

CASE STUDY

How New Hampshire's only academic health system and the state's largest private employer used Hallmark's contingent labor platform to meet acuity and retain patients.

Problem: Faced with an inability to staff sufficient nurses to meet patient acuity, they were losing thousands of patients annually to other major medical centers.

Solution: Hallmark worked with the health system to design a new system staffing office with the contingent labor platform to manage contingent and contract resources across all system sites.

Benefits: Cost savings: As much as \$6.5 million in direct savings in the first 18 months. Labor savings: Significant operational efficiencies. Resiliency: An ability to better weather unforeseen events, like the pandemic.

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"For the staff who run the office and administer the program, the efficiencies are huge."

—Melissa, Director of Nursing

In 2015, this New Hampshire-based health system was losing thousands of patients a year to medical centers in the Boston area. Due to major staffing shortages, the system was struggling to meet census and keep local patients in their community. With fewer open beds in local affiliate sites, more patients were being transferred to their facilities, which in turn led to fewer open beds there. That meant more patients were leaving the system altogether. Simultaneously, the cost of staffing nurses was skyrocketing, losing the system more money even as it was losing patients.

To correct this vicious cycle, the health system wanted to establish a system staffing office that could place the correct clinical nursing staff where needed to manage the patient's acuity level and find ways to combat rising external agency costs. Melissa was placed in charge of that effort; using Hallmark's IRP as the technological core of the new staffing office, she and her team created an internal float pool that could manage all relationships, standardize practices, and work equally well in meeting staffing needs at any and all locations. The team rolled out Hallmark to manage all contingent resources clinically across all sites, including ambulatory settings. After, the health system reported a savings of over \$6M in workforce labor cost reductions.

"If we'd tried to do everything in the current scheduling system, we'd probably only get a tenth of the amount of actual productive hours."

-Melissa, MSN, RN, NE-BC, Director of Nursing

"I think that the FlexChoice program and the timing of its inception was really helpful in supporting the system that our organization has now become," says Melissa, Director of Nursing.

Melissa joined the program specifically to operationalize the new FlexChoice staffing system using Hallmark's IRP software as its core. In fact, she says the FlexChoice program was one of the first ways that the organization began behaving like a true system with a shared group of nursing staff floating through the entirety of the system.

The newness of the program brought its own challenges: cultural resistance, misunderstandings about why the existing core scheduling program couldn't replicate the Hallmark functionality, and the need to satisfy nursing leaders with staff that was qualified and up to their standards.

"Luckily, we got some good wins once we launched, in that we did get very good nurses," says Melissa. In fact, she says the appeal of the program to nurses was a critical component of its success. "That success at the start of the program then allowed us the time and room to continue to grow and become even more successful."



For one, they've significantly reduced manual labor and operational inefficiencies. She cites the ability to communicate with staff members automatically and to match up skill with need, shift timing, and credentials while making it easy for nurses to enter what and when they want to work. "It wouldn't be possible without Hallmark to run our program the way we do, which is how we want to run it because it's so successful," says Melissa.

And of course, there are the cost savings. By being able to turn to an engaged, highly flexible internal float pool before resorting to agency or overtime, the system saved upwards of \$6.5 million during the first 18 months.

Melissa says the program was so successful in this regard, she no longer even prepares cost savings reports. "Probably two or three years ago, I stopped doing the quarterly reports of our cost savings because we don't need to prove ourselves anymore. We've proven ourselves invaluable to the system."

Results In Their Own Words:



Speed

"We got some good wins once we launched, which let us grow and become more successful."



Nurse Relations

"The nurses who use it love the app, the messaging capabilities, and the flexibility."



Flexibility

"The flexibility of the system has really allowed us to grow the staffing program seamlessly."



Efficiency

"The system is efficient enough that we are able to book almost every hour."

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





At Hallmark Health Care Solutions, 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.

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