

From Turbulent to Stabilized:

How a Regional Health System Improved Retention and Became an Employer of Choice



The Client Challenge

Allegheny Health Network (AHN), a multihospital health system with hospitals in Pittsburgh and across Western Pennsylvania, had growth ambitions but faced a fiercely competitive market for patients and talent. With high turnover rates (particularly among junior nurses), modest conversion rates of physician trainees to full-time employees, and a challenging recruitment environment, leadership realized AHN needed a new emphasis on workforce wellness to become an employer of choice and maintain its competitive edge.

Navigating to Next: The Solution

With 22,000 employees, AHN leadership realized a more granular approach to assessing physician, nurse, and staff engagement across the organization was key to actionable and measurable improvements in turnover and retention.

AHN partnered with Chartis to systematically identify friction points that matter most by occupation across the workforce, starting with physicians, advanced practice providers (APPs), and nurses, then cascading through all other occupations. The next step was rapidly moving to action planning and execution of prioritized solutions. To lead the initiative, AHN established a team of operational, physician, and nurse leadership tightly tied to executive sponsors in the C-suite.

The inclusion of all employees—including transport, environmental services, food services, office personnel, and allied health workers—was critical to bolstering the infrastructure that also led to improvements in the day-to-day lives of clinicians. AHN and Chartis worked collaboratively across 14 hospitals, multiple service lines, and hundreds of employee roles to scale solutions that support the entire AHN workforce. The organizational culture was transformed as employees witnessed improvements they called for and observed the impact of actions taken.

THE IMPACT OF BURNOUT ACROSS SYSTEMS

- Higher turnover rates
- Lower physician, nurse, and staff engagement
- Lower patient satisfaction and loyalty
- Reduced conversion of physician trainees to full-time employees
- Higher risk of malpractice claims

NAVIGATING TO NEXT: KEY COMPONENTS



PARTNER & ALIGN

Engage leadership in a collaboration to create a compelling case for change



LISTEN & ENGAGE

Demonstrate active listening to understand organizational culture and engage employees



ASSESS & ACTION PLAN

Establish a data baseline and identify actionable friction points



EMPOWER & EXECUTE

Equip the team to create and implement action plans in real time



MEASURE & SUSTAIN

Track data over time and share impact of success stories while continuing to coach leaders impacted by change

Client Impact

By uncovering the work details that matter most to front-line healthcare workers and those who support them, and prioritizing actionable solutions, AHN measurably improved the daily work experience across most roles and reinforced employee connection to the organization. AHN has seen a reduction in intended turnover across the majority of roles, in some cases dramatically, and a significant improvement in burnout across most professions. In addition, there was an observable cultural shift with increased trust in leadership, higher interprofessional civility, and a greater shared sense of accomplishment. In 2023, AHN was awarded the Silver Level by the AMA Joy in Medicine Health System Recognition Program, one of only 27 institutions nationwide.



How We Are Making Healthcare Better

“This work has been invaluable and has had major ROI for AHN many times over.”

—Don Whiting, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Allegheny Health Network

AHN saw significant improvement across all roles:

90%
of AHN employees reported feeling joy at work, and 80% reported feeling appreciated.

41%
reduction in RN turnover intention and 34% reduction in RN burnout.

44%
reduction in Environmental Services intended turnover

NEXT INTELLIGENCE:

Becoming an employer of choice for physicians, APPs, nurses, and staff requires improving the daily work experience and the supporting infrastructure, through:

Aligned leadership who prioritize, resource, and execute toward sustained change

Role-specific assessment to identify the granular, local issues that drive dissatisfaction, burnout, and turnover

Action plans that target front-line healthcare employees and those who support them

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