Saint Alphonsus health system is a Catholic, faith-based ministry and not-for-profit health system serving the state of Idaho, eastern Oregon, and northern Nevada communities. Saint Alphonsus Health System reinvests in the communities we serve, through charity care and other benefits. Our goal is to improve the health and well-being of people by emphasizing care that is patient-centered, physician-led, innovative, and community-based.

Our Challenge

One of the greatest challenges facing Saint Alphonsus Health System (SAHS) is the ability to recruit for our most critical clinical spaces. Nursing is one of our most in-demand areas and is reflective of staffing challenges across health care. With 300+ nursing positions open across Saint Alphonsus alone, this shortage impacts employee morale, ability to provide quality care, and risk for burnout, and is a key factor in hospitals needing to close departments. We’ve seen higher than average numbers of health care professionals leaving the field due to increased burnout from the pandemic and political challenges to providing health care. These factors combined with an aging population create a growing demand for nurses while at the same time, more than a million nurses are expected to retire nationally by 2030. With similar challenges across all of health care, these shortages require innovative solutions.

Early Outreach and Education Strategy

Introducing students to careers in health care begins as early as middle school and high school. We have increased our outreach to local high schools to provide career exploration and strategic connection points throughout their education. Our goal is to increase student awareness of health care careers and increase the likelihood of students beginning their careers with Saint Alphonsus. We continue to support colleagues in their growth by offering an Upfront Tuition Scholarship for some of our most in-demand positions. Tuition and fees are paid directly to the college, relieving our colleagues of the financial costs. We are limited in our ability to expand our workforce by the availability and capacity of academic programs. We actively partner with a wide variety of colleges and universities to develop and grow in-demand programs.

Workplace Violence

Saint Alphonsus has prioritized violence prevention, and our leadership team has demonstrated its commitment by creating a full-time role, unique across the Trinity Health system. The Workplace Violence & Education Consultant’s focus is violence prevention, staffed by a licensed professional counselor who collaborates with security, clinical staff and leadership to bridge the gap between these teams. This individual facilitates de-escalation training for colleagues and nursing students, provides behavioral health expertise in managing disruptive patients and visitors, and manages the violence prevention program.

Community Outreach and Collaboration

We look for ways to work with workforce development agencies and community organizations. These partnerships connect us to new candidates and allow us to combine our efforts with the community’s workforce development resources. We hope to provide valuable insight, support the development of the workforce through cohorts and partnerships, and partner on grant proposals to fund more training opportunities.
Strong Workforce

Innovative Care Delivery Models
Saint Alphonsus has been an innovator in testing new models of delivering nursing care. Our TogetherTeam model links a bedside RN providing direct patient care support, an RN partner (NA, CNA or LPN) to allow nurses to care for more patients, and a virtual RN to bring expert support and coordinate complex care. Saint Alphonsus has been an early adopter of this model in our Boise and Nampa facilities, now deploying in additional patient care units.

Refugee Collaboration, Support and Partnership
The refugee community in the Treasure Valley is a large talent pool, many of whom have medical experience in their home countries. This talent pool helps meet our staffing needs while building a workforce reflective of our community. We work to identify the highest entry point that would allow colleagues to utilize their experience and skills. We continue to provide support through our scholarship to obtain U.S. licensure. We also provide an on-site language class for those needing to advance their English language skills before advancing to patient-facing or clinical roles.

Mission
We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

Core Values
Reverence • Commitment to Those Experiencing Poverty • Safety • Justice • Stewardship • Integrity

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