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## Staffing Strategies to Help Weather Healthcare's Perfect Storm

Healthcare providers, large and small, are facing what can best be described as a perfect storm - the convergence of three trends that have created an environment never experienced before:

- A shift in consumer "buying" behavior and expectations of healthcare providers
- Mounting pressure to generate revenues under tightening budgets
- Unprecedented numbers of Baby Boomers entering the health care system

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### The Role of Non-Clinical Staff in Consumer Choice, Delivery of Care and Patient Satisfaction

Patients today have greater choices than ever before in where they attain their healthcare, and in the level of service available to them. According to the American College of Healthcare Executives' "Future Scan" report on healthcare trends, patients are beginning to behave more like consumers and are expecting the same experiences from health care providers as they expect in other aspects of their lives.

In response to this and growing competition, healthcare practices and facilities are becoming more service-minded. They are quickly realizing the connection between the service delivery from their staff and patient loyalty and satisfaction. Simply put, the people you hire, particularly client-facing, non-clinical staff, can mean the difference between rising or sinking revenues.

Staffing providers specialize in finding and selecting qualified, customer-focused professionals that can greatly influence your service delivery. With extensive resources and expertise in screening, testing, sourcing and hiring the best talent on the market, temporary staffing firms can be a powerful tool in building your reputation as a quality, service-oriented healthcare provider.

### Engaging a Staffing Partner Produces Cost Savings and Time to Focus on Growing Revenues

A key strategy for survival in today's healthcare market is to leverage organizational strengths while making incremental improvements in overall effectiveness and efficiency. Nowhere is that more possible than by outsourcing the staffing of non-clinical staff to a partner, versus taking on that function in-house.

Staffing providers can bring more consistency and results-driven practices to the recruiting and hiring of non-clinical workers, delivering significant cost savings. Recruiting and hiring talent has changed significantly in the past five years, becoming more like a marketing initiative, highly automated and virtual. Healthcare organizations can find themselves spending large amounts of time, resources and money just trying to keep up.

Staffing providers take on these costs and are able to leverage significant economies of scale in online recruiting, recruitment marketing and advertising costs, background checks and profiling -- items that represent a large fixed cost for healthcare providers.

With mounting pressure on healthcare providers to generate revenues, the ability to shed the administrative and time-consuming processes associated with staffing means more effort can be dedicated to bringing in new patients.

### **Effective Staffing Curbs Service Delivery Interruptions, Manages Fluctuating Staffing Levels**

At a time when unprecedented numbers of Baby Boomers -- the most demanding generation of consumers -- will be entering the healthcare system, healthcare facilities cannot afford lapses in service delivery or inadequate staffing levels to meet increasing patient loads.

Most healthcare organizations spend thousands of man-hours each year managing the staffing challenge. Often, unfilled positions put a strain on clinicians, interrupt patient care and can ultimately diminish patient satisfaction levels.

In addition, organizations must "turn on a dime" to changing business conditions, quickly staffing up or down as needed. Successful healthcare organizations rely on contingent workers to respond quickly and cost effectively to upswings and downswings in patient load.

### **Conclusion**

As healthcare providers hunt for ways to attain strategic gains, many have recognized that utilizing contingent workers can be a powerful engine in driving quality talent selection, increased patient satisfaction levels, cost savings and scalability. And ultimately, outsourcing non-clinical staffing enables hospital and facility staff to be more attentive to the clinical aspects of patient care.

