

MODULE 5

HOW TO HIRE YOUR HEALTH STAFF

ACCOMPANIES THE 'MANAGING HEALTH AT THE WORKPLACE' GUIDEBOOK

MODULE 5: How to Hire Your Health Staff

If you want to have a high quality clinic, then you must hire qualified and proactive people for your health staff – nurses, paramedics, health assistants. The same is true for your doctors.

As Senior Manager, you need to establish a **formal hiring process** for health staff.

A formal hiring process includes these five activities:

- **Disseminating a job announcement** with a job description and performance expectations
- Verifying **qualifications** (paper diploma, records) and job **experience** (employment & reference checks)
- **Interviewing** qualified candidates
- **Assessing skills**, knowledge and characteristics
- Selecting the top candidate through a **fair internal process** for decision-making

Every time you can hire someone, it is an opportunity for improving your health staff and clinic services. *Use it as part of your health improvement process, not just as a compliance requirement to fill.*

WHAT IS A QUALIFIED NURSE?

You should consider two types of qualifications when hiring a nurse:

- 1. Clinical Qualifications.** These relate to a nurse's medical education, training and skills. You want a nurse to have the ability to provide a basic level of care expected of that profession.
- 2. Job Qualifications.** These relate to the work you want the nurse to do according to the job description and factory goals. For instance, you might want someone with more experienced in health promotion or in specific health issues such as nutrition or reproductive health and hygiene.

If you have a contract with an external company to provide your health staff, you STILL should have a selection process based on the factory's health needs. Don't take whomever they give you. Ask to interview and assess their proposed candidates.

Below, you will find information and tools for creating and implementing a hiring process, if you do not already have one.

The Hiring Process – Seven Steps

You can use or adapt the following process when hiring nurses or other health staff:

1. Determine who will be part of the process.

In most cases, your *Human Resources Department* will play the lead role. You should also determine who else will be part of the "hiring committee" to interview and select the candidate. The committee should include at least:

- The Senior (factory) Manager for health
- Representative(s) of the nursing/health staff

But ideally it will also include:

- A manager from compliance, safety, or other section of the factory
- A representative of line supervisors
- Worker and management representatives of the Health and Safety (or other worker-management) committee.
- Workers' representative

2. Determine the qualifications needed for the health job to be filled.

You want someone with a nursing degree, if possible.

But you also want someone who meets your needs based on:

- Your annual plan and improvement goals,
- Your needs in the factory for specific skills or knowledge, and
- The personal characteristics desired for your health staff.

For example, two candidates may have similar education and training. But one has much more experience in health promotion and training and the other has more experience in counseling on reproductive health and sensitive issues.

If you need a health educator, you will likely lean to the first candidate – unless there are other reasons not to do so. You should certainly weigh heavily the **personal characteristics** of a candidate, including:

- A proactive approach to providing respectful care and showing concern
- Openness to a variety of roles and responsibilities
- Eagerness to learn new skills and develop professionally
- Warmth and friendliness
- Ability to communicate clearly

- 3. Develop a job description and circulate a job announcement.** The Human Resources department should develop a job description in consultation with the health staff and Senior Manager. It should reflect your goals and annual health plan (if you have one).

SCORECARD LINK: SAMPLE INDICATORS

6.1.2 A reporting structure exists for health facility that defines roles, responsibilities and decision-making authorities.

6.1.3 Each health provider receives a *job description* defining responsibilities.

6.1.5 A formal process is in place for hiring new health providers, based on the documentation and review of qualifications.

- 4. Screen candidates and determine who will be considered and formally interviewed.**

The Human Resources staff – with input from others – will rank the top candidates. You will need to verify their qualifications by:

- **Validating their records.** *Before you interview any candidate*, you should obtain copies of their licenses, certifications and external references and make sure that the licenses are active and in good standing.
- **Checking references.** Contact the candidate's former employers to confirm that the candidate worked there and held the job he or she claimed. Talking to a former employer is a great way to learn about the candidate's work style, attitude, and skills.

- 5. Conduct interviews of the top nurse candidates by the "hiring committee."** The interviews help determine the best candidate but they also allow you to explain the factory's expectations of the new nurse to apply good quality practices and improve skills.

See the flow chart that gives an example of how one factory organized its hiring process. You will conduct two types of interviews:

- **Introductory interviews.** (See **Tool 19** on *Introductory Interview Questions*.) These will be done individually or as a group by the committee – depending on each member's time. It may make sense for the HR Manager and staff to interview first and raise any red flags. This can help avoid wasting committee time on interviews if the HR staff determines quickly that a candidate is not acceptable.

You use these interviews to get a general sense of the candidates,

determine if they are trainable and understand their reasons for working at the factory.

- **Skills interview.** The health staff – the senior nurses and/or doctor – should lead an assessment of the candidate’s clinical competence and skills. See **Tool 20** (*Clinical Scenarios and Nursing Skill Evaluation*).

Members of the committee may also participate in *the Clinical Scenarios* part of the interview. The nurse candidates will answer how they would act in a specific medical situation.

A senior member of the health staff that has clinical experience should conduct the *Nursing Skill Evaluation*. (This tool can also be used for annual Performance Evaluations.)

- 6. Selecting the candidate.** Your hiring committee should meet as a group to discuss the candidates and determine which one the factory should hire. You should give weight to the evaluation by the health staff – and reject any they consider unqualified. But you should also consider personal characteristics
- 7. Informing the nurse candidate of the selection.** When you offer the person the nursing job, you should reinforce the expectations for the job. This is the time for you to review the job description as well as discuss the factory’s goals, performance measures, annual plan or any other information.

The reason for a formal hiring process is to hire the best, most qualified person. When people are hired because of personal relationships, rather than qualifications, this lowers the quality of the factory health clinic. It can also create factions and disputes.

When you hire someone fairly and with the input of many people in the factory, this can also increase the ownership of everyone in a high quality health staff and services.

TOOL 19: INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Instructions: Ask these questions to get a general sense of the person, their interests and working style and any red flags, and to determine if the candidate is a good fit for your factory clinic.

1. Why did you choose to become a Nurse?
2. Why are you interested in working at the factory?
3. Describe your professional experience and the skills.
4. Which ones do you think will be most important working in the factory?
5. Describe your experience providing health education. In what settings and on what topics? Is this something you like to do?
6. Describe a time when you enjoyed caring for a patient.
7. Describe a time when caring for a patient was difficult.
8. Describe a time when you had to “go above and beyond” to get a job done.
9. Describe a time when you had a conflict with a coworker and how you handled it.
10. Describe a typical day in your most recent job.
11. How would your former employer describe you?
12. Why did you leave your last job? Or why do you want to leave your current job?

TOOL 20: CLINICAL SCENARIO QUESTIONS & NURSING SKILLS EVALUATION

PART 1: SCENARIOS

Instructions: The Following are several scenarios that should help the interviewer judge the clinical competence of the candidate. Read the questions to the candidate and check the boxes next to answers/explanation provided. The purpose of these scenarios is to judge the clinical competence of the candidate.

If you assess the candidate's answer to the scenarios, **go to Part 2** on Nursing Skill Evaluation.

1. A male worker aged 21 has an injury to the foot and comes limping into the clinic. What do you do?

- Take patient into examination area
- Interview patient to assess for injury to foot, other body systems and to see if other patients are affected and expected into clinic
- Examine injury
- Stabilize injured area
- Take vital signs to assess for elevated BP, respirations, pulse
- Treat injury. If hospital care is required, stay with patient until transport is arranged
- Escort patient to vehicle for transport to hospital
- Complete workplace injury paperwork and note follow up for nurse and doctor
- Place a note in patients chart- data collected and action taken

Notes:

2. A female worker aged 28 comes into the clinic and expressed that she is worried that she may be pregnant. She tells you that this is an unplanned pregnancy and does not want to be pregnant. What do you do?

- Ask the following:
 - Date of last menstrual period
 - History of sexual activity
 - Last date birth control pills were taken and type
 - Any signs/symptoms of pregnancy (fatigue, nausea, breast tenderness)

- If patient had unprotected sex less than 5 days ago, offer and provide emergency contraception. Schedule follow up with doctor.
- If greater than five days, counsel patient to take pregnancy test. Schedule follow up with doctor.
- Counsel patient on family planning methods, including emergency contraception. Once a pregnancy is ruled out, she can return to clinic for contraception provided by the clinic, or receive a referral.

Notes:

3. A male worker aged 50 comes in as the clinic is closing. Nurses have changed out of uniform and clinic is cleaned. He has a workplace injury to the hand that happened last week and would like a bandage changed because the wound is now infected. What do you do?

- Take patient into examination area
- Take vital signs (including temperature)
- Gather materials for bandage change (betadine, cotton swabs, tweezers, new bandage, tape.)
- Set up sterile field
- Complete wound cleanse and bandage change maintaining sterile field
- Dispose of old bandage and materials used to cleanse wound. All materials that contain blood or body fluids need to be in separate plastic bag and disposed of as hazardous waste
- Note data and actions in medical record.
- Schedule appointment with Doctor to assess and treat infected wound.

Important- Explain that nurses have an ethical responsibility to provide care for patients at all times. By law in most countries, nurses must be working while workers are working.

Notes:

PART 2: SKILLS EVALUATION

Instructions: The purpose of this evaluation is to first, set the standards and expectations of high quality clinic care at the factory and second, evaluate the interviewee's clinical skills. The doctor or senior nurse should with Management should go over each section and "skill" with the candidate and check all areas the interviewee has experience with.

Skills	Check ✓	Comments/Year s of Experience
Patient Care and Counseling		
1. Actively identifies opportunities for patient education and health services		
2. Maintains privacy and confidentiality during interviews, counseling sessions and examinations		
3. Performs Nursing Procedures		
a. weight and height		
b. respiratory rate		
c. pulse (apical, radial)		
d. manual blood pressure		
e. temperature		
f. medication administration (oral, topical, optical, SQ, IM, ID)		
4. Screens patients for family planning needs		
5. Provides family planning counseling to determine method of choice		
Documentation and Medical Records		
6. Fills out all patient registry completely and accurately		
7. Fills out screening forms for frequent and/or severe symptoms. Refers to MD and files in medical record		
8. Knowledgeable of chart contents and required forms (health history and physical exam progress note)		
9. Ensures health history is completed on each employee		
10. Ensures medical records are filed after each encounter, are neat and in order with no loose papers, and medical record cabinets are locked.		
11. Provides summary of patient visits to Lead Nurse on or before due date for presentation to Safety Committee		
Case Outreach and Patient Education		
12. Follows up with absent workers to determine health needs		
13. Identifies, examines and actively follows-up with workers returning from an injury or medical leave to determine health care needs		

14. Performs “walk about” outreach to workers
15. Facilitate health education activities in groups and over the loud speaker on the chosen topics from the health education plan
16. Ensures that educational materials (flyers, poster, etc.) are up on the clinic spaces and common spaces (water stations, cafeteria, satellite stations)

Patient and Site Safety

17. Demonstrates knowledge of Infection Control and Prevention SOP
18. Ensure cleanliness and sterilization of exam area
19. Sterilizations of instruments after each use
20. Employs PPE: gloves/gowns/masks/goggles as per universal precautions
21. Washes hands following P&P before and after each patient contact and contact with potential infectious agent.
22. Disposes of hazardous waste in designated containers as per SOP

Inventory

23. Stocks all exam rooms and nurse station with needed forms, supplies and equipment daily
24. Maintains inventory of supplies, medications, emergency kits and first aid boxes
25. Maintains inventory of Family Planning supplies
26. Receives and organizes supplies and medications

General Competencies

27. Implements and Leads Health Education Plan
28. Provides leadership and mentorship for nurses in “walk about” outreach activities
29. Ensures that patient education materials (posters, flyers, etc..) are in all clinical and common areas (water stations, cafeteria, satellite nurse stations)
30. Demonstrates resourcefulness, initiative and creativity
31. Leads and motivates Nurses to provide high quality care

Performance Summary (describe strengths and weaknesses) of Candidate:

This module was designed and produced through funding from the Levi Strauss Foundation as well as technical assistance on content and development by the Evidence Project (Meridian Group International, Inc.) under its USAID contract.

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