

CLINICIAN SATISFACTION

Recruiting and retaining top-notch clinicians

3 must-have strategies to boost clinician satisfaction

For any service provider, your workforce is your most strategic asset. In no other industry is this more true than in healthcare. Providing exceptional care starts with exceptional clinicians. What's the secret to exceptional clinicians? It starts with how satisfied and engaged they are in their job.

Clinician satisfaction – or lack thereof – impacts your entire organization. From recruiting and retaining top talent, to achieving positive health outcomes and a strong bottom line, clinician satisfaction can make or break your organization.

What is the risk of dissatisfaction?

The risk of clinician dissatisfaction is pivotal when it comes to being able to hire and retain good employees. Job dissatisfaction and turnover are directly linked. Consider these statistics:

- Healthcare has the second largest turnover of any industry at 21%¹
- Home health has a 66% turnover among in-home aides²
- Mental health has a 52% turnover among providers³
- Average cost of turnover for a bedside RN is \$49,500⁴

Less computer, more care

While there are a host of factors that contribute to both job dissatisfaction and turnover in post-acute care and human services, let's start with the four-letter word that seems to be associated most with dissatisfaction – time.

1 <http://www.nsinursingsolutions.com/files/assets/library/retention-institute/nationalhealthcaremretentionreport2018.pdf>

2 <https://homehealthcarenews.com/2017/07/the-big-picture-strategy-to-combatting-caregiver-turnover/>

3 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29243348>

4 <http://www.nsinursingsolutions.com/files/assets/library/retention-institute/nationalhealthcaremretentionreport2018.pdf>

From recruiting and retaining top talent, to achieving positive health outcomes and a strong bottom line, clinician satisfaction can make or break your organization.

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Overwhelmingly, most clinicians feel they are unable to provide the amount of time they'd like with their patients to deliver more quality care. That's because clinicians are being asked to do things outside their licensure like typing extensive notes into electronic health records (EHRs), mastering different technology and keeping up to date with ongoing regulatory changes.

In a recent study from the Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association⁵, 70 percent of EHR users experience health IT related stress. For every hour a physician spends with a patient, he or she might spend an additional two hours tapping data into an EHR or completing other administrative tasks.

So what can post-acute care and human services organizations do to improve clinician satisfaction?

Think better technology, training and teamwork

To help nurses, doctors and therapists embrace EHRs and the digital tools that are advancing the delivery of care, you need to make them easy to use and simple to learn.

Those organizations who have a user-friendly EHR with resources devoted to train and retrain clinicians on how to maximize the EHR, along with a team-spirited culture where clinicians can voice their suggestions for technology innovations will achieve higher clinician and client satisfaction.

Technology must help – not burden clinicians

Technology at its core is intended to assist us in the pursuit of our goals. It's a set of tools that we use in different ways to increase efficiency. It has automated and brought large-scale changes to society since the Industrial Revolution.

For technology to be successful with driving change in healthcare, the tools clinicians use, such as the EHR, must help them – not burden them⁶.

To ensure clinicians embrace the EHR and use your digital tools, three things must happen:

1

Reduce the time and effort required to record health information in EHRs

While selecting an electronic health record (EHR) can be a complex and lengthy process, deciding on an IT partner is just the beginning. In order to fully optimize EHR functionality, organizational leadership must ensure their staff are heard, involved and supported both during and after selection, implementation and training occurs.

5 <https://academic.oup.com/jamia/article/26/2/106/5230918>

6 <http://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2614079/putting-patients-first-reducing-administrative-tasks-health-care-position-paper>

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It's also critical to make sure the EHR is built to support clinicians and their workflows. If it's not meeting the day-to-day needs of your staff, anything new will likely create frustration and contribute to burnout. Although EHRs get the blame for clinician dissatisfaction, they are not usually the enemy.

The "enemy" is often poor EHR implementation, insufficient support, lack of training and no change in office workflows. Consequently, the data entry burden falls squarely on clinicians, reducing the amount of time they can spend nurturing their relationships with patients.

BLOG: [Key tips to address technology frustration within your organization](#)

To combat potential frustration and burden, start your EHR implementation process with a full review of *current* clinical workflows. Take note of how providers engage with consumers, as well as how they pull information to the point of care and document their own interactions. Users can identify areas within the process that could be improved, allowing leaders to incorporate this feedback throughout the technology search and implementation.

How can you make your organization more efficient?

Do an audit of your health IT. Think about your current EHR and the clinician's experience. Is it easy to use, adaptable and evolving to meet the complex and growing needs of healthcare? Ask clinicians what they want when deciding how to enhance and update your EHR. Give them a voice because that increases their engagement with the technology.

Highly engaged clinicians lead to improved teamwork, coordination of care and outcomes, which ultimately drives positive patient experiences.

SUCCESS STORY: [KVC Health System cuts documentation time in half](#)

Finally, remove the biggest burdens in a clinician's day: Eliminate duplicate data entry, decrease documentation time and remove click fatigue. These things are critical to increasing job satisfaction.

2

Keep improving on every technology iteration

"Implement and forget" is the bane of many operational and business processes, from service lines, to technology implementation, to recruitment and retention. Remember, the implementation of any technology, including your EHR, is only the beginning.

Always look for ways to maximize your EHR and other tools once you implement them. Just because something may not work the way you want it to the first time, don't

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dismiss it. Keep iterating and evolving your technology. That way, your staff can gain all the benefits of the technology you offer.

SUCCESS STORY: [Ohioans Home Healthcare creates a culture of satisfaction with an easy-to-use EHR](#)

3

Provide mobile solutions

To boost clinician satisfaction, leverage the tool providers are already using – their mobile phones. The projected surge in Baby Boomer seniors, lack of access to care in rural areas and a shortage of mental health providers, especially psychiatrists, will heighten the need for mobile care delivery, [telehealth solutions](#) and disconnected solutions for community providers.

With the rise of aging in place – 87 percent of seniors age 65 and older, and 71 percent of those between 50 and 64, want to age in place – healthcare mobility solutions must be established so organizations can leverage mobile technology at the point of care to treat patients quickly and accurately.

What's more, telehealth needs to be better leveraged to impact the opioid crisis. By giving addiction treatment providers telehealth solutions to conduct virtual appointments, you eliminate barriers (transportation issues, wait times, job schedules) to accessing care.

SUCCESS STORY: [Facing the opioid epidemic: Sauk County's success](#)

Telehealth gives both clinicians and patients more of what they want most – time spent with each other. With a telehealth visit, 95 percent of the time spent by the patient is face-to-face with the clinician, compared to less than 20 percent of a traditional visit, in which most time is spent traveling and waiting for the appointment.

WEBINAR: [Improving clinician satisfaction and driving outcomes](#)

Make training #1 when introducing technology

The next must-have strategy to improve clinician satisfaction, after intuitive technology, is training.

You must make training a priority when introducing technology if you want clinicians to engage with it. You can implement the best health IT tools, but if people don't know how to use them, the value is erased. More importantly, providers who aren't comfortable with entering information in an EHR are more likely to make mistakes that can affect patient care.

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Staff who are educated and well-trained in the technology they use, as well as in their roles, tend to produce better outcomes for the organization, which leads to feelings of personal success.

Equally important to training is how you train staff. [Lexington Health Network](#) has a key principle they follow when it comes to training. “We keep education personal and human when training for new or existing technology,” says Allen Pindell, Lexington Health Network senior vice president of information services. “We have EHR and technology registered nurse trainers rotating through our facilities every day. They do chart audits, proctor competencies, lead-in services and help every new hire to start their personal orientation using technology in our space.”

When new hires join, it’s critical to make technology training the first part of onboarding, says Pindell. Doing so shows new hires that technology is paramount to your organization and to their jobs.

Staff who are educated and well-trained in the technology they use, as well as in their roles, tend to produce better outcomes for the organization, which leads to feelings of personal success. This helps individuals feel more connected and invested in their employer, leading to greater loyalty. Organizations who are negligent in providing opportunities for training could see a whopping 144 percent in turnover.

| [BLOG: Recruiting and Retaining Staff for Success](#)

Collaborate, connect and communicate

Another sore point in a clinician’s day is not being able to find important information. After burdensome documentation, clinicians cite missing information or having to click multiple times across several screens to find critical information as a big annoyance. It becomes difficult to effectively coordinate a patient’s care when you can’t find relative patient information.

Accessibility to essential health information is fundamental to providing integrated, quality care. That starts with interoperable technology and open platforms that allow [healthcare providers to connect, share and access data](#) seamlessly across all settings.

| [What Is Connected Care?](#)

| [Providers access behavioral health data through Carequality](#)

Providing great care is a team effort. When healthcare providers across multiple settings can collaborate, share information and consult on best treatments, everybody wins. Patients receive better care and achieve better outcomes, and clinicians feel good because they’re improving lives. As a result, patient and clinician satisfaction go up.

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“We knew we had to make our technology more efficient for our staff, so we could help more people. That was our vision. That is the Netsmart vision, too.”

-Lori Ruckel, Ability Beyond

Ask any doctor, nurse or therapist what keeps them up at night. They'll most likely say, “my patient or my client isn't improving.” That's why it's essential providers have access to complete health histories across all care settings.

Providers must be empowered with tools and technology features that extend outside the typical EHR in order to gain a complete view of even the most complex individuals.

[Lutheran Senior Services \(LSS\) is the first senior living organization in the U.S. to exchange bidirectional clinical data with its local acute care partner SSM Health through the Carequality network.](#)

Clinicians want to ultimately save time, reduce potential errors and improve overall care. Give your clinicians easy-to-use health IT tools, equip them with human-centered training and allow them to collaborate inside and outside your organization. You'll find that their job satisfaction soars – and so will patient satisfaction.

In summary

Healthcare is sprinting to become a more digital-focused industry. In fact, many experts predict that the most successful healthcare provider organizations of the future will be digital companies that happen to deliver healthcare services. That's why it's more important than ever to make sure you have health IT tools that are intuitive and functional, so clinicians can spend more time interacting with their patients than with their computer.

Those organizations who make technology, training and teamwork their mantra will become the digital healthcare leaders of tomorrow.

After all, when clinicians can do what they love – help people – positive outcomes for everyone results.

Let's talk. Contact us.

Do you want to find out how you can increase efficiencies, boost clinician satisfaction and improve outcomes for those you serve?

Fill out this [simple form](#). A Netsmart expert will contact you to listen to your needs and discuss a strategy to meet your goals.

Netsmart helps more than 25,000 health and human services and post-acute care organizations improve the health and well-being of the individuals they serve. Our health information technology and business consulting services drive more efficiencies, so providers can focus on delivering quality care.

We can do the same for you.

