Hallmark
Healthcare Workforce Technology

CASE STUDY

How a large multi-state health system with 90+ hospitals enabled dramatic workforce growth even while cutting agency costs by half.
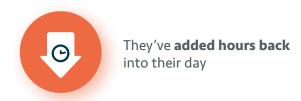
Problem: The multi-state health system with 91 hospital sites was growing rapidly and struggling to contain both labor and operational costs, while meeting all staffing needs.

Solution: They initially deployed Hallmark's IRP to better handle their in-house float pool. Then, they added their VMS to manage agency sourced contract nurses. With the two platforms working in tandem, they've been able to quadruple their workforce management program, slash agency spend and increase operational efficiencies.

Benefits: Cost savings: They've cut agency spend by half. Time savings: They've added hours back into their day from time freed up with the system. Scalability: They can grow their program rapidly with no fear their workforce management program will fall behind. Better placements: The ability to interface directly with agencies has facilitated greater success in those relationships.

They've cut agency spend **by half**

They've **added hours back** into their day

"We're at a 97% fill rate and 20 days to fill right now with Hallmark's technology. I would say those are awesome numbers."

–Director, Float Pool Program

Serving 30 million people across 22 states through 91 hospitals, the health system was facing a serious challenge. Their workforce of per diem, contingent, and contract nurses was growing fast – from 350 resources to over 1,400 in just two years – and their previous approach to managing this group was starting to hit the limit of its capabilities. As a result, managing these resources was becoming increasingly unwieldy and expensive.

The organization turned to Hallmark for help. They began by deploying the Internal Resource Pool (IRP) software to manage all their float pool scheduling and deployment. The health system then added the Vendor Managed Solution (VMS) for a complete, end-to-end workforce management solution that enabled them to effectively source contract and travel nurses through an agency panel of their choosing. With both platforms working together, the health system could use their own float pool as their first choice to fill open needs and only seek external agency help when internal options had been exhausted. That significantly brought down agency spend.

> "I would not be able to have a central staffing function without a tool like this. With it, a team of 11 can manage regional scheduling for 1,400 colleagues at 91 sites."

Challenge:

Rapid growth was putting their manual workforce management system to the test, and it just couldn't meet their needs.

The health system's Float Pool Program Director says their previous approach to managing open needs was too labor- and time-intensive to scale along with that growth. Their team manually maintained nearly two dozen different lists of open needs, depending on role and location. Originally, this approach helped them ensure all needs were covered, but it wasn't a scalable system. Worse, when they needed to move open needs from one list to another, it duplicated effort and sometimes resulted in double-counting. **"We knew we weren't going to get more FTEs as far as administrative support to do this type of work," says the Program Director, "so we needed a better tool that would allow us to be more efficient with our current staff."**

They initially considered their core scheduling software but found it couldn't handle either internal or external contingent resources effectively. They were trying to build a per diem pool, and the core software just wasn't designed for that function.

Solution:

"The only way that we've been able to effectively handle larger volumes of staff and to be able to manage them is with Hallmark, which allowed us to accommodate that massive growth."

"We manage a 24/7 staffing function that does all of the scheduling for all of the regional teams for [our program] across the country," says the Program Director. "And we're able to do that because we have tools like this. It enables us to see all schedules, plus it integrates with our core scheduling software. That way, the local sites know what they have scheduled as well."

Hallmark's contingent labor platform not only automated the actual sourcing and scheduling of nurses, it provided almost any data, reporting, or insight the health system's team needed. They could see what percent of needs they filled versus what agencies filled by department, or they could pull out spend and hours worked. Plus, they had the data they needed to support their requests to senior leadership for additional resources.

This platform was easily able to accommodate the total size of the health system. If every facility had used different software or a different approach, it wouldn't have even been feasible to manage their total workforce because it would require too many people.

"With Hallmark, we get back more time in our day," says the Program Director. "We can reallocate those hours that were spent just entering data and managing open needs. I would not be able to have a central staffing function if I didn't have a tool like Einstein."

Challenge:

Labor spend was escalating commensurate with program growth, resulting in high labor and agency spend over time.

The health system's fantastic growth demanded more than just increasing labor and time from the float pool administrators. The Program Director estimates that their organization would have ended up having to field at least 70% or more of their open roles by agency just to keep up with their increasing staffing needs. The pandemic would likely have pushed that even further. **"If we didn't have 1,400+ nurses in our program being managed through Hallmark's contingent labor platform, then we would be using 10 times more agency,"** she says.

Solution:

"With Hallmark, the health system minimizes the amount of agency they use; and what agency they do use is consistently cost-competitive compared to their previous MSP."

"Since we utilize the combined Hallmark IRP/VMS software platforms to deploy our own resources, we're able to monitor and control the needs coming into us because we're our own first vendor," says the Program Director. In other words, Hallmark gives the health system the option to fill open roles internally before turning to an external source.

The Float Pool Program Director states that even the regional sites that have been most challenged by the pandemic have been able to cut agency in half. "We haven't entirely eliminated it across the system, but we've definitely been able to cut it down significantly. If we didn't have this platform, our spend would probably be twice what it is today."

It's not just cutting costs, though. Reduced labor spend wouldn't mean much if they weren't solving the underlying workforce issues. Hallmark has helped by enabling the health system to cultivate more direct relationships with their vendors. That, in turn, allows the system to be a higher priority for those agencies. "I think it's made a huge difference to the agencies we work with," says the Program Director, "because they can talk to us directly." In turn, those direct relationships translate into faster fill rates with highly qualified personnel at more competitive rates.

"We have cut agency spend in half because we're cutting out the middleman."

In Summary

The health system was rapidly growing and lacked a system that could adequately meet their labor management needs. They found a solution with Hallmark, which could deliver tangible benefits like reduced agency spend, reduced labor and administrative time, and better relationships with staffing vendors. Even better, Hallmark has positioned them for success in the future, with work underway on integrating the system with the organization's own internal health dashboards, which they use to monitor status across all their sites. By feeding Hallmark's contingent labor platform data directly in there, they can share the benefits outside of the staffing function. "Hallmark has done an incredible job of helping us utilize the system and genuinely listening to us about what we need," the Float Pool Program Director says. "I want a technology that is adaptable to meet my needs. And that is the biggest reason that I like using it."

For more information about Hallmark's contingent labor platforms, visit hallmarkhcs.com.

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At Hallmark, we partner with healthcare organizations to overcome their labor-related challenges. From talent sourcing and deployment to provider compensation and contracting, our workforce management platform unlocks essential data, improves access to talent, drives operational efficiency, and delivers substantial cost savings. Through our unique blend of technology, strategy, service, and partnership, we empower healthcare organizations to focus on their core purpose: lifesaving patient care.