



Health Care Reform and Its Effects on Hiring, Retention, and Pay

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Approximately 19.3 million Americans have gained health insurance since the Affordable Care Act passed in 2010, according to a 2018 National Center for Health Statistics [report](#). This dramatic increase in the number of insured people and the ACA’s emphasis on primary and preventive care have created a demand for health care workers.

This ebook examines the demand for these roles and what health care companies can do to hire, upskill, and retain workers in such a competitive landscape.

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Chapter 1

ACA Spurs Increased Demand for Health Care Workers

With millions of newly insured people seeking health care services, there's been a ripple effect of increased demand in the workforce.

The four most notable effects of the ACA's passage as it relates to demand for workers include:

1

Increased Demand for Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants

Increased demand for health care services has driven up demand for physician assistants and nurse practitioners, both of whom can provide many of the same services as physicians.¹



The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects that [employment of physician assistants](#) will increase **37% between 2016 and 2026**, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. That's 39,600 new physician assistant jobs expected to be added.^{1,2}



The BLS projects that [employment of nurse practitioners](#) will grow **36% between 2016 and 2026**, which is also much faster than average. That's 56,100 new nurse practitioner positions expected to be added.²

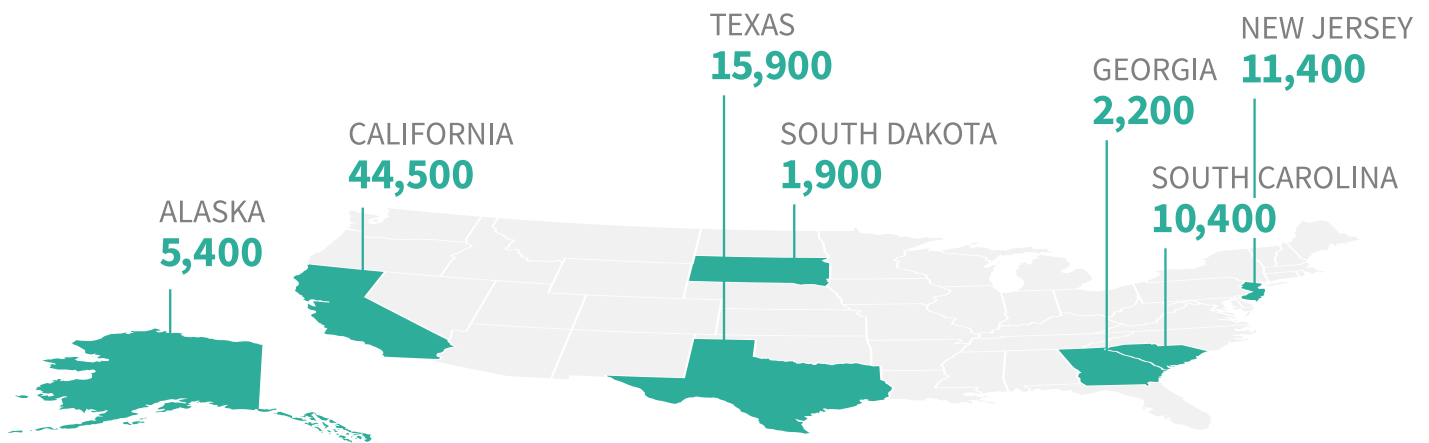
2 Increased Demand for Registered Nurses

As bedside registered nurses (RNs) return to school to fill the demand to become nurse practitioners, the U.S. will realize a continued shortage of RNs.¹

15%
GROWTH

The BLS projects that [employment of RNs](#) will grow 15% between 2016 and 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. That's 438,100 new RN jobs expected to be added in that time period.²

In the next decade, [the shortage of RNs is expected to increase](#). Seven states will be particularly affected by nursing shortages, according to a Health Resources and Services Administration [report](#) (the numbers represent the number of full-time RN deficits each state is projected to experience):



Health care providers are scrambling to get ahead of the RN shortage by offering financial and non-financial incentives to RNs, including signing and retention bonuses, school loan forgiveness programs, and college tuition reimbursement programs. See chapter two for more details.



3 Increased Demand for Medical Assistants

As the baby boomer population ages and needs additional preventive services, it is anticipated there will be an increased demand for medical assistants who support physicians and can perform clinical and administrative duties within an ambulatory care setting.



The BLS projects the [employment of medical assistants](#) will **increase 29% between 2016 and 2026**, which is much faster than average. That's an anticipated 183,900 new medical assistant jobs.²

4 Increased Demand for Diagnostic Technicians

As the ACA requires health plans to cover preventive screenings such as mammograms at 100%, the U.S. is realizing an increased demand for the diagnostic technicians who perform such tests.¹



The [BLS reports](#) that the job outlook for diagnostic medical sonographers and cardiovascular technologists and technicians, including vascular technologists, is expected to **increase 17% between 2016 and 2026**, which is much faster than average. That's 21,100 new jobs in these fields expected to be added.^{1,2}



The [BLS predicts](#) that employment of radiologic and MRI technologists will **grow 13% between 2016 and 2026**, which is faster than average. That's 30,300 new radiologic and MRI technologist jobs expected to be added.^{1,2}



The [BLS reports](#) that the demand for nuclear medicine technologists is expected to **grow 10% between 2016 and 2026**, faster than average, adding an expected 2,000 new jobs.^{1,2}



Chapter 2

Combat Shortfalls With These Hiring and Retention Tactics

Losing talented employees is expensive and time-consuming. A 2017 study by Employee Benefit News found [it costs employers 33% of a worker's annual pay](#) to hire a replacement.

As health care companies continue to compete for workers, qualified workers could have their pick of employers. The companies that offer the best working environments, benefits, and perks will fare the best.

These efforts should include a company-wide emphasis on employee engagement and job satisfaction, including:

► Tuition Reimbursement Plans for Continued Education

Empowering your staff to continue their education benefits you and them. They'll bring more education and training to their jobs and provide better patient care; you'll be regarded as an employer of choice, and employees will stay with you longer to capitalize on such a benefit.

► Career Development Programs

[Career development programs](#) enable you to upskill your current workforce. Employees are seeking opportunities to receive customized training as an employee benefit to advance their current knowledge.



► Paths for Career Growth

Like any professional, those who work in health care want the opportunity to advance their careers. A [2018 report by Global Talent Monitor](#) found that 40% of departing employees cited a lack of future career development as a key factor in their leaving. Health care employers must work with individual team members to learn about their career goals and create a path to get them there.

► Flexible Schedules and Shift Selection

A [report from AMN Healthcare](#) found only 63% of nurses are satisfied with their current jobs, and one of the primary reasons for dissatisfaction includes poor scheduling and long hours. Gallup research from 2019 finds [87% of employees aren't engaged at work](#). In a nursing setting, disengagement could lead to deadly mistakes. Flexible schedules and shift selection help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance and perform their best.

► Generous PTO

Along with flexible work options, the [2018 Global Talent Trends study](#) by Mercer found one of the key desires of employees is ample paid time off. This enables employees to maintain a work-life balance and avoid burnout. In a 2017 [Kronos study](#) of more than 600 human resource leaders, 95% said burnout was the top factor hurting workplace retention.

► A Culture of Belonging

A [2018 LinkedIn study](#) found that the top factor keeping professionals at their company was a sense of belonging. They cited the ability to be themselves without fear of being treated differently as having a major impact on retention.



Chapter 3

Step up Recruitment Efforts

Getting great talent in the door not only helps your company meet market demand for services and improve patient outcomes, but it energizes your existing team and boosts the reputation of your organization.

Companies can further step up their hiring by engaging in these recruitment tactics:

► Recruit More Men

The [number of men in nursing](#) is rising, but there's still plenty of room for growth. The Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies [found](#) the number of male nurses rose by more than 150,000 from 2006 to 2016, but still only 10% of nurses are male.

Organizations such as [Advancing Men in Nursing](#) have plenty of resources regarding how to recruit male nurses and support men in nursing to grow professionally. You can use these resources to recruit more male nurses to your organization.

► Look Out of State and Overseas to Fill Open Positions

Global online learning platforms enable anyone from around the world to pursue a high-quality health care education and get their bachelor's degree or beyond. Your organization can attract candidates from around the country and world by posting job openings with universities, working with global health care recruiters, or checking out online health care job boards.

▶ Actively Recruit From Physically Diverse Backgrounds

Special needs workers, including those with physical disabilities, [face challenges with work](#). For some people who experience medical setbacks, there may be gaps in their resume because they had to take time off work to recover.

Make sure your location accommodates diverse physical abilities. Be proactive in seeking out talent from all types of backgrounds. Empowering more diverse talent to work for you enables your organization to better recruit, engage, and retain your workforce.

▶ Become a Magnet-Recognized Hospital

In the [Magnet Recognition Program](#), the American Nurses Credentialing Center recognizes organizations whose nursing goals improve patient outcomes.³ Magnet-recognized organizations have collaborative cultures and must undergo a rigorous application process to be considered. This recognition can attract top talent.

▶ Upskill Your Current Workforce

Meet your workforce needs by upskilling your existing employees. For example, when Gundersen Health System faced a severe shortage of trained medical assistants, they formed an [educational partnership with Purdue University Global](#), who created a customized training program to upskill their workers. In 6 months, 93% of employees completed the training and moved into medical assistant positions. [Read the Gundersen Health System case study](#).



A photograph showing four healthcare professionals in a meeting. On the left, an older man with grey hair and a beard is looking towards the center. Next to him is a younger man with dark hair and glasses, wearing blue scrubs. In the center, a man with a beard and dark hair, wearing a white lab coat over a blue shirt, is gesturing with his hands while speaking. On the right, a woman with dark hair is partially visible, looking towards the man in the lab coat. They are all in a clinical setting with blurred background elements like shelves and equipment.

Chapter 4

Identify the Obstacles to Job Satisfaction—and Fix Them

Troubleshoot unresolved issues within your organization. What's making people feel unsatisfied and unrewarded at their jobs? Once you find out their grievances, you can then begin developing a solution. Improve the situations that are causing them concern.

One way to identify areas of concern is to develop an anonymous employee survey. You can use a free form like [Google Forms](#) to create it.

Questions could include:

- ▶ Do you feel that information is shared openly and communication is encouraged?
- ▶ Do you receive the training you need to perform your job well?
- ▶ Do you have the tools you need to perform your job efficiently?
- ▶ Do you have adequate opportunities for professional growth and development?

You want to get as close to full participation as possible, so motivate your team to respond. Consider offering prizes such as gift cards to be awarded to several random responders, so you get more feedback.



Chapter 5

Pay Competitive Wages

Across all demographics, salary and benefits rank as the two most important factors when seeking a new employer, according to a [report from Randstad](#).

Are you paying your staff adequately? How worthy an offer is will depend on a variety of factors, including education, experience, referrals, how the employee fits with the organizational culture, and more.

If you're underpaying, you're doing a disservice to your organization. Health care organizations will have to offer competitive salaries to attract workers and keep them.

A [LinkedIn report](#) shows 30% of the workforce is made of active job seekers, and 87% of the overall workforce is open to new job opportunities. You don't want to lose your top talent because they're recruited by a better-paying employer.



If you realize you're underpaying employees, increase their compensation to or above the industry standard as soon as possible—competitive compensation is one of the best ways to keep your staff on board.

Invest in Your Health Care Employees: Offer Workforce Development

Workforce development through specialized health care training is a way to show employees you're invested in them while you strengthen your operations. Employees get to learn critical skills at no cost to them. You prepare your staff for what's ahead in the medical field and help them grow their careers.

Corporate learning programs such as the ones offered by Purdue Global enable health care companies to:

- Attract top talent, due to the appeal of training opportunities
- Upskill employees, promote from within, and cut down on turnover losses
- Retain your best employees by giving them something valuable that also helps them in their jobs

Learn more about the [workforce development solutions from Purdue Global](#).



IMPORTANT INFORMATION: PLEASE READ

- 1 Purdue Global cannot guarantee employment or career advancement. Additional certification or licensing may be required to work in certain fields. Physician assistant and diagnostic technician are not outcomes of any Purdue Global program and require additional training and state-approved higher education that is not offered by Purdue Global.
- 2 National long-term projections may not reflect local and/or short-term economic or job conditions, and do not guarantee actual job growth.
- 3 The Magnet Recognition Program® is a registered trademark of the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

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