How the right technology can simplify a healthcare worker's life

Virtually every study on healthcare worker burnout and turnover cites technology as one of the leading culprits. For example, KLAS Research released a **report** on clinician turnover and EHRs that said nurses are more likely than other clinicians to leave their jobs, heavily influenced by their struggles with EHR systems.

Frustration with disconnected processes and workflows is just one of many reasons healthcare workers of all stripes are quitting their jobs as part of the "Great Resignation." Today's workers are willing to sacrifice salary and benefits for jobs that offer more flexibility, more professional growth, more fulfillment, and more appreciation for what they do. Free movie passes and a pat on the back don't cut it anymore.

Interestingly, the common solution to counter all these new non-technology reasons for leaving *is* technology. The hospital and health system C-suite must adopt new, strategic approaches to technology—embracing an effective, objective, and sustainable workplace well-being technology platform.

> If the wrong technology can make a healthcare worker's life miserable, the right technology can do the opposite. Find out how the right technology can improve retention during the "Great Resignation."

Burned out and leaving fast

Let's start with why healthcare workers—clinical and nonclinical—are burned out. As mentioned, ongoing struggles with their EHR systems are a huge factor. But they're also suffering from cognitive overload. Whether it's delivering care or submitting a claim for payment, virtually every task at a hospital or health system is getting more complex, complicated, and time-consuming.

That mental fatigue triggers frustration. All healthcare workers, but especially nurses and other clinicians, are frustrated because they can't give the optimum level of attention and care to each task or patient. People go into healthcare to deliver the best possible care and services to patients—and their own operational and support systems are getting in the way.

Healthcare workers also feel a lack of control, whether over their work in patient care or administrative tasks or over work hours. Healthcare employers, not the employees, decide when, where, and how long staff work.

According to the KLAS report, the top five reasons, in ranked order, contributing to burnout, cited by clinicians likely to leave their positions, were:

1. Chaotic work environment
2. Too much time spent on bureaucratic tasks
3. Lack of effective teamwork in my organization
4. No personal control over workload
5. Lack of shared value with organization leadership

It's no wonder, then, that healthcare workers are quitting in droves to work for other healthcare organizations that give them what they want. Or taking jobs in completely different professions—and not coming back.

Technology done wrong

Technology in the hands of conventional thinkers will only exacerbate the situation at hospitals and health systems. Giving workers more technology or the wrong technology or technology that doesn't solve their problems isn't the answer. It's not a problem you can just throw money.

Today's healthcare workers put up with a poor user experience on their current technologies. They're frustrated by unconnected, disparate IT systems that force them to interrupt their workflows to log in and out of a system before they can continue their work. If their current systems do have self-service functions at all, those functions typically are limited or difficult to use. Their systems have no or poor scheduling tools. And their systems are plagued by poor navigation, bottlenecking essential data access.

As a result, hospitals and health systems that refuse to address this user experience will suffer increasing staff shortages, absenteeism, lower productivity, lower profit margins, and, in many cases, adverse clinical outcomes. Giving staff more point-solution technology to use without seeing the bigger picture will only make matters worse.

Technology done right

The right technology, which is the manifestation of contemporary thinking by hospitals and health systems, does three things on a single, cloud-based platform. It advises. It augments. And it automates. Let's look at some of the functionality and capabilities of each attribute.

Advises

☐ Alerts staff to remote work opportunities

☐ Gives staff access and control via flexible scheduling tools

☐ Helps staff make better decisions faster

☐ Notifies staff of internal work and career opportunities

Augments

☐ Generates actionable, accurate data in real time

☐ Is transparent to build credibility and trust with staff

☐ Makes it easy for staff to make the right decisions

☐ Speeds use with intuitive navigation and appropriate prompts

Automates

☐ Automates rote, repetitive tasks that require little or no human thinking

☐ Improves workflow by eliminating friction between disparate IT systems

☐ Pre-populates with historic and verified data to reduce rework

☐ Seamlessly runs disparate IT systems on a single platform

The right technology addresses each of the top five reasons for staff burnout identified in the KLAS report. Hospitals and health systems that adopt the right technology, as described above, will enjoy benefits such as:

• Enabling workers to practice at the top of their license

• Renewing workers' sense of purpose

• Improving clinical outcomes

• Enjoying greater staff productivity

• Enjoying greater staff satisfaction

• Enjoying higher patient satisfaction scores

• Improving staff recruitment by becoming a desired healthcare workplace destination

• Improving staff retention and reducing turnover by helping eliminate burnout

Is your new technology approach working?

How does a hospital or health system know it selected the right technology and employs it wisely? The answer will show up in the numbers almost instantly. The before-and-after KPIs should include such measures and metrics as:

• Absenteeism rate

• Clinical outcomes

• First-year staff turnover rate

• Labor costs

• Overall staff turnover rate

• Patient satisfaction scores

• Productivity

• Staff satisfaction scores

• Time to fill open positions

• Vacancy percentage

The wrong technology will only exacerbate existing workplace well-being shortcomings at a hospital or health system and will accelerate the Great Resignation. But the right technology platform will offer incredible potential to improve well-being in the workplace and reverse negative staff trends.

What path does your hospital or health system want to follow?

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