

CNA Turnover Study

SEMCO (Systematic Empowered Community Training): An evidence-based group training based on our biogenetic need for Membership, empowerment and meaning.

Despite popular belief, research has shown CNA pay is not a valid predictor of turnover or turnover intent. Research has shown that the best predictor in increasing retention is the development of a positive and supportive environment. An environment that embodies a sense of meaning, membership, and empowerment; the foundations of the SEMCO process.

The problem: CNA turnover rates are incredibly high and continue to rise.

Certified nursing assistants create a backbone for healthcare facilities; it is worth making the effort to keep them on the job.^[3] Unfortunately, the need for CNAs continues to rise with the occupation growing at double the economy-wide average rate, with 1.8 million CNAs needed by 2022, up from 1.4 million in 2013.^[2] Coupled with the similarly increasing turnover rate from 22.9 percent in 2012 to 27.5 percent in 2013, CNA turnover is becoming increasingly problematic.^[1] In fact, according to one survey, "Although direct care workers report relatively high satisfaction with their work, one in four CNAs reported looking for another job at the time of the surveys."^[4] The direct cost of turnover is also troublesome with each turnover costing around 16% of their salary, totaling an average of \$3600/CNA.^[3] Moreover, CNA turnover has a significant effect on employee morale. Constant turnover looks bad to potential employees, affecting the business's ability to keep talent at most critical care level.^[3] Turnover negatively affects patient service and comfort, which was not considered in the published turnover cost. Supporting that premise, research shows that nursing homes with high CNA turnover had significantly higher rates of low-risk pressure ulcers, pain, and urinary tract infections than those with low CNA turnover.^[5]

Reasons for turnover:

Contrary to popular belief, pay was not a predictor of turnover intent or turnover.^[6] CNAs have an increasingly stressful job that is both mentally and physically draining. It is common for CNAs to feel burnt out or worn down. Typically burnout doesn't result from stress alone, but from fatigue and a sense of futility.^[12] CNAs have a bigger need than most to know that their work matters, that it's recognized and valued. Why? By nature, they're more sensitive to empathic recognition, and feel disenfranchised when they don't receive the recognition they've earned. High retention correlates with continual recognition and encouragement.^[7] A group of CNAs that were surveyed demonstrated that CNA turnover can be traced to a few core issues including stressful conditions and non-supportive relationships with management, which often results in feeling undervalued. The key to success can be as simple as the relationship between management and their employees. 1,780 surveyed RN's claimed that management support was lacking even in the nursing field. The RNs clarified that their unit had problems with leadership, high turnover rates, staffing issues, lack of physical supervisor presence, and failure to address problems in the workplace.^[11]

Solutions:

In 2014, the Liautaud Institute discovered that humans have a biogenetic need for membership, meaning, and empowerment. The Liautaud Institute has adapted these three needs into a program entitled SEMCO: Systemic Empowered Communities. There is an ongoing culture shift to bring the information to the source; to empower employees in the new age of participation. Participation age companies make higher profits, are more stable, have more cross-trained people, exponentially higher Stakeholder satisfaction and retention, and great longevity.^[19] A constant stream of top performing companies such as Zappos, 3M, and FedEx are turning towards self-managed teams by delegating authority and work improvements to their staff. The results? Zappos expected operating profits for 2015 are \$97 million, an increase of 78% from 2014, 3M's Hutchinson facility increased production gains by 300%, and FedEx cut service errors by 13%.^{[21][22][23]} Recent research has shown that CNAs are more likely to stay and grow in their jobs if they enjoy a supportive community.^[12] In general, the research indicated that workers remain with this profession because they consider their work important and valuable. Not surprisingly, employee retention improves when workers are treated in kind as important and valuable.^[10] The most important indicator of CNA retention is their working environment. Therefore, there must be an increasing emphasis on the importance of creating a positive and supportive working environment for CNAs.^[9] For such environments to be effective, it is the teamwork that stabilizes patient care and retention. That is difficult to master when the team partners keep changing.^[3] CNA turnover also has a significant effect on employee morale. Working with people you know creates a more friendly work environment. This leads to improved job performance, increased support from coworkers, and thus, higher employee retention.^[3] Findings related to social support indicated that interpersonal exchanges with coworkers and supervisors may enhance security, mutual respect, and positive feelings—which helped to reduce stress.^{[11][13][14][15][16]} Similarly, burnout and work stress were reduced when administrators created work environments that provided staff with access to opportunity, information, resources, and support—the features of empowerment.^{[17][18]}

Wage is not the most important factor in determining employee retention. It is the creation of a supportive and positive community in which CNAs can feel secure, empowered to make important decisions, and ability to find meaning and value in their work each day.

Recommendation:

Offer all CNAs the opportunity to get certified in Emotional Intelligence from Liautaud Intitutute, Liautaud Graduate School of Business, University of Illinois at Chicago, by volunteering to attend classes on their time off, led by Institute Moderator. Graduate CNAs receive a pay increase upon graduation, and an annual increase.

Works Cited

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