nurturing environment for its 171 resident and employs over 130 direct care staff in Pickton Country, Nova Scotia.

ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONAL SITUATION: ✓

The organization experienced challenges related to excessive reliance on agency staff and overtime, which contributed to higher employee turnover and decreased job satisfaction. Additionally, they were not in compliance with government mandates regarding the minimum required direct client care hours. The staffing office exhibited organizational challenges, including:



Unclear processes



Payroll discrepancies



Absence of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)



Absence of a formal reporting structure

The scheduler's designated working hours were Monday through Friday office hours, which resulted in direct care staff being assigned scheduling tasks outside of their primary responsibilities. These issues have led to uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of scheduling practices within the organization.

The scheduler team had access to highly efficient scheduling software; however, they were undertrained and lacked sufficient knowledge of the software's full capabilities. Additionally, the organization was not aware of the more advanced features available within the software, which could have been leveraged to enhance efficiency and capacity within the current scheduling FTE.

Workforce Edge’s swift review of the organizations master schedules exposed a severely ineffective approach to scheduling and staffing of direct care staff.

Findings revealed:

- Short-horizon scheduling (i.e., two-to-four-to-six weeks out) resulting in constant, high-volume short-fill activity, never allowing scheduler to “get ahead” of the immediate demand.
- Relief needs not being forecasted or included on the master schedules
- Low-quality schedules including single shift work and single days off for part-time staff
- High variation in overcovered and undercovered shifts
- Lack of scheduling resources for after-hours and weekends
- No KPI tracking

OPTIMIZATION SUMMARY – HERE’S WHAT WORKFORCE EDGE DID:

- Consolidated two scheduling offices into a collaborative team. Redesigned the office hours to sustain existing FTE levels while increasing availability outside of standard business hours, such as evenings and weekends.
- Designed and implemented strategic business processes (short call, Advance Booking) – increasing predictability for the employees for shift filling, streamlining the schedulers’ processes, and building capacity within the scheduling service.
- Identified gaps in the utilization of a currently underused feature within the existing scheduling software.
- Met with the system vendor to discuss and implement advanced features in their software, enabling the utilization of software for advance booking and short call.
- Performed workforce analytics to create a predicted future relief model using historical data.
- Developed and implemented fully optimized rotations that promote fairness and equity, ensuring compliance with government-required care hours. These efforts resulted in reduced staffing headcount and the integration of regularized relief, positioning the organization to effectively manage future relief needs.
- Develop and implement a KPI compliance dashboard to provide administration a direct insight into organizational performance metrics and facilitate the assessment of efficiency within the scheduling department.
- Trained an internal resource on Certificated Master Rotations Design to ensure future state schedules meet requirements, budget, and Optimized Master Rotation Guidelines.

OUTCOMES

- Extended scheduling office hours (evening and weekends)
- Predictable schedules for employees, which increased staff job satisfaction
- Fair and equitable work schedules to enhance attractiveness for new hires
- Relief needs incorporated into master schedules
- Reduction of line vacancy rates to below 8% (compared to typical rates exceeding 20%)
- Decrease in reliance on agency staff
- Enhanced transparency regarding the scheduling office’s operational efficiency for administrative review