

2021 DIVERSITY REPORT DEI STRATEGY IN HEALTHCARE RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION, & RETENTION





Introduction	3	Retaining Employees With a Strong Work Environment	12
Why Healthcare Needs to Prioritize Diversity and Inclusion	4	Flexible Work Shifts	13
What Are the Benefits of Diversity in Nursing?	7	Fair Pay in Women-Dominated Fields	13
Branding Your Business to Attract Diverse Candidates	8	The Paradox of Low Earning	14
Understanding the IDEA Model	9	Creating Opportunities for Professional Growth	15
Inclusion	9	Career Growth Meetings and Check-Ins	16
Diversity	9	Internal Mentorships	16
Equity	9	Incentivized Training	16
Access	9	Accountability and Transparency	17
Pay Equity With a Wage Grid or Compensation Philosophy	10	Methods of Measuring DEI Strategy Success	17
Pay Equity Challenges in Healthcare	11	Quantitative	17
Extra Shifts	11	Qualitative	17
Shift Differentials	11	Hybrid Model	17
Salary Negotiation	11	How Technology Supports Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	18
Takeaways for Healthcare Managers	11	Conclusion	20
		About Apploi	21



INTRODUCTION

It's an exciting time to be in healthcare. The Covid-19 pandemic sparked a worldwide focus on healthcare innovation, the effects of which we will continue to see for years to come. This decade is likely to rewrite the playbook on how care is delivered in our communities, and how healthcare leaders staff their organizations.

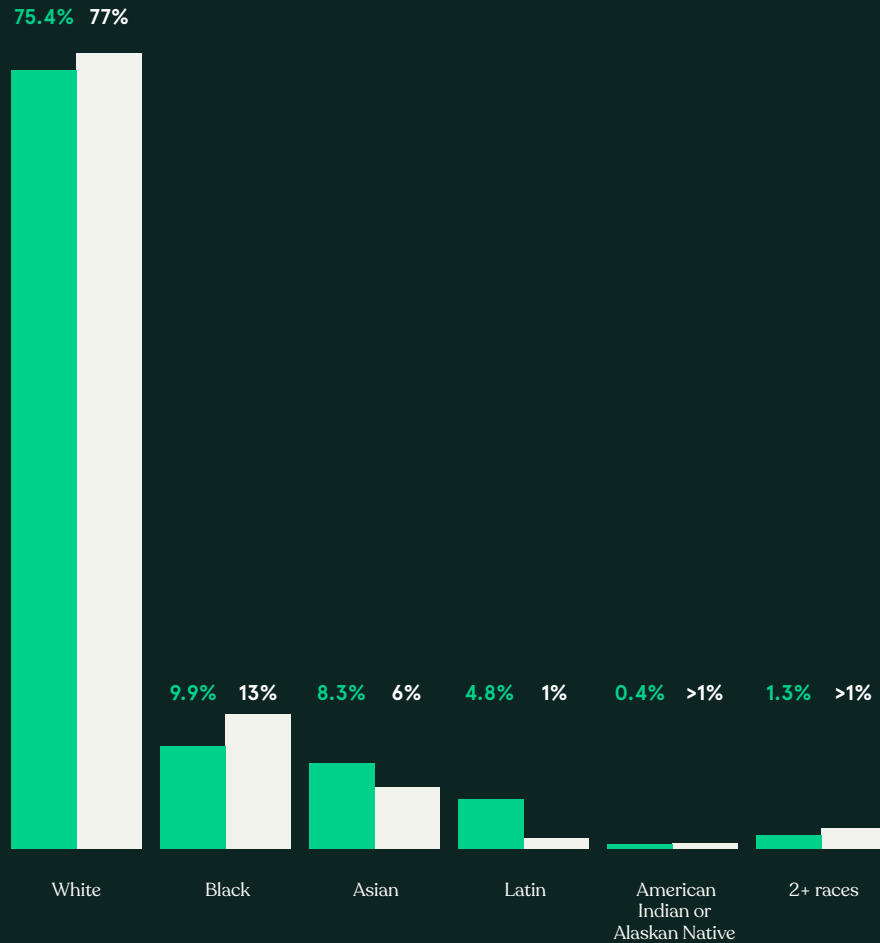
As the business of healthcare diversifies, so will the talent. For employers, this is a prime moment to rethink talent attraction and retention strategies.

More than ever before, now is the moment to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies (DEI) in healthcare staffing. A strong DEI strategy will help you attract and retain top staff, while also providing a useful framework to guide promotions and employee support.



RACIAL DEMOGRAPHICS OF AMERICAN NURSES

- Nurses
- Entire US labor force



Labor force characteristics by race and ethnicity, 2019 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020)

WHY HEALTHCARE NEEDS TO PRIORITIZE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Healthcare leaders, like leaders in many industries, are working to increase diversity at all levels of staffing. With over 75% of nurses self-identifying as white, organizations must seek opportunities to attract and retain racially and ethnically diverse workers.

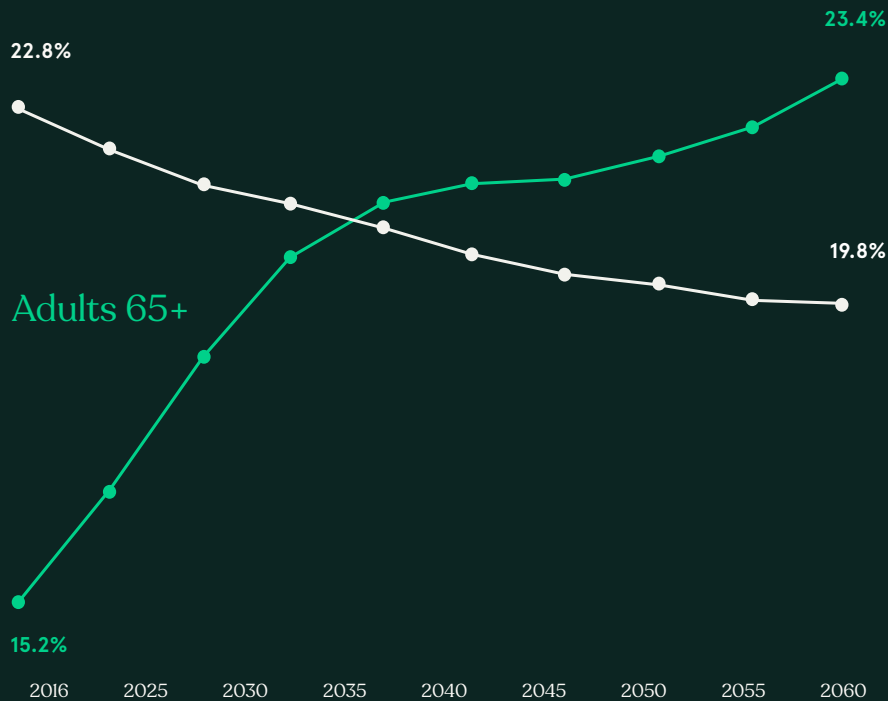
Nursing is a female-dominated profession, and workforce statistics suggest that women are already overrepresented in most healthcare facilities. Among American LPNs, men account for about 7.6% of the workforce.

At the same time, healthcare is facing an increasingly pressing nursing shortage that was only worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. With over [70 million Baby Boomers](#) rapidly aging, America is facing an extraordinarily large generation of older citizens.



OLDER ADULTS ARE PROJECTED TO OUTNUMBER CHILDREN BY 2034, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN US HISTORY

Children -18



U.S. Census Bureau (2017)

According to the WHO, American healthcare can expect to need about [6 million new nurses](#) by 2030. To have enough healthcare workers to provide care to aging Americans, healthcare leaders will need to develop staffing strategies that not only attract large numbers of qualified candidates, but also upend high-turnover positions and proactively improve retention rates.



HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONS BY JOB LOSS, 2019-2021

Industry	Occupation Employment in Industry (2019)	Occupation Employment in Industry (2021)	Change (2019 - 2021)	% Change (2019 - 2021)
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	2,002	1,693	-309	-15%
Skilled Nursing Facilities	149,961	136,720	-13,240	-9%
Ambulance Services	4,214	3,961	-2,536	-6%
Home Health Care Services	180,170	175,378	-4,792	-3%
Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	11,135	10,887	-248	-2%
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	194,537	191,801	-2,736	-1%

Employment by Industry (Emsi Burning Glass, 2021)

Currently, many healthcare professions are seeing marked job loss. Skilled Nursing Facilities have experienced the greatest net loss of jobs since 2019, losing over 13,000 positions, or approximately 9% of all roles. Vocational Rehabilitation Services have also experienced a profound job loss of about 15% in three years.

Given this reality, DEI efforts in healthcare must deal with a deeper issue than simply creating employment opportunities for diverse candidates. Healthcare managers need to broaden their candidate pools to draw in more applicants, including men—but even more critically, they must build inclusive work environments that give diverse employees real paths to grow.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY IN NURSING?

Here are a few of the benefits healthcare organizations may enjoy when they hire, promote, and retain diverse workers.

- Cultural competency with patients from a variety of backgrounds
- A decreased need for language interpreters in the office
- More comfortable communication between male patients and male nurses
- Greater understanding of health issues facing the LGBTQIA+ community
- Sensitivity toward treatment plans that are accessible for disabled, rural, and low-income patients
- Ability to recognize intersections of physical health, mental health, and neurodivergence
- Stronger advocacy for patients with specific needs regarding diet and religious customs
- Greater comfort from patients who feel affinity toward their nurses
- Affinity between nurses, which may increase employee retention
- A wider pool of candidates to remedy the nursing shortage

Nurses make up the largest segment of the entire healthcare workforce, and often have the most direct contact with patients. Because of this, nurses commonly receive more insight into patients' needs than any other member of staff, making them key in addressing health inequities in our communities.





BRANDING YOUR BUSINESS TO ATTRACT DIVERSE CANDIDATES

Your brand image is the collection of values, priorities, and emotions associated with your business. For a healthcare organization, this goes far beyond marketing a particular product. Your brand image isn't only how you encourage trust from your customers and residents—it's also a vital part of how you attract new employees.

Every business has a brand image, regardless of whether it was intentionally crafted. To ensure that yours is positive, pursue opportunities for feedback. Encourage staff members who are leaving your organization to complete exit interviews, and use these interviews to learn and reflect on the perceived company culture.

For some proactive assessment, take a good look at your organization's website, along with any social media you maintain or news items in which you were mentioned. What values do these pieces highlight?

UNDERSTANDING THE IDEA MODEL

The widespread embrace of diversity as a business value has led [some critics](#) to label it a buzzword that allows employers to promise change without taking action. It's easy for businesses to claim a commitment to diversity, but actually backing up that claim in a meaningful way is more complicated.

One useful framework is the [IDEA model](#), where the acronym IDEA refers to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access. When well integrated, this model can be used to monitor how your team is embodying your values during recruitment, onboarding, and daily operations.

Let's break this down further.

Inclusion

The characteristic of a workplace in which every individual can be equally included in all activities, opportunities, and social structures.

Diversity

The commitment to inviting a wide spectrum of perspectives, experiences, and opinions, and the understanding that these differing voices offer invaluable expertise.

Equity

The collection of policies used to make sure every member of your staff receives the same treatment, and has, as much as possible, the same experience within your organization.

Access

The strategies in place to ensure that every staff member has equal access to growth opportunities. This includes equal access to training, support, promotions, and pay raises.

When thinking through the values that you aspire to epitomize, make room for diversity and inclusion. Stating these values without evidence tends to ring hollow. Instead, show explicitly how you live and breathe these values.

You can't earn a positive brand image overnight, much less with your employees, who are intimately familiar with your internal practices. Focus on long-term gains, and on making your organization a genuinely positive workplace.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER STATEMENT FROM AN APPLLOI CUSTOMER

“The Grove at the Lake is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, expression or orientation, genetic information, national origin, age, disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran. When completing this application, you may exclude information that would disclose or reference this information, or any information relating to any other status protected by federal, state, or local law.”

The Grove at the Lake



PAY EQUITY WITH A WAGE GRID OR COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY

Depending on your organization, pay may be informed by a wage grid, a compensation philosophy, or both.

A [compensation philosophy](#) is a statement of purpose regarding an organization's pay rate. Like a wage grid, it is typically created by the HR department to ensure consistency and justification across employee pay. By nature, a compensation philosophy also indicates your organization's position on pay equity. If you apply the same standard to all employees, you have reached a baseline of equity—although compensation philosophies also give HR departments an opportunity to justify pay discrepancies dependent on experience, education, and other factors.

Both compensation philosophies and wage grids should account for the wages offered by competing businesses, and industries, in your area. By understanding the standard pay offered at other businesses, you'll be better equipped to understand the calculations your candidates may be making when they consider a new job.



PAY EQUITY CHALLENGES IN HEALTHCARE

Although the Equal Pay Act requires that employees are compensated equitably across gender, pay discrepancy is still a stark reality in most industries. Equal pay for equal work is tricky to isolate or enforce since any given employee comes with their own unique set of circumstances that could plausibly impact their compensation.

Because of this, HR departments must employ DEI sensitivity or the IDEA model to make sure they are actually attaining pay equity.

Who is being rewarded, and who is being penalized, by apparently fair pay discrepancies?

Consider pay discrepancy based on the following factors.

Extra Shifts

Extra income from additional shifts is likely to benefit employees with high levels of flexibility in the rest of their lives. This income is often inaccessible, meanwhile, to employees who have families, are working additional jobs, or are pursuing further education.

Shift Differentials

Many employers offer extra pay to employees [working less desirable shifts](#). This might include holidays, night shifts, or shifts that are particularly long or risky. The extra pay from these shifts tends to benefit employees who aren't primary caretakers for their households.

Salary Negotiation

It's been [well established](#) that men are more likely to think salary is negotiable than women—and therefore, more likely to request a higher wage.

This is not, however, the only reason men, and specifically white men, tend to fare better with salary negotiation. Studies have shown that when they request a higher salary, white men are actually more likely to receive it than any other demographic group. While it's true that this group asks for higher wages more frequently, they are also more likely to be rewarded for asking. This trend encourages white men to pursue higher pay, while other groups of people learn to expect greater rates of rejection.

Takeaways for Healthcare Managers

What can managers do about these trends?

Address pay discrepancies with assistance from both employers and employees. Empower employees to ask for more—and use your wage grid or compensation philosophy to ensure different groups will receive affirmative answers equitably. When employers explicitly state that salary is negotiable, the discrepancy between negotiation attempts [disappears](#). That's meaningful, but the impact is only as great as employers' willingness and ability to actually provide greater pay rates.

During recruiting, make your compensation philosophy publicly accessible. Speak frankly with candidates about your policy regarding raises. Make it clear that pay equity is one of your central tenets, and that you are actually committed to understanding and disrupting the reasons behind unfair discrepancies.



RETAINING EMPLOYEES WITH A STRONG WORK ENVIRONMENT

Your work environment can be thought of as your post-hire brand image. Your employees can be your greatest ambassadors—or your harshest critics.

You can support your employees' mental health and well-being by protecting their work-life balance. You might consider investing in wellness benefits like gym memberships, meditation sessions, and support with addiction recovery. More important, however, is to make sure you provide fair pay and benefits. No one can thrive when they are struggling to live.



Flexible Work Shifts

[Census data](#) shows that among American children, 70% live with two parents, while 21% live with only their mother, and 4.5% live only with their father. Even in two-parent households, women are more likely to be the primary caregiver, with [74% of mothers](#) saying they spend more time managing their children's schedules than their male co-parent. Likewise, [in 2020](#), only 38% of women said they were satisfied with the division of domestic labor in their home, compared to 55% of men.

This paints the same picture the census and Bureau of Labor Statistics have been illustrating for years: women spend more time taking care of children and domestic responsibilities, and are more likely to sacrifice other opportunities as a result.

Fair Pay in Women-Dominated Fields

The prevalence of women in healthcare might inspire a false sense that the industry has gotten a head start on diversity efforts, outpacing male-dominated fields for equity. The truth is that women in women-dominated industries, and people of color in racially diverse workplaces, are just as vulnerable to exploitation and unjust treatment as they would be in professions dominated by white men.

Taking the example of gender discrimination, it's clear that pay discrepancy is not just a matter of some groups pursuing higher salaries with more aggression than others. Industries perceived to

be dominated by women actually pay less. When more women enter an industry, the work is literally devalued, and [wages consistently decline](#) over a ten-year period. When men enter a previously woman-dominated industry, the opposite happens—the average pay tends to rise.

In the 1950s, women made up 30-50% of the computer programming industry, compared to around 25% today. As the industry's gender demographics changed, so did its public perception. Soon after men started dominating the industry, wages for computer programming [increased dramatically](#).

This disturbing trend has clear implications for healthcare. Roles like CNAs may be primarily occupied by women and represent people of color at relatively high rates—but if these roles offer unlivable wages, the effect is simply that more women and people of color are stuck with untenable pay. By comparison, the relatively small number of men who enter healthcare are more likely to pursue and attain higher-level management positions. To manage the resulting inequity, healthcare leaders must create clear pathways to help all staff members grow.

As the demand for nurses explodes, we are seeing [more male nurses](#) accepting positions, and more conversations about how to [brand nursing to appeal to men](#). While healthcare needs to both attract men and offer competitive salaries, it would be a great shame if healthcare wages only rose as men entered the workforce.

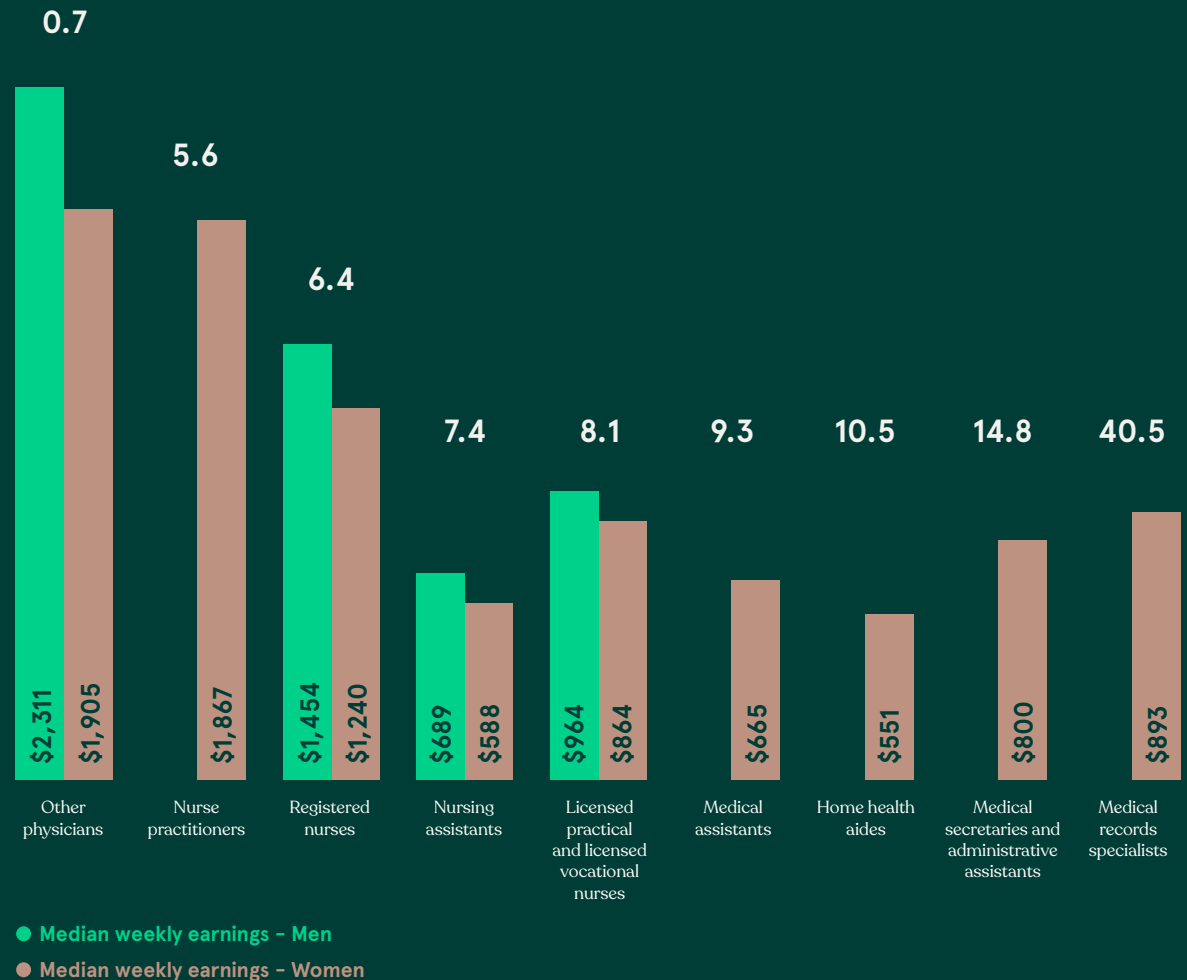
THE PARADOX OF LOW EARNING

It's an unfortunate reality that, in many cases, low earning results in low earning. In a two-parent household, the [parent who earns less](#) is more likely to give up shifts and advancement opportunities to handle other issues, take care of children, and support their partner's schedule. In practice, this means that relatively privileged groups, like white and male workers, are likely to advance faster than people of color and women.

To truly support diversity, equity, and inclusion, healthcare managers must commit to helping their employees grow. This effort cannot end at rewarding high-performers, but must include inquiry into stumbling blocks.

HEALTHCARE WAGES BY GENDER, 2020

Rate of women to men in occupation



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Due to a combination of wage discrepancy, inequitable responses to salary negotiations, unfairly refused raises, and hostile work environments, many workers who belong to marginalized groups struggle to grow in their careers at the rate that is appropriate to their competency and experience.

You can help resolve these issues by putting systems in place designed to help every staff member excel. Here are a few strategies that have been shown to be effective in promoting growth.



Career Growth Meetings and Check-Ins

Early in your employee's lifecycle at your company, invite them to a career planning meeting. Ask about their professional plans, and assess how you can help them meet their goals.

Keep the conversation going with a follow-up meeting six months in the future.

Continue to meet periodically to track their progress and offer support. Seek out opportunities for your employee to get more experience in their areas of interest. This could include shadowing more seasoned staff members, helping out another team, or receiving additional training within or outside of your organization.

The ability to grow within a company is a major factor in employee retention. By materially supporting your staff members

with concrete career paths, you're investing in employees who are experienced, qualified, and passionate about what they do. You're also creating a better relationship between employees and managers, which is another major boon for retention efforts, since negative experiences with management are frequently cited as a reason for turnover.

Internal Mentorships

Mentorship programs allow you to leverage your greatest resource—your staff—to support more robust training and a strong sense of belonging. Pair seasoned staff members with employees who are looking to gain additional experience.

Mentorships are invaluable for employees who are trying to pivot or develop in their careers, but they are often also fruitful

experiences for the mentors themselves. Like affinity groups and informal friendships, mentorships give healthcare staff a direct hand in shaping their workplace and sharing ideas of what inclusivity means.

Incentivized Training

Help your staff develop in their careers by incentivizing professional training. Among all American nurses, Black nurses are most likely to hold a master's or doctoral degree (14.6%). Asian and Pacific Islander nurses, meanwhile, are most likely to hold a bachelor's degree (69.6%).

Many healthcare professionals may be interested in pursuing further education. Higher education may feel out of reach to nurses from low-income backgrounds, or those balancing work with domestic responsibilities. You can level the playing field by financially incentivizing training. By making this lucrative for your employees, you're lessening the chance that they will dismiss educational programs as too much of a distraction from other work. Simultaneously, you're investing in your employees' future, ensuring your staff will be well-educated, prepared, and loyal.



“Mentorship in nursing is incredibly rewarding—for both the mentee and the mentor. Leading by example pushes you to self-reflect on your own practice and values while giving back to the profession.”

Pritma Chattha, VP of Healthcare Innovation, Aplo

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

To ensure that your DEI strategy is sustainable and successful, plan in advance how you will [measure results](#). Share these results annually or biannually with your team, and invite feedback as a piece of your continual improvement.

Methods of Measuring DEI Strategy Success

Quantitative

Consider embracing [affirmative action](#). Set goals for the number of employees you plan to hire and promote who belong to marginalized groups. If you fall short of these goals, dig into why.

Qualitative

Host all-company anonymous surveys and roundtable discussions regarding your business's culture of inclusivity. Invite input from employees about their satisfaction with managers, compensation rates, flexibility, and opportunities for growth.

Hybrid Model

Use both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the real strides your business is making to address DEI, and to measure employee sentiment surrounding these efforts.





APPLOI CUSTOMERS HAVE SEEN:

71%

reduction in days to hire

88%

average candidate
conversion rate

3

day timelines from interview to offer

HOW TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTS DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The rise of recruiting technology has simplified staffing in a number of ways. It's easier than ever to manage your entire hiring and onboarding process from one central location.

An effective, healthcare-focused recruiting platform like Apploi can help you:

- Source, attract, and screen qualified candidates across multiple channels, accessing applicants who use different job sites
- Remove hiring bias by pulling resume information into a standard, easy-to-read format
- Connect with candidates who are busy with their families, education, or other jobs through unlimited texting and email
- Track which candidate sources see the highest traffic, so you can optimize your job posts for certain jobseekers
- Reduce healthcare organizations' time-to-hire so you can onboard candidates before they start another job
- Create efficient, applicant-friendly recruiting and onboarding experiences so candidates can move quickly through the hiring process
- Verify healthcare licenses automatically

Staffing technology should work alongside diversity and inclusion, but to make sure it does, we have to be thoughtful. When you navigate Apploi, it's clear that it's designed specifically for healthcare, from recruitment to onboarding and managing your staff. That's the kind of specificity we need in order to staff up quickly with diverse candidates, and focus on quality patient care.



Pritma Chattha
VP
Healthcare Innovation

With Apploi revolutionizing how healthcare hires, we're able to reach a higher volume of more diverse candidates. We're able to recruit everywhere, from traditional job boards to social media, and to reach Spanish speakers through Apploi's unique partnerships.



Faygee Morgenshtern
CEO
People Powered Nursing



CONCLUSION

The healthcare industry stands on the precipice of enormous change, and the need for qualified nurses only continues to grow. To rise to this unprecedented occasion, the industry will not only need to evaluate what it takes to attract diverse candidates, but also how to create a workplace where those candidates will choose to stay.



Apploi is on a mission to help healthcare hire, onboard, and retain staff more successfully with smart job distribution, digital credential management, and streamlined onboarding. With automatically created digital employee records and up-to-date credential analytics, we make it easier to keep your staff work-ready, whether you're a team of tens or hundreds.

Interested in learning more about how you can recruit, hire, and onboard healthcare staff quickly?

CONTACT US TODAY

for a free demo of our end-to-end solution.
