

Spring 2024 CHRO Roundup

March 4-6, 2024 | New Orleans, LA

The Health Management Academy's CHRO Forum met in New Orleans in March 2024, convening Leading Health Systems and Industry Partners to discuss their most pressing challenges, successes, and opportunities for partnership. Below is a quick recap of key topics discussed.

1.

Health systems are relying on a combination of short and long term strategies to rebuild the workforce pipeline

- While nursing shortages have started to improve, health systems are still combating retention challenges for allied health and entry level roles.
 - CHROs indicated that average nurse turnover was 13%, while average turnover in entry level and allied health roles were around 30%.
- Health systems have made investments in long term strategies to reinvigorate the healthcare workforce pipeline (e.g., partnerships with universities and high schools, etc.) but in the meantime, are also relying on some near-term strategies to sustain their workforce, including:
 - Using DOL workforce grants to implement 16-week apprenticeships for MA, EMT, Coder, Pharmacy Tech, and other allied health roles.
 - Relying on contingent staff, internal float pools and traveler programs to address the most urgent shortages. Some health systems have found success with recruiting contracted staff into permanent roles, with one CHRO stating that a third of their nurses/entry level roles were recruited from temporary positions.

2.

Retention efforts are focused on individualized leadership development and skill building

- CHROs agree they have to be more proactive in growing their employee base compared to years past.
- Therefore, health systems are implementing leadership development and skill building programs that will keep employees engaged and help them identify a career path at the health system.
- Notably, health systems are developing more individualized leadership and skill building programs.
 - One health system's leadership program focused on understanding an individual's competencies and building a growth plan that focused on their strengths and how they would fit within the executive team.
 - Another health system provides career coaching to entry level staff to help them develop their career path and future opportunities internally. Depending on the individual's career goals, they are given specific guidance on where to grow their skillset and are supported by their cohort.
- To successfully execute individualized learning programs, health systems are also looking at digital platforms that centralizes workforce data to provide a holistic view of an employee's performance to evaluate the best career path or leadership role for them.

3.

CHROs are spearheading the messaging needed to adopt new technology

- As health systems become more tech enabled, CHROs are playing a significant role in change management by developing the messaging needed to get employees on board with adopting new technology.
- One CHRO stressed that the messaging on new tech needs to clearly state the rationale for adoption and how it will impact employees' daily tasks.
 - When their health system started piloting AI enabled documentation and inbox messaging tools, the messaging focused on how these tools will give providers more time with their patients than on time consuming administrative tasks.
- By positioning the new tech as an asset, care teams were open to pilot the tech and see the benefits for themselves.

4.

CHROs are working with marketing leaders to develop an identity that resonates with employees.

- Health systems recognize that their organizational culture, including aspects like local ownership, institutional knowledge, and community involvement, plays a significant role in shaping their brand image.
- HR and marketing leaders are collaborating to create stronger alignment of brand identity and organizational culture, with the goal of creating a better aligned organization with an ethos that sustains employee engagement and attracts new employees.
- CHROs agreed there needs to be a human-centered approach that ensures employees' voices are heard and incorporated into decision-making processes.
 - Creating an environment that employees will engage in can be done in various initiatives, such as communication toolkits, experiential events for new graduates, and innovation accelerators.