



NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
RESOURCE CENTER

600 East Superior Street, Suite 404 | Duluth, MN 55802 | Ph. 800.997.6685 or 218.727.9390 | www.ruralcenter.org

Midwest Retention Toolkit 2012

Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin

Sally Buck, M.S.

Associate Director
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Purpose

The National Rural Health Resource Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to sustaining and improving health care in rural communities. As the **nation's leading technical assistance and knowledge** center in rural health, The Center focuses on five core areas:

- Performance Improvement
- Health Information Technology
- Recruitment & Retention
- Community Health Assessments
- Networking



Midwest Retention Toolkit

- Created by:
 - The National Rural Health Resource Center
 - The National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network (3RNet)
- Under contracts with:
 - Indiana State Department of Health
 - Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care
 - Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Primary Care Office



National Health Service Corps

- In 2011 NHSC expanded Scholarships and Loan repayment programs to 10,000 providers
- NHSC supports primary care and psychiatric physicians, physician assistants, advanced practice nurses, mental health providers, dentists and dental hygienists
- Funding provided to 36 state Primary Care Organizations to support and track retention of NHSC providers



Midwest Retention Toolkit

- Retention Issues
- Retention Plan
- Retention Elements
 - Orientation
 - Practice Feedback and Satisfaction Surveys
 - Recognition Activities
 - Mentor Programs
 - Other Retention Tools
- Resources



Retention Toolkit Samples

- Worksheets
- Surveys
- Timelines
- Checklists
- Presentations
- Interviews



Retention Challenges

- Lack of individual clinic staff responsibility for retention
- Limited salary and benefit resources
- Retaining providers after completion of their loan repayment obligation
- Limited partner/spouse employment opportunities



Retention Solutions

- Affiliations with local Universities to offer continuing education and professional networking
- Creating retention committees
- Conducting satisfaction surveys
- Developing provider recognition efforts, including a **“Provider of the Year”** award selected by peers



Health Care Provider Retention Survey

- 123 health care providers surveyed; 48% response
- 30% mental health, 26% advanced practice nurses, 16% dentists, 12% physicians, 9% physician assistants
- 52% rural and 48% urban
- 55% in practice 2-3 years and 38% over 4 years
- Majority planned to stay in the practice following obligation; 26% not sure they would stay



Health Care Provider Survey Most Important Retention Factors

- Professional relationships with partners and colleagues
- Workload/call schedule
- Compensation/benefits
- Community/lifestyle



Health Care Provider Survey Non-Financial Retention Factors

- Recognition activities
- Community integration
- Participation in clinic/hospital decision making
- Less than 30% of the sites offered these activities



Top 10 Retention Factors - Literature Review

- Availability of relief coverage
- Quality of schools
- Compatibility with others in health care
- Availability of quality housing
- Availability of practice partners and specialists



Top 10 Retention Factors - Literature Review (continued)

- Income potential
- Employment for spouse/partner
- Help with retiring education loans
- Availability of continuing education
- Opportunity to be a preceptor



Retention Plan Components

- Goals, timeline and person accountable
- Committee or those part of the plan
- Resources (materials, community and health care contacts and budget)
- Elements of Retention
- Evaluation (outcome measures)



Orientation

- Welcoming and orient the new provider and spouse/partner to the health care community and the broader community
- Arrange opportunities for the provider to “check-in”
- **Matching a mentor of “buddy” to the provider for the first year**
- Address concerns or issues
- Recognize the provider for service
- Satisfy compensation, benefits and education needs as appropriate



Provider Feedback and Satisfaction Surveys

- Build communication
- Assess potential retention issues
 - Understanding of organizational mission
 - Benefits and compensation
 - Workload
 - Technology
- Conduct annually by a neutral party
- Confidential
- Address issues identified from the survey



Recognition Events

- Years of service
- Practice research, presentations, and publications
- Community or hospital service
- Teaching and precepting students
- Achieving Meaningful Use
- Specialty certification
- Patient satisfaction survey results



Mentor Program for New Provider

- Monthly lunch or breakfast with a staff member or colleague
- Discuss retention factors
- Obtain feedback and follow-up on issues
- Use same process with the spouse/partner
- Discuss acceptance, quality of work environment, community integration



Other Retention Tools

- Exit interviews
 - Determine reasons for leaving
 - Gain perspective on the practice and community
- Financial retention samples



National and State Resources

- Initial recruitment
- Clinical and management support
- Academic linkages
- Professional development and continuing education
- Family ties and support
- Teaching/supervision opportunities



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(218) 727-9390 ext. 225

sbuck@ruralcenter.org