

Recruitment:
Using
Digital
and
Social
Media

Recruitment:
Seeking
Diverse
Candidates

Recruitment:
Reaching
Students
and
Local
Schools

Retention:
Using
Technology

Retention:
Advancing
Leaders
and
Workforce
Culture

Retention:
Providing
Peer
Mentoring

Retention:
Improving
Onboarding
and
Orientation

Retention:
Offering
Childcare
Wellness
Staff
Resource
Connector

SOLVING THE WORKFORCE PUZZLE

Lessons Learned
from 42 Workforce
Solutions Grants:
Year One



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Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation, we are thrilled to share with you the first results of our Workforce Solutions grants to members.

Solving the Workforce Puzzle includes more than 40 field-tested recruitment and retention ideas from your colleagues in elder care communities across Minnesota. These promising practices will help you address your local workforce challenges by sharing what has worked in other communities, key learnings on things to avoid, and tips if you want to start a similar recruitment or retention program. You can also download tools from our website to help you with your own workforce efforts.

LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation was fortunate to secure a \$1 million grant to create the Workforce Solutions Grant program. Using an Independent Review Panel of older adult services professionals, we awarded 42 grants during 2017. This booklet describes the results of the first year of activity.

We congratulate the grantees on their excellent work to-date, for their contributions to the quality of life for those we serve and for helping to create this opportunity for shared learning around one of the most important challenges of our time.

Sincerely,



Bob Dahl
Board Chair
LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation



Gayle Kvenvold
President and CEO
LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES:

Facebook Campaign Helps Minnewaska Community Health Increase Applications and Hires

In July, Minnewaska Community Health Services (MCH) will be opening a new site in nearby Hoffman and they already have applications flowing in as people see photos on Facebook of the construction.

"We've received at least 30 applications for our Housing Manager job before we've even posted the position," says Chris Knoll, MCHS Administrator in Starbuck. "And, we had 15 applications for other jobs before we started advertising."

Chris and his team (Heidi Baukol, HR Director and Shelia Finke, Marketing Coordinator) used Workforce Solutions grant funds to hire DAYTA Marketing to revamp their use of social media. MCHS pays about \$980 per month and reaches about 67,000 people monthly.

"Today, we're sending content to be posted to Facebook almost every day, and we used to post about once a quarter," says Finke. "We've moved our ad dollars from a recruiting website to Facebook ads because we're seeing a better return on that investment."

The team uses photos that staff take around the campus, pulls content from LeadingAge MN and Face Aging MN as well as the Alzheimer's Association. *"The buzz internally about our Facebook page is noticeable,"* says Baukol.



Minnewaska Community Health Services posted a job.
April 6 at 9:33am · 🌐

Home Care Director | Minnewaska Home Care

The Director of Home Care is responsible for strategic planning and profitability and is accountable for all operations and programs. She/he directs/supervises, and governs all home care programs including nursing, therapy, home care and...

STARBUCK, MINNESOTA · FULL-TIME JOB

[Apply Now](#)

Like Comment

Minnewaska Community Health Services added 2 new photos.
March 28 at 4:02pm · 🌐

We had a great time meeting the members of the community during our Open House/Informational meeting yesterday in Hoffman regarding the Hoffman Senior Living Facility! Thank you to everyone who made this event a success!

USING DIGITAL MEDIA SUCCESS

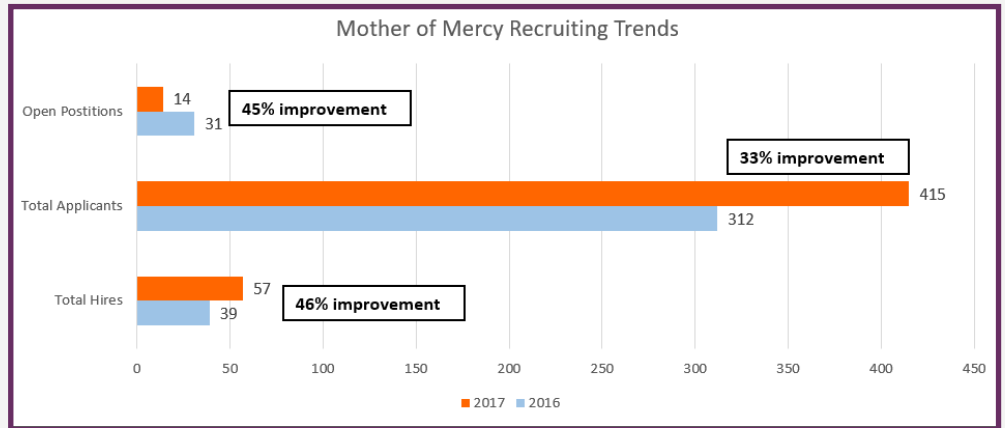
Mother of Mercy's Digital Media Plan Shows Improvement in New Hires and Total Applicants

Over the past four years, Mother of Mercy (MOM) in Albany has reduced turnover from 30% to 10.4%. Now they are focused on recruitment.

"We've learned that it's critical to invest in one lead person who can focus on your digital marketing efforts," says Dean McDevitt, MOM Administrator. "We chose to hire DAYTA Marketing to help us build our strategy and execute our plan. They are digital media experts and keep us on track."

The digital marketing plan includes Facebook, Instagram, a blog on their website, and Twitter. Jason Bergmann, MOM Foundation Executive Director, is the key internal person feeding information, videos, and stories that DAYTA then posts on a variety of digital platforms.

"With digital media, we can focus on telling the positive stories about our employees and what's happening on our campus," Bergmann says. "Also, we're seeing a new trend from our Day 1 surveys of new employees—80% of our last recruits came to us through Facebook. As an example, a new nutritional aide saw the job ad on Facebook and this was a difficult to fill position for us in the past."



Susan Roberts reviewed **Mother of Mercy Senior Living** — 5★

August 31, 2017 · 🌐

I came here as a temporary Director of Nursing over 6 months ago. Three months later I accepted the job permanently, and here's why...the staff here is not only hard working, but are so kind and caring with the residents and their families, this includes nurses, aides, dietary, activities, social service, housekeeping, maintenance and the managers. Also there are a real choice of benefits. All in all a great place to work



Deborah Hadley, Jason Bergmann, John Hoefs and 2 others like this.



Mother of Mercy Senior Living Thank you Susan! So happy to have you on our team.

31w

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES:

Improving High School Awareness of Long-Term Care Careers

Lifecare Medical Center offers Nursing Assistant classes in two high schools. At Roseau High School, it is a year-long class resulting in five college credits for a Health Professions course, high school credit for Nursing Assistant course, Nursing Assistant certification, and CPR certification. At parent-teacher conferences, Lifecare staff hear that parents are grateful for the career focus.

At Warroad High School, students study medical terminology and can receive Nursing Assistant accreditation.

From Middle School to High School to College: Promoting Long-Term Care as a Career

Northfield Retirement Community is launching an 8th grade outreach class this summer for eight students in a Career Readiness class. This group will continue into the school year to introduce younger students to long-term care.

High school students can take semester-long Nursing Assistant courses offered in the Fall and Spring with an accelerated course offered in the Summer. About 20% become part-time staff during the year they completed the class.

St. Olaf students, in a variety of healthcare majors, work as Nursing Assistants during school year and some continue through Summer break.

Creating a High School Recruiting Video Promoting Long-Term Care Careers in Hallock

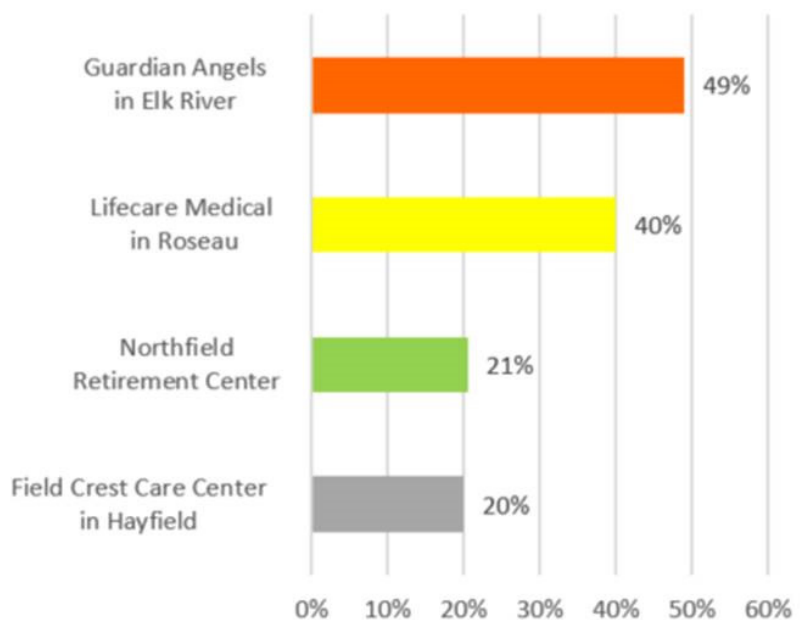
Kittson Memorial Health Care Center is developing a long-term care career awareness video with high school students to use in recruiting. It features interviews with Kittson Memorial Health Care Center staff and residents.

An Investment in Community Relations

Guardian Angels in Elk River is partnering with four local high schools to offer a one credit Nursing Assistant course that includes five hours of volunteer time at a Guardian Angels site. Schools contribute to the cost of the program.

The course can accommodate up to up to 20 students per semester and runs after school on Monday and Wednesdays for about 2.5 months. This allows students to learn skills with residents during the afternoon and evening shifts.

Hire Rate of High School & College Students Taking Nursing Assistant Courses



Field Crest Care Uses On-the-Job Training Program to Deliver Nursing Course

Administrator Cheryl Gustason worked with Hayfield High School to connect Nursing Assistant classes with the school's On-the-Job program. The school invited her to talk about the course at an Open House with parents and students. Parents were particularly interested to hear about the state-funded scholarships available for long-term care careers.

To recruit students, she brought along staff that are school alumni, so students can relate to people who grew up in the town.

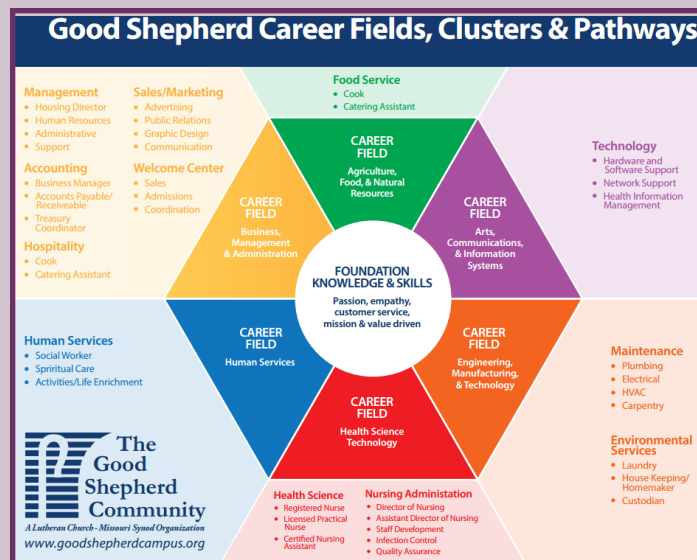
REACHING STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

Using Educators and Community Partners to Design Recruiting Plan

The Good Shepherd project team met with local educators and community partners to discuss a recruitment strategic plan and they shared Good Shepherd's need for more soft skills training for students, e.g., listening, empathy, starting conversations with older people.

This conversation led the team to change job postings based on feedback for more clarity on the "Day in the Life" of the various long-term care careers.

They also created a Career Wheel for use in classrooms; specific to these careers.



Summer Experience Camp in Two Harbors

Ecumen Scenic Shores will host an experience camp for high school students. Camp topics will include the biology of aging and dementia as well as the basics of being successful in the world of work, self-image and careers in senior services.

To help with the design, staff surveyed students about their interest in geriatric careers. Only 16% of surveyed students were "somewhat interested." Interest increased to 90% if there were employer-paid scholarships available. Students cited three reasons for lack of interest:

1. Lack of understanding about dementia and other age-related diseases.
2. Having to deal with death of older people.
3. Fearing that it would hurt to create emotional connections and then residents pass away.

New Healthcare Employee LPN Program (HELP) Developed

Mother of Mercy in Albany, with 15 other CareVentures Cooperative partners, worked with Rasmussen College in St. Cloud to design an LPN program for working adults.

Clinical Simulation Equipment Upgraded at Local Technical College

In Alexandria, Bethany Foundation funded a lab room at the local technical college that is set up exactly as a patient room. It includes a full-body patient simulator that teaches airway, breathing, cardiac, and circulation management. Audio and visual equipment can record practice session for correcting mistakes and learning from others.

Tips for Connecting with Local Schools

- Find a champion at the school. Potential partners are guidance counselors, principals or assistant principals, and career readiness instructors. Allow 9-12 months for planning and preparation before first class.
- Explore On-the-Job training opportunities for Nursing Assistant courses with high school credit.
- Consider pairing Nursing Assistant course with college credit health courses from community college.
- Offer to be a guest speaker at a Health Professions, Chemistry, or other science-related class. Bring models of knees or hips, a mannequin, or equipment to capture student interest.
- Use guest speakers from across your organization such as dietary, activities, maintenance to spice up your training as well as reinforce the breadth of career opportunities.
- Consider the pace of training and slow down to help students absorb complex healthcare concepts and new information.
- Address death and dying to promote young people's comfort level. Consider a tour of a funeral home.
- Have students do the exam soon after coursework. Provide extra skills practice to help with passing the exam.
- Use Health Information Technology to hook tech-minded students to consider long-term care careers.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES:

Evolution of an Effort to Recruit Somali Nursing Assistants in Willmar

In Willmar, Somalis are the fastest growing population segment. Rice Care Center is using the Workforce Solutions grant to help diversify its workforce with Somali immigrants.

“Working with a local employment agency and a Somali nurse that works at the local hospital, we’ve been able to hire six Somali workers out of 53 applicants,” Pam Adams, Rice Care Center Administrator. “We have learned so much about the barriers facing Somali candidates including language, cultural beliefs about care of elders, and daycare availability.

“Early on, we learned that it was helpful to have candidates watch a video explicitly showing the personal care tasks involved in nursing assistant work. This helped weed out potential applicants who were not comfortable working with opposite gender clients,” says Adams.

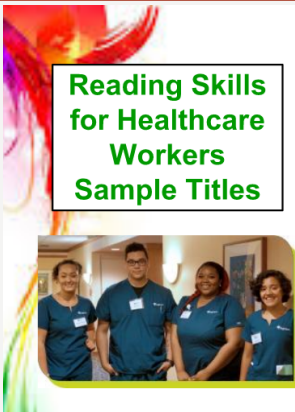
The language barrier was another huge obstacle for Somali candidates. Through this project, a nonprofit called CLUES came to Adams’ attention. CLUES works with linguistically and culturally challenged people to help them engage in the community. In Willmar, they have offered a free Nursing Assistant course for Latina and Somali people. Ridgewater College, provider of the course, also instituted a Nursing Assistant course specifically for English Language Learners.



Working with Adult Basic Education and Healthcare Literacy Tool

Avera Marshall Medical Center recruits workers that have come from Myanmar, Somalia, Mexico, or Central America. Along with other healthcare employers in the area, Avera works closely with the Southwest Adult Basic Education to train people as Nursing Assistants and to improve candidates’ English language skills.

A free online tool, called Reading Skills for Healthcare Workers was enhanced by a Workforce Solutions grant. The tool helps people build up to the 8th grade reading level required for the training in long-term care. The grant project developed and recorded 50 stories with long-term care content. They are at the 4.5 and 5th grade reading levels which help new English learners build up their skills. See the tool at: <https://www.reading4healthcareworkers.com>.

A graphic for the "Reading Skills for Healthcare Workers Sample Titles" tool. It features a green box with the title in white text. Below the title is a photo of four healthcare workers in blue scrubs standing in a hallway. To the right of the photo is a list of sample titles, each preceded by a diamond symbol.

- ♦Mr. Howe's Pneumonia
- ♦Recognizing Signs of Elder Abuse
- ♦Resident Rights in Nursing Homes
- ♦Samantha Learns about HIPAA
- ♦What is Dementia?
- ♦The Five Principles of Care
- ♦Breaking the Chain of Infection
- ♦Developing Cultural Competence
- ♦Taking Vital Signs
- ♦Performance Evaluation
- ♦Healthcare Settings
- ♦Planning for a Successful Job Search

In Marshall, Avera benefits from a nursing assistant course that they sponsor with ABE, MN West, the public school, and other community healthcare organizations.

SEEKING CULTURALLY DIVERSE CANDIDATES

Tribal Workforce Coaches Help Browns Valley Health Center (BVHC) Focus on Retention

Recently, a great staff person was having attendance problems and no call no-show issues. Autumn Roark, BVHC Administrator, suggested that she talk with Work Coaches from the Sisseton Whapeeton Oyate (SWO) Tribe of the Lake Traverse Reservation that are onsite twice a month to meet with any staff about personal or work issues. This resource will be available through the Workforce Solutions Grants.

Through this conversation, the staff person was able to open up about feeling depressed and being unable to come to work as a result. The coach connected her with the Indian Health Service and other tribal departments for help. Roark was able to adjust her shift start time to work around the challenges with childcare.



BVHC draws 25% of their staff from members of the tribe. Turnover with these workers specifically, and staff in general, led Roark to connect with the tribe's workforce resources.

The coaches focus on three main areas:

- Personal consultations about life and work stresses. Problem solving about coping, family, finances, etc.
- New hire assistance with arranging daycare, transportation issues, housing, and just checking in.
- Performance improvement coaching from an external source that reinforces manager or supervisor feedback.

In May, during Nursing Home Week, BVHC hosted a Native American Heritage Day. To celebrate, the festivities included SWO drummers, cultural practices, and traditional foods. The goal is to improve cultural understanding among all staff and residents.



The Complexities of International Recruitment

Two Benedictine Health System sites have been working since early 2017 to bring four registered nurses to Ada and Crookston from the United Arab Emirates.

Visa processing delays and clearing immigration processes now put their arrival into December 2018.



Key Takeaways from Grantees

- Find local organizations specializing in reducing language barriers.
- Connect with community groups from other cultures.
- Work with other healthcare partners to support literacy improvement for new immigrants.
- Anticipate a long wait for international nurses and build into 2-3 year plans.

RETENTION STRATEGIES:

Peer Mentor Program Helps Produce a 20% Reduction in Nursing Assistant Turnover

After 18 months, the Grand Village Primary Peer Mentor (PPM) Program is really clicking. All nine mentor positions are filled and new hire feedback is excellent. The retention rate for the first 90-days was 86% in 2017 compared with 78% in 2016. Plus, the program has contributed to a 20% decrease in Nursing Assistant turnover in the past year.

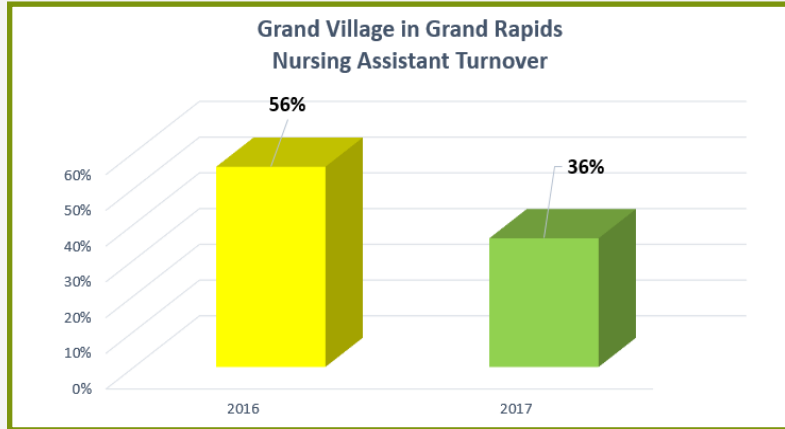
“It’s taken a lot of attention and nurturing for the program to become a routine here,” says Kyle Hedlund, Grand Village Administrator.

Jen Juntunen, HR Manager, says *“You need persistence to keep it going and to counter staff’s perception that it’s just the latest new program and it will go away.”*

Recruiting of mentors was difficult at first because staff were reluctant to take on the additional responsibility. The project team could only fill three of nine available positions. During a second recruitment push, the project team members (Juntunen and Staff Coordinator Karen Kunz) personally asked people to apply that fit the mentor criteria.

A sign of success is that mentors have recently asked to take on more responsibility for the clinical training of their mentees. They are paid \$1 per hour more for their mentor role. Kunz coordinates schedules for mentors and mentees, and helps new mentors adjust to the role.

“We also encourage our mentors to give us feedback about how to make the program better,” Hedlund says. “You have to be open to tweaking and having it be a collaborative effort.”



Tips for Starting a Peer Mentor Program

Some studies show, one in five new employees are at risk of leaving in the first 90 days, studies show. Five Workforce Solutions grantees are using Peer Mentor Programs to make new staff feel more welcome and supported during their first days on the job.

- Each project is using different training materials for mentors, yet they have common elements:
 - * Coaching mentors in how to establish a trusting relationship with their mentees.
 - * Providing structured discussion questions at regular intervals (usually 10, 30, 60, and 90 days) to check-in on how things are going.
 - * Helping mentors learn to ask open-ended questions.
 - * Role playing to prepare for difficult conversations or awkward situations. Giving mentors practice and improving their comfort level in their role.
- Consider using non-clinical staff to administer the Mentor Program because it is difficult for nurses to meet mentor needs and to juggle clinical priorities.
- Recruiting mentors has been the biggest challenge across projects. While most mentor programs pay \$1.00 per hour more for this role, the increased responsibility is not attractive to some people.
- Personally recruiting likely candidates and encouraging their participation has worked well.
- Look for informal leaders and good trainers.

PROVIDING PEER MENTORING PROGRAMS

A Variety of Approaches to Peer Mentoring

Good Shepherd Community: After a comprehensive search for Peer Mentor program materials, Allison Buersken, Assisted Living Program Director, used grant funds to purchase a toolkit from Kansas City Health Alliance for \$750. She received permission to customize the toolkit for long-term care, since it was developed for hospitals. <http://kchealthcareers.com/mentoring-toolkit/nurse-mentoring-toolkit/> It includes nine hours of mentor training as well as worksheets with discussion questions and exercises.

Mentors receive quarterly bonuses for each mentee they help. In a year, a mentor can make an additional \$500 per mentee. Payment is based on mentors completing discussion worksheets with mentees two times per month. Buersken and Jackie Barber, Assistant Director of Nursing run the program together.



Oak Hills Living Center: Two Team Lead positions were created on the afternoon shift because there are more inexperienced staff, often high school students, working during this time. Team Leads provide a 3-day Orientation & Training for Nursing Assistants. Their role is to mentor new hires and to provide training.



The Team Leads are not assigned residents. They are focused on coaching their peers, based on daily audits of standard tasks. They can provide immediate training when they see people needing help or not performing tasks appropriately.

Having Team Leads shadow all department managers and the Charge Nurse during training was important. It gives Team Leaders different views of the organization. With the Charge Nurse, they understand more about what's being done when they're not on the floor. This can then be explained more fully to new employees.

St. Mark's Living in Austin: Six mentors received eight hours of training including role-playing of conversations mentors might have with new employees. Three mentors were hired in the Care Center and three in Assisted Living/Memory Care. Some staff were personally recruited to be mentors due to lack of applications in the Care Center.



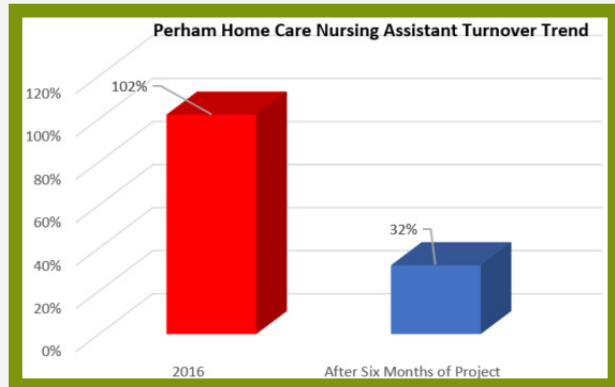
Bethesda in Willmar: Getting mentor applications was not a problem for Bethesda—they have more than 25 candidates for their new Peer Mentor program. Learning from earlier Workforce Grantees, they handed out applications personally to individuals that would make good mentors. Mentors will start in June and will be working with an average of 15 new employees each month.

A second component of Bethesda's grant is to provide a leadership workshop session for front-line supervisors and managers. Mentors will participate in the self-evaluation portion of this training, as new leaders in the organization.

RETENTION STRATEGIES: IMPROVING HIRING, ONBOARDING AND ORIENTATION

Perham Home Care Reduces Nursing Assistant Turnover Helped By New Onboarding and Orientation Process

For the first time in seven years, Perham Living Home Care is fully staffed. A built-from-scratch Onboarding and Orientation Process has contributed to this success. Before creating the new tool, they interviewed staff who found the old process was too disjointed and required too many videos.



To improve their hiring process, a structured phone interview is now conducted. It saves managers' time and ensures that in-person interviews are more productive and focused on candidates who were a good fit.

For onboarding and orientation, a consultant researched best practices and created a structured Welcome Binder with Days 1-13 checklists for completing training. They eliminated 28 hours of video training while still complying with all requirements.

The final phase of the project is to hire lead mentors to work one-on-one with new staff as they do their orientation and training. These mentors will be in charge of keeping the Welcome Binder up-to-date as compliance standards and regulations change.

Competency-Based Hiring Tools Used for New Cambridge Site

Hiring for the new Levande Assisted Living, Memory Care, and Senior Apartments in Cambridge was based on Workplace Behaviors identified by Walker Methodist as core competencies.

The top five Workplace Behaviors were: compassion, decision-making, imagination, promoting/demonstrating ethics and integrity, adaptability and flexibility.

Behavioral-based interview guides were used to ask candidates to provide examples about demonstrating empathy, working with unhappy customers, working with difficult team members, and building trust.

Making Orientation More Convenient with Teleconferencing Equipment

Two Ebenezer communities (Baxter and Wyoming) send about 20 new employees per month through new employee orientation training. They each received a grant to fund a new training site in Fridley, so new employees could avoid the commute into the Ebenezer metro training site in Richfield. Most of the grant investment was for laptops, a 72" television screen with ceiling microphones to capture audience questions, and a camera used for teleconferencing.



RETENTION STRATEGIES: ADVANCING LEADERSHIP AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

Building Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Resilience

All line supervisors, managers, and leaders at The Lutheran Home Association (TLHA) in Belle Plaine attended a two-day Leadership Retreat facilitated by Ministry Leadership Institute (MLI). Day 1 focused on Strengths Finders. On Day 2 each leader built a Resiliency Action Plan to improve their Spiritual, Physical, and Emotional resiliency. The TLHA Board of Directors is also completing the Strengths Finders training. For the first 30 days, MLI sent daily email encouragement and support. Beth Wadsley, Vice President of Human Resources, is the grant project lead.

To sustain the learning and encourage follow-through, each participant was assigned an Accountability Partner based on shared strengths.

Three participants share how the training has affected their leadership:

- » **Dawn Roberts, Director of Marketing and Communications:** Her Accountability Partner is CEO Michael Klatt, a 30-year TLHA employee. *"We start our weekly meetings by checking in our progress on the three pillars of the action plan: Physical, Spiritual, and Emotional Resiliency," she says. "It has deepened our working relationship by sharing personal information with each other."*
- » **Debra Wilbright, Director of Disability Services:** *"I found Strengths Finders to be a fascinating way to understand why we are the way we are," she says. "It has helped our team have conversations about people's self-perception vs. the reality of how others perceive them."*
- » **Karl Keup, Administrator Kingsway Retirement Living:** *"The insights gained from the training have helped my team really think about where they are professionally and personally on the three dimensions. Taking time to pause and step away for two full days is important for a leader's self-awareness," he says. "Building stronger relationships with team members is an important outcome of learning together during the retreat."*

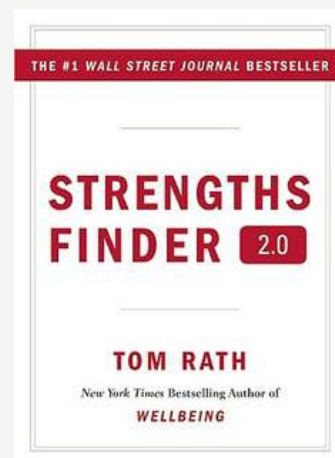
Pre-reading for the retreat included two books by Tom Rath, **Strengths-Finders 2.0** and **Eat, Move, Sleep**.

Three Approaches to Leadership Training

Benedictine Living Community in Duluth used Developmental Dimensions Inc. through Winona State to train a leadership team where 86% of members had less than two years of experience. Topics covered included: Communicating for Leadership Success, Coaching for Peak Performance, Addressing Poor Performance, Resolving Workplace Conflict, Creating a Service Culture, and StrengthsFinders.

Bigfork Valley Senior Living brought Dr. Linda Shell onsite with her Leadership Boot Camp (SurThrive Leadership) to address accountability, trust, introspection of self and communication skills.

West Wind Village in Morris worked with an Alexandria-based consultant (Bigger Associates) to provide leadership development training for all 170 staff. They believe that everyone is a leader within their organization and that this approach will build trust between departments.



Re-training on Soft Skills Helps Improve Retention

At Augustana Care in Moose Lake, senior leaders and staff trained on listening and conflict resolutions skills that were identified as key improvement areas. Administrator Tara Peterson and Christine Ripley, HR Director, continue to reinforce these new behaviors.

Ripley says, *"We've learned to listen between the lines and talk more directly with each other. We are more willing to productively work through disagreements."*

RETENTION STRATEGIES: USING TECHNOLOGY

Improved Intranet Supports Daily Communication with Staff



Communicating with staff has grown increasingly complex at Knute Nelson with multiple services lines reaching seniors in 29 counties. The Knute Nelson grant project team revitalized its intranet, KN 360, to keep increasingly independent staff connected.

“The key to our project’s success is a committed Intranet Governance team that started six months before launch,” says Katie Perry, Knute Nelson Foundation Executive Director and Senior Vice President. *“We have a mix of management and staff with a common purpose of increasing the daily use of KN360 on a phone, tablet, or laptop—where ever staff are working.”*

Seven months after launch, 94% of staff are active users.

Reducing Stress and Burnout with Digital Tools

Village of Lonsdale is updating eight-year-old technology supporting medication management, nurse calls from tenants, and documentation of cares. Tablets have replaced paper and two-way radios for improved communication in the assisted living and memory care community. *“An important learning for me is to not underestimate the amount of time required for technology consultation and trouble-shooting,”* says Marilyn Pint, Executive Director.

iPads Used for Staff Feedback

Co-workers have recognized 103 of their peers using iPad kiosks set up at three nursing stations at Eventide on Eighth in Moorhead. Employee Engagement Coordinator, Melissa Nelson, uses Survey Monkey to collect real-time feedback from staff and to report this information monthly to the Leadership Team.

“When a person is identified by their colleagues for a job well-done, the supervisor or manager hand-writes a Thank You card,” explains Nelson.

Experimenting with Telenursing in Home Care

To reduce the burden and turnover of on-call nurses, the Sleepy Eye Area Home Health service is launching a telenursing program. On-call nurses are training to use tablets and a secure link to help them observe and “see” the client in a virtual face-to-face situation. Then, they can decide if they need to come back on-site to help the home health aide.

Two Apps to Address Retention Factors

Ecumen hired researchers from St. Catherine University to find out what affects retention at two rural sites. Findings show that staff want better and more relevant information, more time with residents, and greater control over their work schedule. As a result, Ecumen is investing company funds to pilot an app called TouchTown to push out site-specific news and leader messages on work iPhones and iPads. A second app provides immediate access to schedules and HR information like paystubs. Impact on retention rates will be measured with grant funds.

Brainerd Adult Day Program Goes Digital

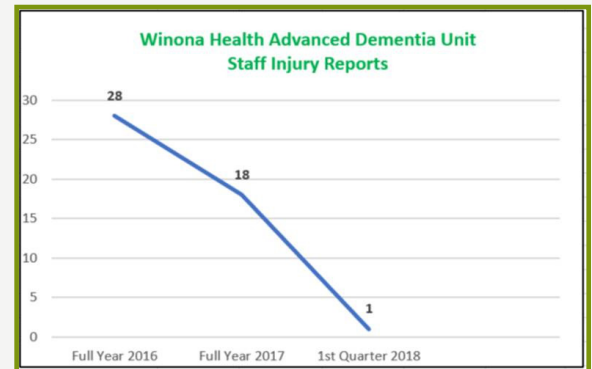
Breath of Life Adult Day Services staff now complete in-service training on-line. The small staff are getting better results and training is more efficient.

RETENTION STRATEGIES: OFFERING SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Reducing Staff Injuries in Memory Care Units

Since implementing a new dementia care program at Winona Health called Namaste Culture, staff injuries have been significantly reduced. Disruptive resident behavior has also declined.

Each day memory care residents spend time in the Namaste Care room. Staff provide healing touch, the environment is soothing, and residents get individual attention. Room walls are a calm color, lights are lower, soft music plays and lavender aromatherapy helps calm residents and staff.



Addressing the Need for Childcare and Wellness Program

At Renville Health Services (RHS), survey data showed the extent that staff were affected by local closures of childcare services. Using Workforce Grant funds, they converted a donated building near campus to an on-site childcare run by a private contractor and open to the local community.

The children visit with RHS residents regularly—participating in singing groups, morning exercise and other events. After six months, about 60% of the childcare spots are filled. Affordability for staff and evening hours coverage are ongoing concerns.

At Zumbrota Health Services, staff satisfaction surveys showed a need for ways to combat stress and burnout. The project team created a Workout and Relaxation studio in an unused basement room. More than 75% of regular staff have signed on to participate.

*Their job ads now include:
GOT STRESS? WE'VE GOT THE SOLUTION!
Enjoy The Pulse, our NO COST 24-hour on-site work out center that includes unlimited access to new equipment and two massage chairs!*



Making a Difference Beyond the Workplace

Non-illness absences have reduced by 46% (Sunnyside Care Center in Lake Park) and 19% (Pelican Valley in Pelican Rapids) since they started sharing a part-time Employee Resource Connector (ERC).

Since the ERC is not in an authoritative position, she is seen as non-threatening and her sessions are confidential. While managers and leaders can refer staff, the ERC does not report back on sessions.

Tips if you're considering this type of position:

- Finding the right person is key. It's critical that they connect with staff and develop trust quickly.
- Consider a part-time role at 10-hours per week.
- As an alternative, look at people already spending time counseling staff such as a chaplain and formalize that role for an hour or two per week.
- The ERC does not eliminate a manager's responsibility to deal with staff issues; however, she or he can point people to resources and teach them about life skills such as budgeting, conflict resolution, and problem solving.

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS GRANT PROGRAM

TOOLS AVAILABLE ONLINE

A variety of tools used by Workforce Solutions Grantees are available on the LeadingAge Minnesota website in the Workforce Center. Go to www.leadingagemn.org/su. This Project Showcase page presents information about each of the grants.

The tools described below are in the year one grant results. This section will be updated with additional tools as grant projects continue.

Recruitment Tools

Hiring

- Phone Screening Questions (Perham Living Home Care)
- Onsite Interview Questions (Perham Living Home Care)
- Frontline Staff Interview Guide (Walker Methodist – Levande)

Digital/Social Media Examples

- Application Web Page (Minnewaska Community Health Services)
- Video “Review” by staff person (Mother of Mercy Senior Living)

Working High School Students

- Career Wheel (The Good Shepherd Community)
- Survey Questions for Grades 11 and 12 Students (Ecumen-Scenic Shores)

Improving English Language and Reading Skills

- Online Reading Skills for Healthcare Workers Tool
<https://www.reading4healthcareworkers.com>

Retention Tools

- Peer Mentor Application (Good Shepherd)
- Peer Mentor Job Description (Ecumen)
- Team Lead Audit Checklists (Oak Hills Living Center)
- LPN Program: Healthcare Employee LPN Program (HELP) (Mother of Mercy)
- Employee Resource Connector job description (Sunnyside Care Center/ Pelican Valley Senior Living)

For more information about grant projects or to connect with grantees, contact Terri Foley, LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation Program Officer, at tfoley@leadingagemn.org or 651.659.1422.



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