

Nurturing a Culture of Engagement in Healthcare

A culture of engagement in healthcare organizations sets the stage for employees to learn and succeed in a flourishing, professional environment while delivering high-quality patient care.

Research shows that better patient outcomes, higher patient satisfaction, and stronger patient safety standards often result from engaged healthcare staff.¹ Engagement also fosters a work environment where open communication and collaboration among teams thrive. In an engaged workplace, absenteeism is lowered and burnout is lessened.²

However, lack of employee engagement has many negative effects. It may result in toxic environments for employees, higher turnover rates, and compromised patient care.³

As healthcare organizations continue to face challenging circumstances, such as staffing shortages, burnout, and more, it behooves them to invest in their healthcare employees to keep them motivated and engaged.

Following are various tips on reaching out to healthcare employees and nurturing a culture of engagement in healthcare organizations.⁴

1

Invest in healthcare leaders by supporting them, cultivating their skills, and giving them robust tools and assistance. Encourage leaders to be positive, optimistic, trustworthy, visible, and approachable as well as to build and maintain relationships with healthcare employees.

2

Inspire trust in healthcare employees by ensuring leaders demonstrate the organization's values in their leadership approach and communication methods. Reinforce a culture in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect.

3

Commit to an atmosphere of two-way communication that involves leaders listening carefully and encouraging healthcare employees to speak up about their concerns. Keep lines of communication open and accessible by hosting events (e.g., town hall meetings) where healthcare employees can ask questions, share concerns with leadership, and feel part of decision-making.

4

Ensure that [onboarding processes](#) for healthcare employees are thorough and orient them to the organization as well as the other employees. Seek feedback from new employees to improve the processes.

5

Specify acceptable and unacceptable behaviors that align with organizational values. Offer tangible examples to illustrate the behaviors. If unacceptable behaviors occur, confront and manage them promptly.

6

Allow healthcare employees to work independently and as a team to devise solid clinical solutions and make decisions when delivering patient care.

7

Keep healthcare employees informed about the organization's goals and mission, outlook on care, and values. Let them feel part of the "bigger picture" to see the organization's focus and how they play a valuable role in it.

8

Offer peer mentors or coaching programs. Garner feedback from healthcare employees to assess the programs' success and improve any issues identified.

9

Offer opportunities for learning and professional development to healthcare employees on an ongoing basis as part of retention efforts. Keep them informed about advancement opportunities.

10

Show appreciation for healthcare employees through recognition and reward programs (e.g., deliver shout-outs for outstanding performance, feature workplace “heroes,” or post employee-of-the-month announcements). Recognize teams and individuals for milestones. Include opportunities for peer-to-peer recognition and manager-to-staff recognition.

11

Promote work–life balance initiatives. Consider flexible workforce models to help healthcare employees manage their personal obligations. Additionally, keep schedules flexible so healthcare employees can participate in health and wellness initiatives (e.g., stress management, exercise programs, and more).

12

Survey healthcare employees on an ongoing basis to determine how engaged they are. Review feedback from the surveys and inform employees about any new changes implemented that will help address their concerns or suggestions.

Endnotes

¹ Allegrow. (2025, October 1). *Employee engagement in healthcare*. Retrieved from <https://allegrow.com/steps-to-better-employee-engagement-in-healthcare/>

² Ibid.

³ Itacit. (2024, July 18). *Employee engagement in healthcare: A critical factor for quality care and organizational success*. Retrieved from <https://itacit.com/blog/employee-engagement-in-healthcare-a-critical-factor-for-quality-care-and-organizational-success/>

⁴ The risk tips in this publication are based on the following sources: DeRienzo, C., & Buhlman, N. (2025, April 29). *7 tactics for successfully driving health care team engagement*. American Hospital Association. Retrieved from www.aha.org/news/blog/2025-04-29-7-tactics-successfully-driving-health-care-team-engagement; FasterCapital. (2025, April 12). *Hospital culture and employee engagement: Key drivers for business success*. Retrieved from <https://fastercapital.com/content/Hospital-culture--Hospital-Culture-and-Employee-Engagement--Key-Drivers-for-Business-Success.html>; Perry, M. (2024, August 23 [last updated]). *15 ways to improve employee engagement in healthcare*. Cooleaf. Retrieved from www.cooleaf.com/blog/5-ways-to-improve-employee-engagement-in-healthcare

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