Healthcare Innovation for Attracting the Right Caregivers

Viventium's CMO Terra Vicario Sat Down with Apploi's Vice President Pritma Chatha, DNP, MHA, RN, to Discuss Healthcare Innovation for Attracting the Right

Published November 15, 2021



Viventium's CMO Terra Vicario Sat Down with Apploi's Vice President Pritma Chatha, DNP, MHA, RN, to Discuss Healthcare Innovation for Attracting the Right Caregivers The Bureau of Labor Statistics talks about a growth projected at nearly thirty-five percent for home health and personal care aides. This number is growing so much faster than the average across all occupations. And it's attributed to the baby boomer generation aging and the senior population increasingly relying on home care as an alternative to nursing homes, which means more job openings than ever. In fact, Mercer's US Health C are External Labor Market Analysis examined the breakdown of role shortages within health care over the n ext four years. In contrast to the growth in home care, it found that the demand for physicians, surgeons, a nesthesiologists, and other highly skilled practitioners are expected to grow the least and the slowest. A nd by 2050, America's senior population will reach nearly 88 million, up from 48 million today, requiring mo re support roles to assist with chronic health conditions and disabilities. The big question remains, wh

ere will everyone find candidates to fill these vital roles? **Terra** Pritma, what are you seeing overall in the talent acquisition sector? **Pritma** Definitely, the caregiver shortage is at an all-time high. The demand far exceeds the supply, and while there seems to be a high volume of applicants to meet that demand, it is falsely misleading. Many caregivers have had to make the difficult decision to leave the profession overall due to personal responsibilities in the wake of the pandemic, and those that have remained at work, are seeking their next opportunity. Many are calling it the 'great resignation,' or what I call t he 'great re-evaluation.' Caregivers are feeling exhausted, alone and underappreciated. They are in se arch of organizations that can help care for their needs and a place where they feel heard. So despite th ere being a mass shortage of qualified caregivers, the application rates are surprisingly high because ev eryone seems to be re-evaluating their current role, in search of positions with more balance and be nefits. **Terra** Along those lines, what have you seen happening from 2020 to 2021? **Pritma** Because of the skyrocketing demand, employers are getting very competitive, finding innovative ways to attract new talent. Health care employers are beefing up their total compensation package and thinking outside the box when it comes to salary and benefits. With over 92% of the caregiver workforce being female, and over 4.5 million less women in the workforce today than there were at the beginning of the pandemic, employers are realizing the mismatch between their benefits offering and the needs of their people. Shift start/stop times are being re-evaluated, work from home opportunities are being created, and benefits packages are becoming more flexible and relevant to the demographics they serve. Facilities are also re-evaluating their retention strategies. Incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion in their leadership, their hiring, and their succession planning while getting laser focused on cultivating a culture that cares deeply for their people - at a time their people need it most. **Terra** Can you share with the group a little bit about the data Apploi has been collecting? **Pritma** Certainly. Despite pandemic concerns, clients saw a significant increase in job activity, both in posting more jobs through our platform, of course, because of the demand, and in receiving more applicants. Again, what I touched on earlier – according to our data, total job growth rose by forty-five percent in 2020 compared to 2019, and the applicant growth increased by seventy-six percent. **Terra** So we know the candidate market is hot and candidates are hard to find. Given these facts, what are the things that deter candidates from continuing through the application process? **Pritma** We're hearing a lot that c andidates tend to go silent if the applicant journey is too slow or if it's too cumbersome. For example, ca ndidates nowadays, after being forced to do most everything online over the past 20 months, have li ttle to no tolerance with paper application processes. They also want to be able to apply and co nnect with recruiters and hiring managers from their phone - not a desktop or laptop. We live and br eathe on our phones these days. So it's so important to get to people and meet them where they are . Candidates simply won't apply if you're not able to accommodate them applying over their phone . Also, the way in which we communicate to candidates has changed. Candidates are looking for t ext communications – not email, not phone. There's a very poor probability that you'll reach candida tes by the phone nor will they answer their voicemail or look at their voicemail. What's happening often, I find, is that if you're not digital, other organizations will beat you to the offer letter. If you're not fast, if your processes are not efficient, someone else is going to scoop up that candidate, and you're goin g to miss out. Candidates also want to feel important. They want to feel heard. And if your process is

slow and they're not hearing back from you for two or three weeks, they've already moved on. I cannot emphasize enough that speed matters at this moment in time. **Terra** From your experience, any other overall feedback that you're getting from candidates? **Pritma** Predominantly that they're out there s hopping. So you have an active audience – try to capture that audience. And I'm hearing over and ov er again that salary is not the deal breaker. A quarter here, a quarter there does not matter in terms of ho urly salary rates. What's important right now, especially in health care for caregivers, is that they're look ing for employers that care, that listen, and that value them. They want to contribute and partner in t heir success and growth within that organization. Candidates are feeling a little bit frustrated, disi llusioned, and burnt out right now. They feel disenfranchised and are seeking organizations that have their act together and can support their emotional well being off the back of this pandemic, and cont ribute to their personal and professional development in the years to come. **Terra** That makes a lot of sense. And I'm sure the pandemic hasn't helped with any of the burnout either. Everybody's feeling it.

This information is for educational purposes only, and not to provide specific legal advice. This may not reflect the most recent developments in the law and may not be applicable to a particular situation or jurisdiction.