

Most Improved Team Experience!



At a Glance

Inova Fair Oaks is a community-based hospital in Fairfax, VA, boasts a 4-time Magnet redesignation and was recognized as a top maternity hospital by *U.S. News & World Report* for 2 consecutive years. The Labor & Delivery unit, managed by Clinical Director Lani Brown, MSN, RN-OB, C-EFM, NE-BC, and overseen by VP Nursing Musculoskeletal and Chief Nursing Officer Deborah Fulbrook, EdM, MHS, BSN, RN, NEA-BC, includes a 13-bed Labor and Delivery Room (LDR), four antepartum beds, three operating rooms, and nine OB-ED/Triage beds. Despite its clinical excellence, the unit was faced with high turnover, low engagement, widespread incivility, and unprofessional behaviors.

The Challenge

The L& D unit faced critical organizational and cultural challenges despite its clinical excellence and prestigious accolades. The primary issues were leadership instability due to frequent changes in leadership which contributed to a lack of continuity and consistency in the unit's operations and culture. This instability undermined efforts to establish a cohesive team environment and effectively address behavior issues. As a result, the unit experienced significant staff turnover and high vacancy rates, disrupting patient care and contributing to a strained work environment. A pervasive absence of clear behavioral standards led to widespread incivility and unprofessional conduct among staff. Issues included disrespectful interactions such as eye-rolling, name-calling, exclusion, and general unwelcoming behavior, particularly towards new graduate RNs. The lack of accountability meant these behaviors were unaddressed, further exacerbating the workplace climate. The unit struggled with a fragmented and unhealthy work culture characterized by a lack of teamwork and support, hindering effective communication and collaboration. The team reported a general sense of disconnection and dissatisfaction, negatively impacting engagement and morale.

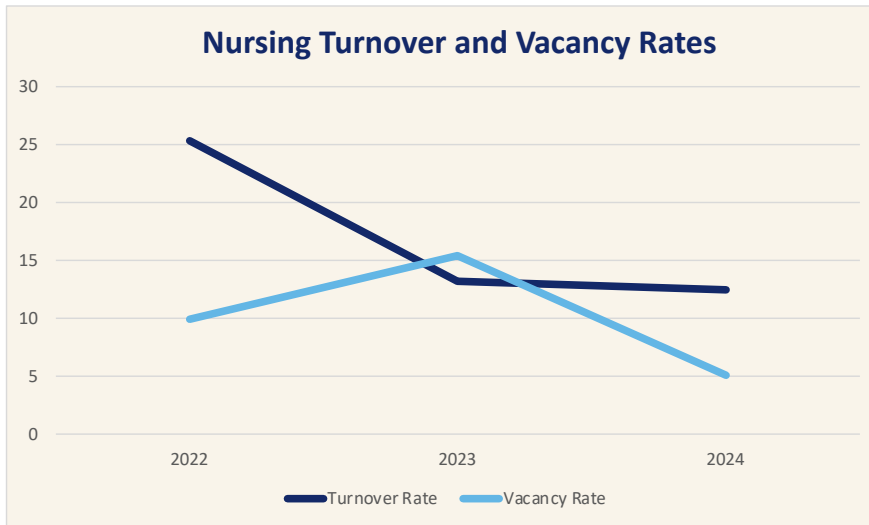
The overarching goal was to establish a foundation for addressing behavioral issues, creating a culture of accountability, improving overall team performance, and fostering a healthy, respectful work environment.

The Solution

Facing significant cultural and operational challenges, the Labor & Delivery unit at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital enrolled in the **Healthy Workforce Culture Change Certification** Program, a comprehensive initiative. The program, implemented in four strategic phases, began with heightening awareness through open dialogue to identify and address disruptive behaviors. It then created and communicated a powerful vision, establishing a compact of professional behaviors to set clear expectations. The following phase focused on developing interprofessional team skills through targeted education, promoting professionalism, and reducing incivility. Finally, the program hardwired and sustained these changes with ongoing actions, reinforced by a dedicated Healthy Workforce Committee. This team met regularly to focus on professional behaviors, share successes, and ensured continuous cultural improvement. Regular huddles further embedded these shifts, encouraging open communication and accountability and fostering a lasting transformation.

Results & Benefits

The implementation of the Healthy Workforce Culture Change Certification Program has resulted in positive outcomes for the Labor & Delivery unit since its inception:



Reduced contingent workforce

7 → 0

Converted 2 travelers into permanent team members



Team Member Experience Survey (TMXS) Results



Most improved department within Fair Oaks
18.5%
Increase in 2024

Key improvements from 2022 TMXS:

- Regular coaching on performance **+41.1%**
- Recognition of accomplishments **+30.5%**
- Pride in being an Inova team member **+25.7%**
- Respect from manager **+24.7%**
- Manager cares about team members **+22.6%**
- Intention to stay **+21.9%**
- Encouragement of teamwork/collaboration **+20.2%**



As a Chief Nursing Officer, I am extremely pleased with not only the initial changes I observed in my rounding in the units, but the sustained improvements in the unit cultures and enculturation the team members have assumed with the HWF practices.

- Deborah Fulbrook, EdM, MHS, BSN, RN, NEA-BC
VP Nursing Musculoskeletal, Chief Nursing Officer
Nursing Administration, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital



Conclusion

The successful implementation of the *Healthy Workforce Culture Change Certification* Program has profoundly transformed the Labor & Delivery unit at Inova Fair Oaks. Through a strategic four-phased approach, the unit addressed leadership instability, high turnover, and widespread incivility, achieving significant improvements. Turnover rates decreased by 12.88% and vacancy rates dropped by 10.33%. The Team Member Experience Survey showed an impressive 18.5% increase, with notable gains in areas such as recognition, respect, and pride in the workplace. This initiative not only enhanced team dynamics but also fostered an interprofessional culture of accountability and respect, demonstrating a profound impact on team member morale and engagement.

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