A Strong Workforce Delivers Mission-Centered Care

We are MercyOne: a connected system of health care facilities and services dedicated to helping you and your community live your best life.

More than 20,000 colleagues strong, our care providers and colleagues make health and happiness their highest priority, so Iowans can get well — and stay well. With 230+ care locations, our clinics, medical centers and affiliates allow us to improve the lives of individuals and communities across Iowa and beyond.

Strong Workforce Pipeline
MercyOne is committed to creating partnerships, programs and pathways for our colleagues and in the communities we serve to develop a robust, diverse pipeline of talent. Here are several examples around the efforts underway across Iowa:

High School Partnerships:
To address the need for people in the health care field, MercyOne provides awareness and exploration activities providing exposure to the variety of health care careers. With more than 50 events attended or hosted by MercyOne in the 2022-2023 school year, 9,000 students were impacted by these efforts, driving interest and networking post-graduation. Since 2023, more than 100 high school students have been hired into MercyOne facilities in roles spanning from Certified Nurse Assistants and Emergency Medical Technicians to Radiology Aides and Environmental and Food Services Associates. Given the success of these efforts, MercyOne has more than 20 events scheduled for next year, including summer camps, exploration events, speaker sessions, and worksite tours with a prospective impact of over 11,500 students. institutions to provide clinical space for health care programs. We partner with these institutions to build our pipeline by supporting a diverse demographic of students to create a strong supply of workforce. Some programs of focus include nursing, imaging, respiratory, laboratory sciences, and paramedic and Earn and Learn programs like our Medical Assistant program utilized across the state in partnership with Mercy College of Health Sciences. Moving forward, MercyOne's focus needs to be around expanding current partnerships with surrounding post-secondary institutions and creating new relationships to hire hard-to-fill positions.

Community Partnerships:
Iowa Vocational Rehab Services (IVRS) is a great example of a community partner who collaborates with MercyOne for workforce. IVRS understands our needs related to specific roles and requirements, reviewed training plans and potential accommodations, and determined how their clients can be successful within our organization. With 24 hires in 2022, MercyOne ranked in the top ten list of employers in the state in employing clients from IVRS, and has set a goal of 100+ hires in the coming fiscal year. MercyOne will approach the partnership through phases spanning from establishment, strategic planning and a system-wide training to include all MercyOne leaders and stakeholders in the conversation.

“The pandemic, along with a large number of nurses retiring, has created significant nursing shortages. Leaders need to be creative in retention and recruitment strategies. Contract labor is not a financially sustainable process for health care organizations, nor is it good for the overall morale and culture of our frontline workers”

- MercyOne Nursing Leader
Support Innovative Care Delivery Models
The national health care workforce shortage is felt here in Iowa, and at MercyOne, and it creates an unstable and unpredictable work environment for all involved. As a result, major change is necessary for MercyOne to continue to build a strong future.

One initiative, TogetherTeam, is creating new care models and other important transformational initiatives to grow and to better serve our patients. TogetherTeam is an innovative care model, supported by technology and processes providing patient/member-centered care with a three-person team. This team includes a Bedside RN, RN Partner and Virtual RN. The team works together to provide coordinated, efficient care that supports better outcomes, safety and an exceptional experience.

This model brings many benefits including:
• Increased patient safety and satisfaction.
• Improved expertise and mentoring at bedside.
• Meeting caregivers where they are in their career and offering advancement opportunities.
• Providing a stable, predictable working environment.

Address Workplace Violence
Though workplace violence was an issue prior to the pandemic, it has worsened considerably in recent years. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported health care workers accounted for nearly three-quarters of violence-related workplace injuries and illnesses, with hospital workers six times more likely to suffer job violence than private sector workers as a whole. (AHA)

A survey published in Workplace Health & Safety revealed two-thirds of nurses experienced verbal abuse in early 2020, especially those caring for COVID-19 patients (IHA). A high-paced, high-stress environment – including the pressure of limited capacity - creates an overwhelmed staff. When that environment is coupled with violence, the strain on workforce stability is exacerbated. More than a third of nurses recently surveyed by one staffing firm said they plan to leave their current jobs by the end of this year.

To address workforce shortages, MercyOne is intensifying retention and recruiting efforts to attract new staff and provide current colleagues the support they need. We are also improving communication through policies and procedures education when this happens onsite, and how our colleagues can receive support and help.

At our Genesis Health facilities in Davenport, we deployed “No violence” signs throughout the hospitals. We have distributed staff-worn personal alarms (panic buttons) and mounted additional alarms on registration desks. Duress alarms have also been installed throughout the exterior areas of the hospitals.

Other elements of our approach to improving security and reducing workplace violence include:
• State-of-the-art video surveillance technology with significant coverage and extensive video storage.
• Tight badge access controls between public and colleague areas.
• Department lock-down capabilities.
• All colleagues are required to review Run, Hide, Fight training at least once a year.
• Strong relationships with area law enforcement and city officials.
• Meetings with County Attorney, Mayor, Chief of Police and City Administrator asking for additional support and advocating for stronger penalties against those who assault our colleagues.

Use this QR Code to contact your members of Congress!