

Recruiting: Building a diverse workforce

Dalphy Watson

SR VP, HR & ADMINISTRATION

While working toward a more diverse workforce isn't a new endeavor, the WPMG recruiting team recognized there's more they could do as we commit collectively to become an anti-racist organization.

Because recruiting with an EID lens is a comprehensive business strategy, the team recently partnered with our Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Advisory Group (DIAG) to update their approach, identify target audiences, and develop a new plan to improve cultural alignment between those who receive care from us with those who give care.

As we slowed our hiring during the pandemic, we recognize we may have missed opportunities to diversify our workforce in our quest to fill positions quickly. Now, more than ever, we can change that, and our recruiters are playing a big role in creating a diverse candidate pool that accurately reflects our patient population. Today, we especially lack appropriate clinical representation among many racial groups such as Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native communities.

As a woman of color, I feel strongly that we all play a big role in creating a workplace that's diverse and inclusive. The world is ripe for change and the time is right for diversity and inclusion to not be the flavor of the month but a way of everyday life. Our EID recruiting strategy demonstrates our commitment to moving the needle toward having a workforce that is representative of the communities we serve.

Research and outreach

To be successful, the recruiting team must be flexible, cater to our members' needs, and be able to build strong partnerships. Today, they're actively recruiting in cities known for more diverse populations. They're connecting with:

- Colleges and universities that historically have a larger Black and Hispanic population to expand those relationships and create a pipeline
- Associations like the Association of Black Women Physicians and the Hispanic Medical Association
- Family medicine programs that graduate a diverse group of new clinicians

Advertising

The team partnered with the communications team to revamp their advertising to attract a different audience, developing new digital and print ads with more inclusive language featuring Black, Hispanic, and LGBTQ men, women, and families.

Team development and progress

The team is adding new recruiting tools and interview questions, while also investing in training—for the team, hiring managers, and for chiefs who hire clinicians:

- Individual development plans now include an EID goal, with diversity trainings added to recruiting team meetings at least once per month
- Chiefs now have EID questions in their interviewing toolkit, such as, “what do you think some of the greatest challenges are within health care to address health inequity?”
- Candidates can now identify a language they’re fluent in when they apply for a new position
- A new report shows candidate diversity in real time so the team can retool and target a more diverse candidate pool
- A new cross-functional Tableau report informs recruiting of cultural and language imbalances, with both patient and clinician diversity (age, gender, language, race/ethnicity) by medical center

When I asked outgoing HR director ((name)) about what’s different now, she said, “The Black Lives Matter movement and the death of Mr. Floyd brought the team together in a new way. We’re much more aware of what we say, how we interact, and we’re more focused. Support and engagement from leadership emphasizes how important this is, and by doing this differently, we’re serving our patients in the best way possible.”

((Name)), Medical Staff Recruiting Manager, added, “While we’ve long been committed to recruiting for diversity, we now have greater support to invest the time. We know we have to get it right. This is a priority within our organization and among our team, so every step matters.”

Diversifying our workforce will not occur overnight. We need each of you to lean in and create an inclusive culture.