



Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO): Helping Healthcare Organizations Stay Focused on Patient Care

Healthcare organizations struggling to meet critical staffing needs are now using a method that other industries have relied on for years: recruitment process outsourcing, or RPO.

RPO is an integrated talent model approach in which an external service provider partners with an organization's recruiting and human resources department to hire candidates quickly and efficiently while lowering costs and ensuring a good culture fit.

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– **Dan White**, President, Strategic Workforce Solutions, AMN Healthcare

"The number one pain point with healthcare organizations today is the supply and demand imbalance," said Dan White, President, Strategic Workforce Solutions, AMN Healthcare. These organizations are staffing up, because they're providing care for more patients, due to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and aging Baby Boomers, or they're offering additional services or clinical specialties.

At the same time, he said, healthcare organizations are experiencing turnover based on increased competition, clinician shortages, and nursing retirement. In fact, 62% of RNs over 54 say they are thinking about retirement and most say they plan to retire within three years, according to the 2015 Survey of Registered Nurses by The Center for the Advancement of Healthcare Professionals at AMN Healthcare.

The explosion of RPO

For large healthcare organizations and small independent rural hospitals, "the whole concept of augmenting and outsourcing the recruiting process has become very attractive," White said. "An RPO team can surge when you need to surge and back off when you need to back off. That not only hastens the hiring process and proves more efficient but also can make financial sense. Finding quality candidates who can provide quality care is also a major factor."

“An RPO focuses on hiring candidates with the right skills, the right behaviors, and also the right culture fit,” White said. “Culture fit is vital because it means that a clinician is more likely to stay with the company, which improves quality of care and employee retention.”

RPO first surfaced in telecom in the 1990s, then exploded after the Great Recession in other industries, such as finance, insurance, and oil and gas, White said. These industries needed to be agile and flexible when it came to recruiting, and RPO helped them.

While healthcare was initially slow to adopt RPO, circumstances have changed. In the last several years, many hospital systems have consolidated, and their operating budgets have grown exponentially. The new, much larger organizations drew leaders from non-healthcare Fortune 100 companies, who brought with them best practices in hiring and recruitment, plus the operational courage to effect change, such as implementing RPO.

Lower costs and improved quality

Working with a healthcare organization’s HR department, the RPO team focuses on the day-to-day tasks related to recruiting candidates so the HR department can focus on strategic initiatives.

Using RPO can also lower hiring costs by providing the most advantageous balance of permanent and temporary staffing, which

solidifies an organization’s staffing plan, White said. RPO can also lower costs by reducing the number of days it takes to fill a position, reducing the lost productivity that a long position vacancy can cause.

For example, a community-based, not-for-profit health system needed to care for a rising number of patients while simultaneously staffing up a new surgery center, but it had several hundred requisitions open for more than 100 days. After the health system decided to bring in an AMN Healthcare RPO team, it reduced its requisition backlog by 15% in the first month, decreased its reliance on temporary workers, and is on target to fill a total of 700 positions during the three-year partnership.

While lower costs and speed to hire are clear benefits to using an RPO, there are other advantages, too. “An RPO focuses on hiring candidates with the right skills, the right behaviors, and also the right culture fit,” White said. “Culture fit is vital because it means that a clinician is more likely to stay with the company, which improves quality of care and employee retention.”

To learn more about AMN RPO, call **(866) 437-5815** or visit AMNHealthcare.com/rpo



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