



mhca's e-Newsletter

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Culture CPR: Administer Immediately to Survive the Great Resignation!

Guest article by Author, Speaker, and Executive Coach Jeff Whitehorn

When I ask healthcare leaders what their #1 pain point is, almost 100% of the time they shake their heads in exasperation, throw up their hands, and answer: "The lack of labor." Who can blame them? In 2021, healthcare lost 20% of its workforce. Think about that for a moment. One out of five employees didn't just quit, they left the profession. In 2021, 30% of all nurses quit their jobs. RN turnover for 2022 was 27%. These statistics are staggering. How do you staff your hospital to provide great care to patients who trust and depend upon you when the workforce has shrunk?

The Great Resignation has become one of the most powerful barriers to success for healthcare leaders. Hospitals and other healthcare entities have tried numerous recruiting strategies to attract workers to their teams. Millions of dollars have been spent on these strategies along with countless manhours needed to execute them. Other healthcare organizations have spent lots of money on retention bonuses, finding most of these to be an ineffective solution. One of the most significant cost increases has been the huge jump in

contract labor utilization. In fact, hospitals and outpatient centers have been seemingly gouged by nurse staffing agencies during these past two years.

Have these strategies been successful and cost-effective? Although some healthcare organizations have experienced some success, by far most have not. So, what must leaders do now?

The answer: FOCUS ON CULTURE!

That's right, focus on culture. Why? A better culture drives higher employee retention. Higher retention means lower employee turnover. Use your time and money more wisely. Shift your thinking away from spending more money on a low-return recruiting strategy to investing in people and culture for a high-return employee retention strategy. Culture is the cornerstone of retention.

Here is a great story from a special encounter that happened shortly before I retired as CEO at TriStar Summit Medical Center in Nashville, TN: One morning after making rounds throughout the hospital, I was walking through our physician offices tower and patient registration lobby. As usual, it was packed. People everywhere. It was pretty much like the hub of a small city Monday through Friday. As I was circling around the lobby to head back to my office, I heard someone shout, "Jeff!" In my mind, I wanted to answer, "That depends." I turned around and I was greeted by a former employee with whom I had worked at a previous hospital, Southern Hills Medical Center in Nashville, TN. It had been about twelve years since we had worked together. She was an outstanding employee who worked in the Laboratory Department.

Karen was with her mother, who was about to have an outpatient procedure. She kindly told her mother, while pointing at me, that I was the CEO she had talked about who didn't own a pair of blue jeans (that's incorrect but a lot of employees thought that because I wasn't a fan of Blue Jeans Day at the hospital!). She then said that her time at the hospital was the best job that she ever had. I asked her why. She said these words that I will never forget: "I stayed because I loved our culture." I was so honored. It wasn't new buildings and increased market share that made her stay. It was our hospital culture.

When you find healthcare organizations who have great culture, you find happier employees and lower turnover. Focus your time on recognizing your team and improving your culture. It's the best way to win in the long-run. Your staff will appreciate it, and your patients will benefit from it. Culture CPR, it's the winning strategy in order to survive The Great Resignation.

Jeff Whitehorn will be leading a session during our [Spring Conference](#) in Nashville where he will reveal specific actions that a leader must take to improve culture in order to help win the battle against the Great Resignation. Using his personal experiences from 25 years as a successful hospital CEO, Jeff will share eye-opening insight and advice that will inspire you and your leadership team. If you haven't registered

for the Spring Conference yet, you can do so now here: <https://mhca.com/conferences/conference-registration-2023-nashville>

And don't forget to book your hotel room! Our block is sold out, so please contact [Gena Matthews](#) with your desired arrival and departure dates for assistance.

A banner for Scioto Real Estate. The top half is white with the text "SUPPORTING YOUR HEALTHCARE REAL ESTATE NEEDS" in dark blue. The bottom half is dark blue with a light blue curved border. On the left, there is a Scioto logo (a house icon) and contact information for Rick Coley: Rcoley@Scioto.com, (740) 885-8164 | www.scioto.com. On the right, it says "Homes Available Now Across the U.S." followed by a bulleted list: "Addiction Recovery", "Transitional Housing", and "Sober Living".

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