

Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Leverages Kronos for More Efficient, Cost-Effective Scheduling

Kronos for Healthcare | CASE STUDY



**Tallahassee Memorial
HealthCare**

EMPLOYEES: 3,992

INDUSTRY: Healthcare

PRODUCTS:

Kronos scheduling
- Workforce Target
Intelligence™
- Workforce Workload
Manager™

“It [the Kronos solution] is like having air traffic control — there is visibility and control over all that is happening in the house and therefore much better management of all the moving pieces.”

Norman Pasley
Director of Patient Flow
Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare

Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare is a private, not-for-profit healthcare system serving the diverse healthcare needs of 16 counties in North Florida and South Georgia. TMH includes a 772-bed acute care hospital and is home to the region’s only accredited community hospital cancer program and state-designated trauma center. The eighth-largest hospital in Florida, TMH has a staff of 500 physicians representing 50 specialties and an additional 581 medical staff and support employees.

CHALLENGES

- Nursing’s paper-based scheduling process was time-consuming and inefficient
- Drowning in paper, the central staffing office often released schedules late and/or incomplete
- Lack of oversight resulted in nursing vacancies going unfilled, leading to excessive overtime and agency spending
- Nursing leaders felt overwhelmed by the daily requirements of staffing and scheduling

SOLUTION

- A Kronos scheduling, staffing, and workload solution that helps frontline nurses and hospital executives optimize day-to-day and long-term staffing efficiencies

BENEFITS

- Seeing the benefits of the Kronos® application, nurses developed their own detailed staffing policies and procedures to improve staffing in their units
- Kronos shift-note data help nurse leadership assess staffing needs to make cost-effective staffing decisions by moving staff among units and using flex and float pool staff
- Staffing is now accurately based on patient census and workload intensity, increasing nurse satisfaction and maintaining high-quality patient care
- Increased visibility and accurate staffing decisions have helped reduce travel nurse usage from 65 to six within one year
- Rigorous overtime monitoring has reduced the percentage of labor spent on overtime from 7 to 8 percent to only 2.5 percent over three years

THE STORY — Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare

Staffing nurses at Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare was a time-consuming manual process. Nurse leaders created paper schedules and sent them to the central staffing office, managed eight hours daily by one person. Schedules were often published late and/or incomplete, and central staffing didn't have the time or tools to carefully oversee the process. Vacancies went unfilled, creating excessive overtime and agency spending.

Kronos supports increased staffing rigor

TMH selected the Kronos scheduling and staffing tool for nurses. Nurse leaders, however, were so overwhelmed by the daily requirements of staffing and scheduling — and unaware of the improved staffing benefits that the powerful Kronos tool could provide — that they hesitated to take on the challenge of adopting and understanding the new technology. Changes in leadership and a focus on detail were followed by nurse leadership realizing that beyond embracing new technology, nursing needed a new mindset about staffing. An effort began to enfranchise nursing in a culture of rigorous staffing, with the Kronos tool at the heart of it. The result has been a more efficient, cost-effective staffing process that has led to a steep reduction in the use of contracted traveling nurses and in staff overtime.

More accurate staffing to nursing workload

The first step was communicating the imperative and value of optimized staffing. Frontline nurses, managers, and staff from finance, administration, clinical informatics, and education discussed the benefits of Kronos: more accurate staffing based on patient census and acuity and the professional judgment model.

Recognizing the need for greater structure, nurses came together to create detailed staffing policies and procedures across four areas: general staffing, shared staffing, self-scheduling unit-based guidelines, and a standby-staffing procedure. The policies spell out expectations and training needs for every role/job code in the unit staffing plan and encompass every aspect of scheduling, staffing, and workload management. A standardized template provided a clear structure, and each unit was charged with developing its own staffing guidelines. Nurses embraced this opportunity and also recognized that with Kronos they would get credit for their full workload, the workload would be distributed more equitably, and their schedules would be more predictable.

"It [the Kronos solution] is like having air traffic control — there is visibility and control over all that is happening in the house and therefore much better management of all the moving pieces," says Norman Pasley, director of patient flow.

Shift-note feature streamlines adjusting staffing to census

The most striking example of the culture shift in staffing was the conversion to using Kronos shift notes. All staffing needs and changes are now communicated through the solution's shift-note feature, making all information accessible to both unit staff and central staffing. Bed huddle meetings are no longer held twice daily for staffing discussions, except when census is at 90 percent capacity or higher. Kronos data are used during the meetings to assess staffing needs and make cost-effective staffing decisions by moving staff among units, using flex staff, and using float pool staff.

Overtime and traveler use decline dramatically

Nurse managers monitor overtime usage every shift with online reports and the central office's use of Kronos color-coded monitoring reports. If nurses are needed to assist on other units, shared staffing policy provides a clear structure for sharing nurses based on their clinical competency and the patient population in the unit. Nursing leaders developed nurse competency and patient placement spreadsheets to provide clear direction. And nurses assigned to another unit receive a unit fact sheet of practical tips to help them get up to speed quickly, making the experience more productive and satisfying. The benefits have been multifold, including the percentage of labor spent on overtime decreasing from 7 to 8 percent to just 2.5 percent over three years.

Previously, managers had also looked to traveling nurses to address staffing issues. Adding structure and the Kronos tools have helped drive down traveler use from 65 to six in one year. Now, with multi-tiered float pool incentives that generate a substantial internal float pool — and templates for requesting float pool staff — nurse managers are directed to more efficient and cost-effective options, and patients continue to receive high-quality care.

Increased nursing satisfaction

Beyond the financial gains, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare has seen a significant uptick in nurse satisfaction, as nurses understand the benefits of better staffing for patients, themselves, and the organization. Using the Kronos scheduling solution, TMH looks forward to enjoying the continued benefits of optimized staffing.



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