



Health workforce strategy

Creating workforce strategies that strike the right balance between being bold and nailing the basics

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Growing demand for care is outpacing the supply of health workers available and putting pressure on health systems globally. Health organizations must respond by creating a comprehensive strategy to prepare their workforce for the capacity needs of the future.

The workforce crisis

Despite the growing use of technology, healthcare is still primarily a people-driven business. Yet, the sector's most valuable asset is facing wide-spread crisis, driven by inadequate human resource supply, increasing workforce burnout, and retention challenges.

Our global healthcare survey

Our recent 2021 Healthcare CEO Future Pulse Survey validated that this crisis is top of mind for health leaders, as many are already worried about their ability to meet demand (66%), support workforce wellness (62%), and recruit and retain talent (58%).

In Canada, we see these three key issues persisting through the health system:

- 1. The supply and demand challenge:** Healthcare systems around the globe are facing a future of too much work with too few workers. In Canada, the healthcare workforce is growing at twice the rate of the labour force in general; however, in January 2021 the sector still had more job vacancies than any other industry.^{1,2}
- 2. Supporting workforce wellness:** High patient workloads, resource scarcity, and fear for personal safety has led to increased emotional fatigue and burnout among healthcare professionals. The Ontario Medical Association has reported 72.9 percent of physicians experienced some level of burnout in 2021.³ Additionally, more than two-thirds (67.9%) of nurses indicated they were burned out in a Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) survey.⁴
- 3. Recruiting and retaining talent:** The challenge to maintain a healthy talent pipeline and manage turnover is intensifying. A recent RNAO survey revealed 68.5 percent of nursing respondents plan to leave their current position in the next 5 years⁵ while 12.6 percent plan to exit the profession altogether.^{5,6}

Action to take

Work needs to be done at the policy, planning, and provider levels to prepare our system and empower our people for the future of healthcare. The time is now for organizations to redesign their workforce strategies to shape a holistic, actionable, and sustainable way forward. This should include a plan to begin working differently within a collaborative model that combines the best of administrative, clinical, medical, and technology leaders. To get started, leaders can leverage global workforce strategy innovations to help create local solutions that work. The solutions identified should ultimately guide the development of a workforce vision and action plan to engage the entire organization in this transformational change.

¹ CMAJ: "Poor health workforce planning is costly, risky and inequitable"

² Global News: "Facing COVID-19 staffing crunch, some Ontario hospitals offer cash bonuses to new nurses"

³ OMA "ontario's doctors report increased burnout, propose five solutions"

^{4,6} RNAO "Ontario's RN Understaffing Crisis: Impact and Solution"

Our healthcare strategic workforce diagnostic tool

Based on our experience, few organizations have taken a holistic view of their workforce or have a robust strategy to address their workforce needs of the future. However, our Strategic Workforce Diagnostic Tool can do this in a systematic and rigorous way. We work with healthcare organizations to compare an organization or health system's current workforce maturity against future aspirational workforce priorities by using the Diagnostic Tool. The diagnostic was informed by key insights from the book *Human: Solving the Global Workforce Crisis in Healthcare*, which was written by Mark Britnell, KPMG's Global Chairman & Senior Partner Healthcare, Government & Infrastructure at KPMG International.



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How the diagnostic tool will be used

The tool provides a directional focus to inform planning by using 9 themes to rate the workforce's maturity based on international best practices. Its healthcare specific focus and rapid nature quickly provides actionable insights quickly that are practical and can be customized to include targeted stakeholders or expanded consultation. The results are highly relevant to health organizations across the system including regional authorities, hospitals, and health providers that are looking to respond to workforce needs as a priority on their governance agenda.

KPMG is helping healthcare organizations and systems around the world understand, plan, and transform their workforce agenda. We work with healthcare leaders to identify and implement their strategic workforce priorities by creating alignment between business objectives and workforce needs. Our team leverages our proprietary diagnostic tool, collaboration, deep healthcare knowledge and experience, and global viewpoints to build future-ready workforces that can provide quality care to patients.



Key benefits include

- A baseline of workforce maturity; a way of measuring where the organization is at against where it needs to be
- Direction on what workforce priorities will need attention in the future and why
- Insight into the priority actions that the organization can control and deliver
- A different kind of dialogue with leadership shaped through a strategic lens and focused on actionable change

Contact us

We're here to help

Each organization has unique talent supply and care demand drivers that will impact their workforce strategy. We look forward to discussing your organization's details and business objectives to co-create a comprehensive workforce strategy.



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