
A Study Addressing the Retention of an Aging Nursing and Allied Health Workforce

Grant Amount: \$202,000

Grantee: State of Maryland's Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

Partners: Johns Hopkins Hospital, Cedars-Sinai Health System, and Hospital Corporation of America

Project Description: The healthcare system in the United States faces a critical shortage of skilled workers, particularly in nursing and other allied health fields, such as radiology, respiratory therapy, physical therapy, and laboratory technicians. This worker shortage is due in large part to the aging of the baby boom generation, as a significant segment of the healthcare workforce nears retirement age. As a result, the healthcare industry is at risk of losing its most experienced workers at the same time that the industry and its needs for skilled workers continue to grow. While steps also must be taken to expand the pipeline of workers entering healthcare fields, retaining older workers is a critical strategy for meeting healthcare workforce needs in the coming years.

This one-year project will provide an important foundation of knowledge for efforts to address the workforce challenges posed by the aging of the nursing and allied health workforce. Through a series of focus groups with employees who are nearing retirement age or have recently retired, the study will examine the incentives or conditions that would encourage older employees to continue working. The project will result in a better understanding of the steps that can be taken to improve the retention of nurses and allied health workers and thereby meet the critical workforce needs of the healthcare industry.

