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SOLVING THE NURSE VACANCY PUZZLE: GETTING PAST THE INDUSTRY STANDARD

A GUIDE TO INNOVATION
IN NURSE HIRING.

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staffgarden

Any nurse executive in the United States is well aware of the problems surrounding nurse staffing. Among these are the lack of baccalaureate-prepared RNs, the looming retirement of experienced (baby boomer) nurses, and the uneven distribution of available nurses. Agency and traveling nurses can help take up some of the slack, but the financial cost is high. Extended hiring time, or time-to-fill, is one of the few variables over which an organization can exert some control.

A recent case study from StaffGarden and Hoag Hospital shows there is a better way that can save time and money while increasing the number of full-time positions filled. The process combines the benefits of standardized electronic RN portfolios and resumes, a searchable database that can be customized to an organization's needs and a hiring fair at which to interview and hire multiple candidates in a single day.

Why are healthcare institutions focusing on **reducing** time-to-fill?

It is no secret that healthcare costs are increasing in the United States. Whether measured per capita or as a percentage of national GDP, the U.S. spends more than any other Western nation on healthcare.¹ From 2015 to 2023, health spending is projected to increase at an average rate of 5.8%, about two percentage points higher than recent growth rates.²

Human capital represents the largest portion of healthcare delivery cost. At the same time, the U.S. suffers from an increasing shortage of qualified healthcare professionals to fill the many positions that hospitals need. This shortfall is a further contributor to increased costs due to additional overtime cost, agency expenses, and reduced productivity.

In this environment, healthcare institutions must look for ways to operate more efficiently while lowering costs, especially when it comes to managing their nursing workforce, which represents more than 50% of the clinical staff for most institutions. Finding, retaining, and effectively managing an institution's nursing workforce has never been more important for the healthcare industry.

Poorly managed nurse vacancies can have a significant impact on both operations and the bottom line. Overworked staff can adversely affect patient satisfaction, while running up high costs through overtime labor. Extended vacancies can overburden existing staff and negatively impact HCAHPS scores, which are key in determining reimbursement dollars.

Every institution would benefit from a strategy to address nurse vacancy effectively.

One key indicator on how well institutions are addressing the nurse vacancy problem is measuring the time it takes fill a vacancy with a new hire. This measurement, called time-to-fill (TTF), is the time between a position opening until the replacement starts.



We believe that with the proper approach and effective use of technology, TTF can be reduced significantly.

StaffGarden helps institutions better manage nurse vacancy by reducing TTF.

What's the big deal with time-to-fill? **Everything.**

Hospitals must be well staffed and fully functioning at all times. With more and more states legislating nurse-to-patient ratios, filling vacancies efficiently is more critical than ever.

Reducing TTF helps hospitals stay up to speed on staffing and operations. A fully staffed hospital means:

- Less burden and burn out on employees
- Improvement in patient safety and satisfaction
- Improved engagement with leadership
- Reduced turnover
- And most importantly: happy nurses

These benefits translate to better HCAHPS scores!

What can acquisition teams do about it? **Evolve.**

According to Lean Human Capital's (LHC) benchmark study of 580 hospitals, filling vacancies with the right person using current hiring practices takes one thing: time.

Industry average TTF for RNs is 45 days⁴, and in some cases positions can take 100 days or more to fill. Finding qualified nurses by sorting through resumes by hand forces hospital acquisition teams to expend valuable time and energy. A lengthy hiring process increases

the average TTF for a point-of-care institution, and costs money while negatively impacting operations. As LHC points out, finding and placing qualified talent while reducing TTF requires a thoughtful and sustainable talent acquisition process, and an effective acquisition team with the time, energy, and dedication to complete the task.

When institutions invest in a better approach to hiring, TTF is reduced and significant cost savings realized.

Dedicated hiring teams are finding the **solution** with **innovation**.

Hiring nurses will always take time, but there's a faster, easier and more cost effective way to do it.

Innovative nurse acquisition teams at StaffGarden use new tools to connect nurses to point-of-care institutions. These teams research and identify qualified nurses, and help them fill out innovative but standardized ePortfolios in place of outdated paper resumes. Using an up-to-date database, employers can partner with StaffGarden to easily filter through hundreds of applicant resumes. The new technology is already beginning to transform the nurse acquisition process.

CURRENT PROCESS:

- Post open position(s)
- Contact recruiters or wait for nurses to apply
- Read individual resumes
- Sort through resumes by hand to identify prospective candidates
- Study varying resume styles to compare educational attainment, qualifications, experience, and certifications
- Contact nurses and set up interviews
- Interview individual nurses over a period of time
- Make job offers
- Hire new nurses

JOB FAIR PROCESS:

- Post open positions
- Find job fair venue, schedule and publicize fair
- Nurses show up for job fair, bring resumes
- Sort through resumes by hand to identify prospective candidates
- Study varying resume styles to compare educational attainment, qualifications, experience, and certifications
- If possible interview nurses at job fair; otherwise set up interviews for later dates
- Interview individual nurses
- Make job offers
- Hire new nurses

STAFFGARDEN PROCESS:

- Design and launch Hiring event Campaign*
- Nurses register and build an elegant and sustainable ePortfolio, which translates their resume into a standardized format
- Search ePortfolio for client requirements and prescreen nurses
- Schedule nurses through platform for hiring event
- Interview and hire qualified nurses at hiring event

*Learn more about Direct Hire Events [here](#).

What does a **1-day** direct hire event using **innovative** technology look like?

Behind our new technology there are real people building solutions.

StaffGarden's dedicated hiring teams source, screen, and contact nurses who fit the particular needs of healthcare institutions and enter each nurse's information into a database. By typing into an easy-to-use search menu, employers can peruse the database and filter through stacks of resumes instantly. In moments, the search tool lists and contacts qualified candidates. It even schedules them for hiring events.

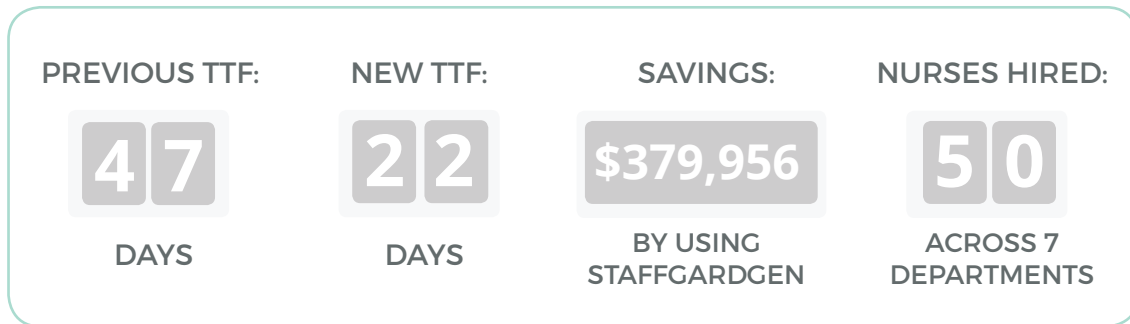
All the healthcare institution has to do is show up. On the day of a hiring event, the contacted nurses arrive, sign in and get ready to be interviewed by the institution's team. In just a day, employers can offer positions to the nurses they want, share nurses across departments, and fill openings with quality employees.

With the new technology, a process that used to take months can unfold over just a few days.

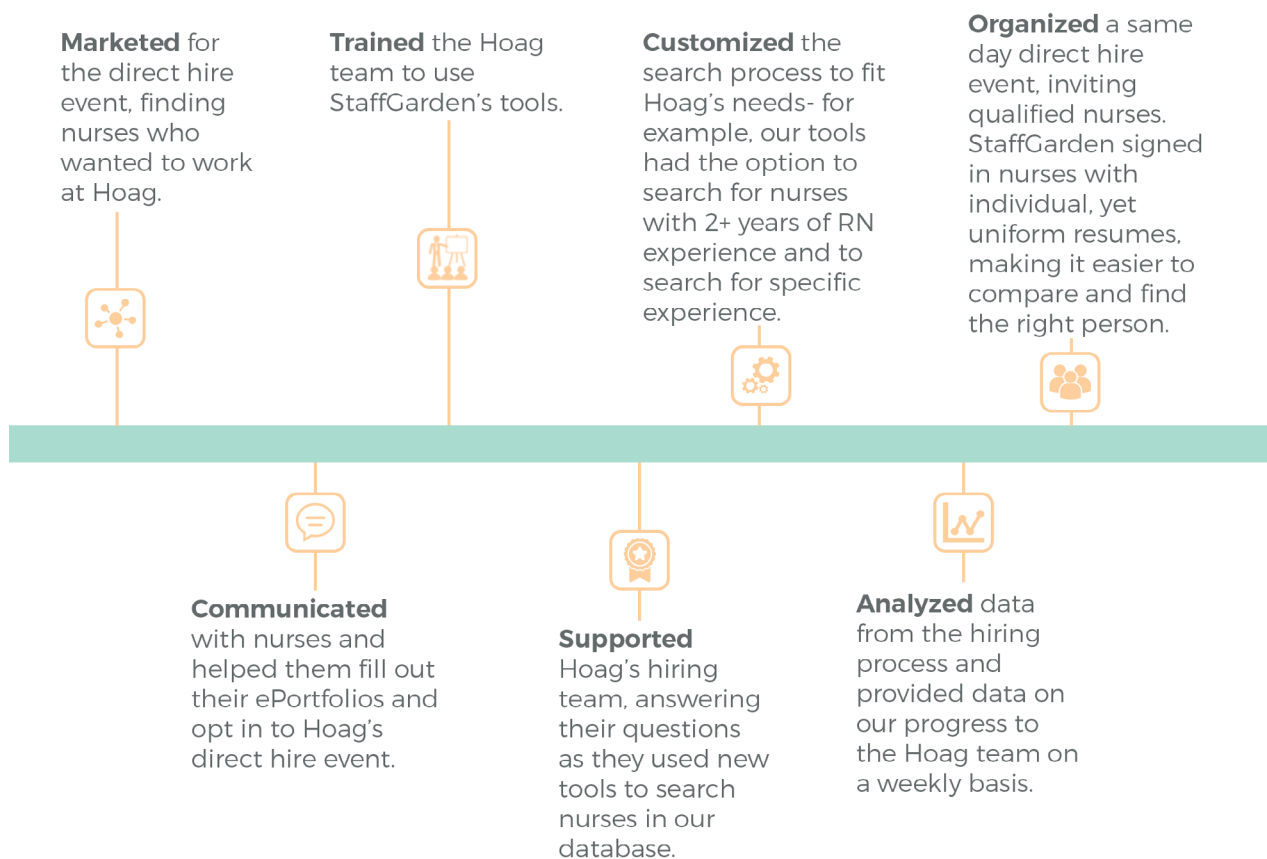
Don't just take
our word for it.
**Check out the
numbers on
the next page.**

Hoag Hospital Case Study

Hoag Hospital partnered with StaffGarden to beta test a one-day direct hire event using our innovative technology. These are the results:



Over the course of a full calendar year, Hoag could save up to \$1 million by sticking with StaffGarden and our streamlined nurse acquisition process. To get those results, we partnered with Hoag throughout the beta-testing process. Here's what we did:



What did Hoag think of the process?

“I have to tip my hat off to the StaffGarden team for building a purposeful product. Utilizing their intuitive platform allowed our talent acquisition team to achieve better recruiting outcomes more efficiently and consistently. We hired some really great, qualified nursing candidates by saving everyone an incredible amount of time in the earlier stages of the sourcing and screening process.”

- *Michael Krug, SPHR, Manager of Talent Acquisition Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian*

What to Remember

- The healthcare industry can and should decrease the length of time-to-fill vacancies.
- Hospitals should streamline the nurse acquisition process in order to do this without sacrificing quality.
- A dedicated recruitment team with innovative hiring tools at their disposal can transform an institution.
- The growth of technological solutions has reduced average TTF, pushing past the industry standard.
- The benefits of reducing TTF are far reaching and will improve healthcare, reduce costs, and help provide better service to patients.

In the upcoming year, the movement to reduce TTF will force the industry toward a higher standard of efficiency, and institutions will need to start looking toward these innovative nurse vacancy solutions.

Who We Are

StaffGarden is a marketplace that connects qualified nurses with leading hospitals to deliver outstanding patient care. Launched in March 2015 and based in Fullerton, California, StaffGarden's team has created an innovative application for healthcare institutions to search, connect, and manage nurses from our vast database. This provides them with greater exposure to qualified nurses ready for employment. Whether you're a student or a seasoned professional, in an office or an institution, StaffGarden is the place to share your education, experiences and dreams to an engaged and growing community.

Additional Resources

1. (2015) "Health Care Costs 101." California Health Care Almanac. Retrived from <http://www.chcf.org/publications/2015/11/health-care-costs-101>
2. (2015) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Retrieved from <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/National-HealthExpendData/NationalHealthAccountsProjected.html>
3. David Szary. (2015. October 14). "Healthcare Recruitment Metrics Benchmark Study-Honor Roll Winners" [Webinar]. In Lean Human Capital LLC Webinar Series. Retrieved from <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/7309051194537613058>
4. (2014). "Turnover and Vacancy Benchmarks: Final report for the calendar year 2014." The Advisory Board Company. Retrieved from https://www.advisory.com/Research/HR-Advancement-Center/Expert-Insights/2012/~/_media/Advisory-com/Research/HRIC/Tools/2010/HR-Benchmarking/2011-National-Report.pdf

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