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Rethinking Recruitment: How Catholic Health Services Builds a Workforce that Stays

Through mission alignment, enhanced onboarding, and a strengthened talent acquisition function, the organization is redefining retention in South Florida's competitive healthcare landscape

BY ROSE LUGO, EdD

Catholic Health Services operates four medical campuses across Broward and Miami-Dade counties, offering post-acute rehabilitation hospitals, skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, as well as hospice, palliative, and home health services. Although founded by the Archdiocese of Miami, the organization is keen on serving people of all faiths. Over the past three years, Catholic Health Services has significantly enhanced the recruitment and retention of healthcare providers by focusing on both process improvement and mission alignment.

In 2026, Catholic Health Services is leveraging its 40th anniversary to elevate its recruiting approach, focusing its organizational storytelling on highlighting the longevity of its most loyal team members. These include Certified Nursing Assistants Pauline Brown, who has served 39 years at Villa Maria Nursing Center in Miami, and Ann Whitmour, who has served 36 years in Broward. This longevity extends all the way to leadership. Director of Nursing Sharon Bedasse has been with the organization for nearly 33 years and Director of Human Resources Salissa Mayes follows closely with 31. Their faithful service tells the story of a stable employer with deep community roots.

A strong emphasis on employee recognition further strengthens Catholic Health Services' retention record. Cultivating a culture in which employees feel valued and appreciated is key to sustaining this exceptional longevity, in which the organization is investing to attract talent likely to remain long term.

"Mission is really the driver of our success. We see a tangible correlation between team members who reach the coveted 30-year, 25-year plus tenure and their alignment with our values centered on human dignity and excellent medical care," says Mary Jo Frick, President and CEO at Catholic Health Services.



Mary Jo Frick

"Our retention success in no small part results from identifying candidates who are not only qualified but also aligned with the organization's mission and values. Our Human Resources Department does a tremendous job attracting superbly qualified professionals who are genuinely motivated to serve in a compassionate-care first, mission-oriented environment," adds Frick.

Competition for the same talent pool is fierce, and in response, Catholic Health Services' mission-focused approach over the past three years has been greatly helped by strengthening its talent acquisition function—refining expertise, growing team structure, and optimizing processes to better support organizational growth. A critical shift was to move the organization beyond transactional hiring to deliver a more personalized and meaningful candidate experience.

Alongside improving recruitment efforts, the organization has enhanced its onboarding process to create a more engaging and supportive transition for new hires. HR Directors at each facility now play a more active role, offering a personal and distinctive touch while guiding employees through the complex regulatory and compliance requirements of healthcare. This approach ensures that new team members feel welcomed, supported, and prepared from day one, reinforcing a sense of belonging and commitment early in their employment journey.

Finally, the continuous monitoring of turnover trends—an essential discipline in today's environment—has enabled Catholic Health Services' HR team to deploy proactive, data-driven course correction to strengthen workforce stability. Catholic Health Services' experience shows that while compensation remains important, it is not the sole differentiator. Attitude, morale, and a genuine willingness to make a difference in patients' lives are critical factors in both hiring and retention. Ultimately, the organization's greatest asset continues to be its people, whose dedication and compassion have shaped its legacy and will continue to define its future.