



## Memorandum

TO: Nursing Home Administrators

FROM: Martin P. Margolies, Chief Executive Officer  
Healthcare Quality Strategies, Inc. (HQSI)

DATE: June 9, 2006

RE: Current issue of **MENTOR-NHC**; National Nursing Assistants Week

Enclosed is the June issue of **MENTOR-NHC**, which provides tips to **enhance staff satisfaction and improve retention**. These are critical issues for nursing homes because staff's contentment in their careers influences their dedication to your facility and residents. Pleasant relationships among staff, management, and residents inspire a positive chain reaction that leads to higher quality of care and greater satisfaction. These benefits naturally lead to financial advantages for your facility—by avoiding the high costs associated with staff turnover.

This issue of **MENTOR-NHC** was specifically planned to coincide with National Nursing Assistants Week (June 15–22, 2006). At HQSI, we want to take this special opportunity to express our appreciation to your nursing assistants. Please post the enclosed flyer to share our message with your staff.

As always, HQSI is available to support your facility and your staff's efforts to maximize residents' quality of life. If you need any assistance, please contact our Nursing Home team by phone at 1-732-238-5570 or E-mail:

- Marianne Sagarese, extension 2006 or [msagarese@njqio.sdps.org](mailto:msagarese@njqio.sdps.org)
- Anne Sommers, extension 2062 or [asommers@njqio.sdps.org](mailto:asommers@njqio.sdps.org)
- Dolores Viotti, extension 2117 or [dviotti@njqio.sdps.org](mailto:dviotti@njqio.sdps.org)



*Thank You for Your  
Commitment to  
Enhancing Residents'  
Quality of Life*

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# MENTOR-NHC

*Monthly Education, News, and Tips to Optimize Reliability of Nursing Home Care*

June 2006

## Focus on Staff Satisfaction and Retention to Enhance Residents' Quality of Life

Positive relationships are essential for creating a pleasant environment in which employees are satisfied and, therefore, motivated to do the best job they possibly can. By nurturing relationships among staff, management, and residents, the work environment and quality of care provided could be dramatically improved.

Following are possible causes for staff dissatisfaction and strategies for improving staff retention. You can select one or two factors from each list that are relevant to your facility and use those as starting points for enhancing staff's loyalty and service to residents.

You can help ensure staff's contentment by considering common reasons for dissatisfaction:

- Responsibility for care of too many residents
- Perception that they are not valued
- Dissatisfaction with supervisors
- Lack of support from peers
- Inability to provide quality care because of management constraints
- Low salaries
- Unsafe working conditions

While striving to correct and prevent problems, you can also employ any of these retention strategies:

- Communicate openly and consistently
- Create meaningful and rewarding orientation and training programs
- Implement coaching and peer mentoring
- Encourage self-growth and provide leadership-development opportunities
- Implement employee surveys and act on the responses
- Praise employees for all of their contributions
- Participate in care plan meetings
- Assign permanent elder care assignments and teams
- Allow for staff to spend time with residents and to grieve the loss of the elders
- Show employees they are respected and cared for as individuals
- Communicate that staff's opinions are valued
- Encourage friendships

In the coming months, Healthcare Quality Strategies, Inc., (HQSI) plans to increase its focus on employee retention. Our Nursing Home team is available to provide you with information and support to create a positive environment where your staff can feel valued and their needs are met, which can greatly contribute to the quality of healthcare residents in your facility receive. For additional resources, visit our website at [www.hqsi.org](http://www.hqsi.org) or contact an HQSI Nursing Home Quality Improvement Specialist at 1-732-238-5570.

### Employee Retention Makes Sound Financial Sense, Too

Consider these New Jersey statistics\*:

	Turnover	Cost <sup>†</sup>	Vacant Full-Time Positions
RNs	40%	\$89,715	628
LPNs	37%	\$66,222	748
CNAs	46%	\$30,165	1,718

\* All data refer to the 2002 calendar year.

<sup>†</sup> Cost to replace one employee, based on 1½ times base salary.

Source: American Health Care Association, 2002; data presented by David Farrell, MSW, NHA, Quality Partners of Rhode Island

### Cutting-Edge Research, Best Practices Information Available at No Cost

Cutting-edge research and best practices information are available through a series, entitled *A New Look at the Old*. The material may be obtained in print format or streaming video, at any time and at no cost. The print series began in the *American Journal of Nursing*, August 2004, and will continue every other month until December 2006. For topics, go to: [www.NursingCenter.com/AJNolderadults](http://www.NursingCenter.com/AJNolderadults). CEUs are available for a fee.



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