

Abstract

Losing employees in a health care setting has proven to drain time, efforts, and money from the facility. Employee turnover is particularly high in emergency medicine practices for many reasons. At a more magnified level, recruiting and retaining employees is predominantly more difficult at a facility in a rural health care location. This research discusses why these rates may be so drastic and how health care managers can help to control them. Studies have provided data to the health care community that makes tackling this issue possible. This study employs literature review and statistical comparison in order to reveal to managers how to start decreasing the turnover rates in rural emergency medicine and increasing employee retention.

Evidence has shown that employee benefits, providing new hires with a mentor, and staff support contribute to an employee's desire to stay. Giving new hires a mentor to cultivate their skills and to provide emotional support eases their transition in a new facility; this then contributes to retention as they are more inclined to like their new position. In addition, employee benefits, such as loan repayment programs or paid leave, give staff reason to stay. In a high-stress and fast paced environment, these aspects are crucial for high retention rates. Not only do these types of programs keep their current employees in, but they may attract outside hires as well. They could be the difference between a new employee choosing a rural emergency medicine facility over another location lacking such features.

A nationwide increase in need for physicians and nurses only contributes to this overarching problem. The findings and comparisons included in this research may help programs to see what the best techniques are for recruitment and retention in rurally-located emergency medicine facilities. Creating a plan is an important part of initiating such change. With a plan considering these presented options, change can be brought to turnover rates.

Key Words: emergency medicine, employee retention, rural medicine