



Redesigning your workforce for the future of healthcare

Increasing levels of burnout and projected shortage of clinical roles are challenging healthcare leaders to re-imagine their workforce strategies.

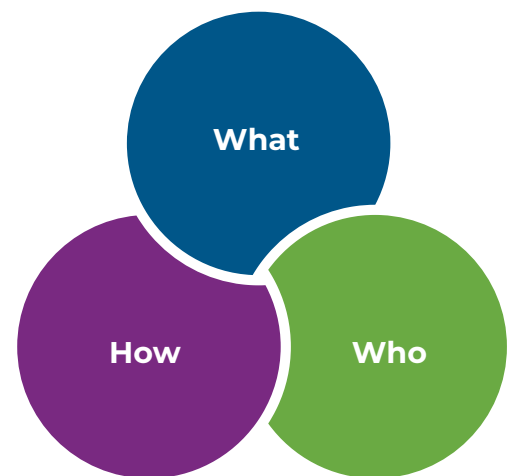
In [Huron's talent research](#), 81% of healthcare workers report regular feelings of burnout, with ineffective processes and systems noted as the biggest driver.

As leaders implement innovative strategies to combat today's workforce challenges, they should ask how these solutions prepare their people and organizations for the future of work. Without this longer-term view, healthcare organizations will struggle to retain and attract the talent needed to stay relevant in an [evolving digital landscape](#).

Designing a future-ready workforce requires a strategic rethinking of how processes, roles, and technology evolve to best support the needs of the health system's people and mission.



Asking these three key questions shifts organizational thinking:



- 1. What** work needs to be done to create maximum value and align with the organization's strategic priorities and mission?
- 2. Who** does the work so that the right resources and technology are in the right place at the right time?
- 3. How** is work performed to create exceptional patient, employee, and provider experiences?

Using these three questions as a guide, healthcare leaders can inform their workforce strategies around four core components of work design.

1. Staffing and skill mix

Staffing models and skill sets will evolve to include a more diverse, technology-enabled workforce, requiring new expectations. Workforce models that promote flexibility, prioritize employee development, [and advance culture and technology in tandem](#) will help boost employee retention and elevate skill sets, resulting in better care for patients and financial outcomes for the organization.

Putting it into practice:

- **Administrative staff**
Respond to the recruiting pull of other industries by creating clear, competitive career paths for recruits and current staff.
- **Executives**
Enhance career progression pathways and build out comprehensive strategic succession planning.
- **Nurses**
Allow nurses to supplement bedside care by working virtually when applicable. Stave off burnout by incorporating flexible scheduling.
- **Physicians**
Expand use of advanced practice providers (APPs) to redistribute work from physicians and help them stay focused on more complex cases.

2. Labor arbitrage and sourcing

Stiff cross-industry competition for talent is forcing healthcare organizations to address expertise and skill gaps. Strategic partnerships and outsourcing can help fill gaps while reducing the workload of onsite staff, freeing them to focus on more patient-centric tasks.

Putting it into practice:

- **Administrative staff**
Outsource functions that don't require an onsite presence, including shared service centers, revenue cycle, and IT. To maintain quality, ensure the right service level agreement is in place.
- **Nurses**
Outsource case management or discharge planning to alternative, lower-cost domestic or

global markets. Organizations choosing the latter must be mindful of specific regulatory requirements.

3. Intelligent automation

Manual, inefficient processes heighten staff burnout, lower quality of care, and decrease productivity. Selecting [proper use cases for intelligent automation](#) can help lessen the strain on overworked staff, allowing them to focus more on patient care and complete tasks more efficiently.

Putting it into practice:

- **Administrative staff**
Leverage robotic process automation (RPA) software to help complete repetitive tasks across functions, including revenue cycle and data entry.
- **Executives**
Increase data accessibility by integrating automation within the health system's ERP platform to create insights for care, employee satisfaction, and other business-critical areas.
- **Physicians**
Invest in ambient listening software to reduce the administrative burden of clinical documentation.

4. Technology and process optimization

While healthcare organizations continue to [invest in new digital tools](#), investment itself won't drive success. Organizations frequently miss opportunities to utilize existing technology to its fullest potential and end up with unnecessary spend on more niche or point solutions.

Putting it into practice:

- **Administrative staff**
Expand the functionality of existing platforms across functions, including patient scheduling and reporting.
- **Nurses**
Leverage patient portals to gather essential information ahead of patient visits, saving nurses valuable time.

As healthcare workers demand change and technology reshapes the future of work, organizations can position themselves for success by proactively determining what work will need to be done, who will do the work, and how those tasks will be performed. Maintaining alignment between your people, processes, and technology will prove crucial as work becomes more digitally connected and less confined by physical and geographic barriers.



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