

How Technology Is Changing Recruiting, Retention in Home-Based Care

Andrew Donlan, Oct 17, 2022

The COVID-19 hasn't changed the workforce issues in home-based care, other than by making those issues worse at various stages of the pandemic.

What has changed over the last few years is how providers are trying to address their workforce woes. Increasingly, they are turning to technology to do that.

"We have more and more people that want to age and at home, we have more and more of a need for this service," Jim Rolla, the SVP of personal care at VNS Health, [said on a webinar hosted by CareAcademy Thursday](#). "How are we going to meet this need? How, as an industry, are we going to face this challenge, knowing that the workforce shortage has become so critical?"

The New York-based VNS Health, [which went through a major rebrand in May](#), is a full-service organization. The company provides care to over 40,000 patients daily in the five boroughs of New York City via its over 10,000 employees.

Over time, the company has had to adapt its recruiting and training – the latter of which ties heavily into retention – to a new world that allows less business to be done in person.

"That's one of the results of the pandemic, it has changed how we all do business, no matter what industry you're in," Rolla said. "So you have to think about ... how you get your caregivers to think about another way of being able to learn or oriented and introduced into a new organization."

On its end, the Marietta, Georgia-based AccordCare is looking for more technology partners to drive efficiency and interoperability in this area.

One of the things that Crisy Cary – the VP of clinical operations at AccordCare – believes about the home-based care industry is that it's a bit behind when it comes to technology.

"I will say in the home care sector, there's technology out there, but there's so much more that's going to need to come," Cary said. "Because we're not there yet. We're starting to get there."

AccordCare offers clinically complex care, skilled nursing, personal care and companion services in eight states.

Both VNS Health and AccordCare recognize that there's aspects of recruiting and retention they could get better at internally. At the same time, each is also looking for those partners to make things easier on them.

"The technology industry forced us to think about this in another way," Rolla said. "How do we deliver this? How do we deliver this in a way that's more efficient? How do we deliver it in a way where we can have a broader reach? How do we deliver this in a way where we can access more people to address the workforce shortage?"

As Rolla explained, in a way, the pandemic was a conduit for potential technology partners to offer up different ways of training, recruiting and retaining for home-based care agencies.

One of the biggest hurdles was reluctance from staff in the industry. Though online training was "successful" for VNS Health during the pandemic, there were still major hurdles in terms of bringing new ideas and technology to an industry that had very much been stuck in its own ways.

"Are we afraid to embrace it as an industry?" Rolla said. "We've got to get serious about how we're going to change the course of both the workforce shortage, and also attracting new people to this profession."

Both companies have leveraged CareAcademy as a partner on the training front.

But as they look forward, each is also recognizing the issues they've had with recruiting and retention over the last two years or so and then looking for partners who can address those.

"There are so many things that we are trying to focus on," Cary said. "We're running in a million different directions. We want to continue to growing through de novos and acquisitions, so that efficiency piece – and the interoperability piece – that's what we have to focus on. So as we're even looking to bring on new partners, it's about, 'Does it fit into that model for us?'"

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