

Report on Valley Health System Hospitals' Turnover, Recruitment and Retention Efforts
Presented by Michele Nichols, CNE of Valley Hospital
Before the Legislative Subcommittee on Health Care to Study Staffing of the System for Delivery of Health Care in Nevada.
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Good Morning Chairwoman Koivisto and Committee Members. My name is Michele Nichols, Chief Nurse Executive of Valley Hospital and Medical Center. I appreciate this opportunity to speak before you today to present information regarding Valley Health System Hospitals' efforts to recruit and retain healthcare professionals, including our largest body of employees, Nurses.

In representation for Valley Health Systems, I would like to begin by addressing the testimony presentation of the SEIU Universal Health Services RNs to your Advisory Committee in March, and earlier to the Legislative Subcommittee in their February 19th testimony. In their presentation, the SEIU UHS RNs displayed a poster board and power point slide denoting what they believed were the 2003 turnover rate for RNs from Clark County Hospitals. Although I cannot speak for hospitals outside of the Valley Health Systems, I would like to address the turnover rates stated to be for Valley and Desert Springs Hospitals (VHS Hospitals).

The SEIU RNs stated that there was a 33.8 % RN turnover at Valley Hospital in 2003. The source given for this statement is Valley Hospital's monthly reports to SEIU Local 1107. In Valley Hospital Human Resource Personnel's review of those 2003 monthly reports, there was no source data that would result in the turnover rate stated above. The actual turnover rates for full-time/part-time staff RNs in 2003 was 17.9%, and if we add the per diem RNs to the turnover number, the 2003 staff RN turnover rate was 21.5%.

For Desert Springs Hospital and Medical Center, the turnover rate that was reported in the same SEIU presentation (24%), included forty nurses that left employment at Desert Springs either related to the closure of the Maternity Center or transferred to Spring Valley, which is a new Valley Health System hospital that opened in the Fall of 2003. Adjusting for those atypical events, the RN turnover was 19%. Desert Springs has maintained aggressive programs to recruit RNs and through those efforts and opportunities to participate in on-site training programs to prepare nurses for work in specialty areas, their overall vacancy rate is less than 3%.

METHODOLOGY:

Valley Health System's Human Resource Departments are responsible for compiling, computing and reporting the turnover and vacancy rates for the hospital. For turnover rates, the number of employees in a job class who leave the hospital's employ is divided by the current employees in a job class each month. That would give the monthly

EXHIBIT <u>C</u>	HealthCareDelivery	Document consists of <u>3</u> pages
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turnover rate. The same methodology is used at the end of the year for an annual turnover rate. .

The point of the SEIU UHS RNs presentation was to acknowledge that there is a shortage of RNs in Nevada. The Valley Health System hospitals share that there is a shortage of RNs. In response, Valley and Desert Springs Hospitals have initiated efforts to recruit and retain RNs.

Because of the impact of the severe nursing shortage in Nevada, in 2000-2002, we focused on recruitment efforts.

- Re-location bonuses
- Incentive bonuses to work extra shifts
- RN Salary adjustments to ensure we are competitive in the market

In 2003, as Chief Nurse Executive, I asked our leadership to focus on retention efforts.

- Open RN Forums with CNE and Chief Retention Officer to discuss retention ideas.
- Nurse Apprentice Program for student nurses to receive pay while orienting in hospitals for extended periods of time prior to graduation
- A job-shadow program
- Availability of a 24/7 Childcare facility
- Addition of more unit-based education programs for medical/surgical nurses including surgery specific post-operative care, acute respiratory patient care and many more.
- Addition of independent study CEU programs.
- New RN Grad programs that pay them to orient to nursing specialties after graduation
- Career opportunity internship programs for nurses moving to a specialty nursing opportunity
- Cross-training program allowing nurses to train in units other than their home unit.
- Chief Retention Officer (CRO) program
- Numerous retention initiatives for our health care workers, including tuition reimbursements and scholarships for nurses.
- Work environment improvements through implementation of:
 - PYXIS Connect, facilitating receipt of patient medications in a timely manner, reducing significantly countless hours previously spent on the telephone between nursing and pharmacists
 - Transporters to transport patients to off unit diagnostic testing, transfers between units and discharges home to reduce time spent by RNs or other direct bedside caregivers.

In the year 2003, mostly RN employees received 4649 hours classroom and clinical education with additional hours provided in 827 home studies offered for those who like the option of this mode of education. Education ranges from programs like:

- General Orientation, Nursing Orientation, Service Excellence and Safety Education for all new RNs;
- Certifications in Basic Life Support (CPR), Pediatric Life Support, Advanced Life Support, Neonatal Resuscitation and Defibrillation and Emergency Pharmacology;
- Skills Lab for RNs to practice specific invasive skills such as inserting an intravenous needle or nasogastric tube placement.
- Unit, Equipment and/or Specialty specific education: Advanced Hemodynamics, Intra-aortic Balloon Pump, 12 Lead EKG.
- Train-the-Trainer and Preceptor training classes
- RN Internships in New Graduate Program, Critical Care (ICU), Intermediate Care (Step-down), Newborn, Neonatal Intensive Care, Labor and Delivery, Emergency and International Course.

We join with our RN staff who believe education to be paramount to the competency, professionalism and retention of that same RN staff. We have dedicated educators who are experts in their specialties to orient, instruct, mentor and assist toward their career goals, all of our RNs at Valley Hospital. When the hours of the instructors who taught the classes, are added to all of the education hours of the participants and you multiply this by the average hourly rate of the participants, the dollar figure dedicated to education was over \$2,000,000 in 2003.

In closing, I would recommend that the Legislative Healthcare Subcommittee, in turn would recommend to the full Legislative Healthcare Committee that a legislative committee be put into place toward the ongoing dialogue between healthcare entities, such as those who were brought together in your Advisory Committee. The goal should be a partnership focus, for the long term, on healthcare workforce issues.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

Submitted by,

Michele Nichols, Chief Nurse Executive
Valley Hospital and Medical Center
Valley Health Systems.