

CASE STUDY

VNA & Hospice: Meeting the Home Care Growth Challenge

Located in vibrant, culturally diverse Northampton, Massachusetts, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice is a mid-to-large size healthcare facility that has been recognized as being in the top 25 percent of U.S. home care and hospice agencies. With the understanding that the senior population is growing and the importance of patient wellness and prevention is increasing, the organization has a strong focus on home care. They recognize that most patients, whether recovering from injury or illness, or at end-of-life, would rather be at home.

Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice has an award-winning palliative care program and was recognized with an innovation award from the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts in 2014. This success marks about 50% growth of their rehab department over the last three years.

Challenge

Adding and expanding services necessary to better help the aging population while maintaining the highest level of patient care resulted in the need for more staff. Simply stated: Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice found itself in a growth phase. On top of expanding, the executive leadership team wanted to improve its utilization and rehab programs to improve outcomes. They also wanted to improve on and expand their palliative care program, which heavily uses rehab resources to help patients reach their functional goals. So, although Northampton, Massachusetts, is a thriving, exciting location to live and work, there wasn't a large pool of physical therapists coming out of school to choose from. Home care in particular is difficult to staff because often candidates don't come right out of school with the necessary experience. But with that said, quickly getting high-quality staff members to Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice would be integral to their success of sustained growth for their home care programs while maintaining high-quality patient care. Little did they know that their growth would also turn into a need for more high-quality nurses.

Partnership

Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice chose AMN Healthcare to meet its rehab and home care staffing needs, and later to also fill their need for nurses.

“The quality of nursing candidates we get from AMN is unlike any other candidates we get from other organizations. The candidates are incredible. They are great. AMN is the place I go to first and it's because of the quality.”

– **Kristen Santos**, OTR/L, Clinical Director, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice

Benefits that Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice have experienced because of their partnership with AMN include:

- The candidate packet that AMN creates for its hiring partners contains the breakdown of a candidate's skill set and competencies with references imbedded. It's very easy to scroll through and find anything you need to know about a candidate. It's extensive and telling for hiring managers.
- They are able to work with their account manager and customize data to better meet their hiring needs.
- Their AMN account manager has become an integral partner/consultant to the hiring process. In fact, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice trusts its AMN account manager to the point where the organization can snatch up star candidates more quickly by trusting the judgment of the AMN account manager.

“AMN was a key partner in the growth of our team. Working with their Account Manager has been part of why it has been a success. He is incredible with his follow up, as well as being warm, authentic, supportive and honest and having great integrity. AMN was able to deliver on what we requested, which was quality therapists.”

– **Kristen Santos**, OTR/L, Clinical Director, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice

When comparing their experiences with other hiring agencies, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice says other staffing agencies simply can't find the same quality of employee, and competitors don't match the level of candidate detail collected and shared by AMN.

“I ask [other hiring agencies] for a competency skills checklist, or even a copy of their license and they say, ‘Oh we don't have that’ or ‘Ask the candidate for it.’ With AMN, professionalism is much higher. And so, therefore, the candidates come well prepared and with that same level of professionalism shown by AMN. And when it doesn't work out — and that's happened with a couple of candidates but very rarely — AMN has been very responsible and has shown good integrity in taking those people back and quickly giving me someone else.”

– **Kristen Santos**, OTR/L, Clinical Director, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice

Solution

As beautiful a location to work and live in as Northampton is, healthcare travelers typically have not heard of it. From the initial interview with AMN, Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice talked in detail about the attraction of the location. So AMN did its due diligence, studied the demographic and has been very successful in selling it as part of the travelers' benefits of employment. AMN also understands that with Northampton being a college town, there is competition for housing. AMN works around the student population's seasonal schedules and seeks appropriate housing when competition is at its lowest.

AMN understands that in home care, case mix weight is how heavy the need is of the patient, which influences the healthcare organization's reimbursement per patient. Therefore, having enough therapists to provide care can increase the per patient reimbursement rate. Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice prospers because they are able to stay well staffed and hold a competitive edge because of AMN. They don't have a waiting list for therapy candidates while their competitors do.

Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice is able to maintain and improve their reimbursement rate per patient because it has had high-quality rehab staffers who are able to provide care.

Also integral to the success of the candidates directed to the Cooley-Dickinson VNA & Hospice is that each one participates in AMN's training module for home care candidates.

To learn more about AMN Healthcare Home Health, call **(800) 915-1475** or visit **www.amnhealthcare.com/homehealth**



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