



## **Implementation Guide:**

# **Goal 1: Reducing Staff Turnover**

***This Implementation Guide provides efficient, consistent, evidence-based approaches to increasing staff retention.***

[www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org)

## ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN AMERICA'S NURSING HOMES

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### A Campaign to Improve Quality of Life for Residents and Staff

*Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* is a [national](#) campaign to encourage, assist and empower nursing homes to improve the quality of care and life for residents.

Comprised of long term care providers, medical professionals, consumers, employees, and state and federal agencies, *AE* is the largest and first coalition of its kind to measure quality by setting clinical and organizational goals for nursing homes.

The coalition stimulates quality improvements by providing nursing homes with free, current and practical evidence-based [resources](#), empowering residents and their families with education, and helping participants reach their targets. Homes can compare their progress with state and national averages.

This Implementation Guide was prepared by volunteers and members of the Advancing Excellence Steering Committee.

Click [here](#) to see a list of coalition leaders.





## Goal 1: Reducing Staff Turnover

**Staff Turnover:** Nursing homes will take steps to minimize staff turnover in order to maintain a stable workforce to care for residents.

### Objectives – By December 31, 2011:

- A1. The average annual RN turnover rate reported by nursing homes participating in this goal will be at or below (65%).
- A2. The average annual LPN turnover rate reported by nursing homes participating in this goal will be at or below (35%).
- A3. The average annual CNA turnover rate reported by nursing homes participating in this goal will be at or below (65%).
- B1,2,3. (25%) of nursing homes participating in this goal will achieve an annual RN/LPN/ CNA turnover rate at or below (25/15/40%).
- C1,2,3. The number of nursing homes reporting an annual RN/LPN/CNA turnover rate at or above (75/65/75%) will be reduced by 33%.
- D. No individual resident level measurement
- E. Each state will attain an average facility level improvement of one decile.
- F. NH will set a specific target to improve staff turnover by one decile rank over the next 24 month period.

### ICON KEY

-  Recognition/Assessment
-  Cause Identification
-  Management
-  Monitoring

**The icons in the box** to the left will be used throughout this guide to help identify those processes related to key evidence-based approaches.

## Approach to Implementation

A nursing home working to reduce staff turnover and improve retention should follow these steps:



### Recognition / Assessment

1. *Identify reducing staff turnover as an area for potential improvement.*
  - Based on nursing home quality improvement data, quality measures, results from staff satisfaction surveys, review of actual staff turnover data and cases, comparison to benchmarks, etc.
2. *Identify authoritative information available about reducing staff turnover.*
  - Review references listed in the *Staff Turnover Resources*, as well as reliable and evidence-based information about ways to reduce staff turnover from the literature and from relevant professional associations and organizations.
  - Identify ways to distinguish the reliability of information about reducing staff turnover (i.e., how to separate valid ideas from myths and misconceptions about the topic).
3. *Identify current approaches to reducing staff turnover.*

For an overview of the process, see the *Staff Turnover Process Review Tool* and related *Staff Turnover Flow Diagram*.

  - Are approaches consistent with the steps identified in the *Staff Turnover Process Framework*?
  - Identify current approach to reducing staff turnover, and the basis for that approach.
  - Who among the senior leaders decides how to reduce staff turnover, and what approaches do they use?
4. *Identify areas for improvement in approaches to reducing staff turnover.*

Using the information gathered in Steps 2 and 3 above, compare current with desirable approaches to reducing staff turnover. Address the following:

  - Check whether current nursing home policies / protocols are consistent with desirable approaches.
  - Check whether desirable approaches are being followed consistently.
  - Identify whether anyone has been reviewing and comparing current approaches to reducing staff turnover to desirable ones.
  - Link staff turnover to retention – does the home have problems with retention as well as turnover?

## Approach to Implementation (cont.)

- Have issues related to staff turnover been identified previously? Were they followed up on? Have senior leaders previously evaluated performance and taken steps to improve? Have senior leaders sought the input of staff and involved staff in the improvement process?

### Cause Identification



5. *Identify the causes of issues related to reducing staff turnover, including root causes of undesirable variations in performance and practice.*
  - Identify issues and practices that are inhibiting reducing staff turnover.
  - Identify underlying causes (including root causes) of, and factors related to, high rates of staff turnover.
  - Identify reasons given by those who do not adequately follow desirable approaches.

### Management



6. *Reinforce optimal practice and performance.*
  - Continually promote “doing the right thing in the right way.”
  - Follow the steps of the *Staff Turnover Process Framework*, throughout the nursing home.
  - Identify and use tools such as staff satisfaction surveys, absenteeism, small group meetings, staff complaints, and other resources to help implement the steps and address related issues
  - Based on information and data collected about the organization and the processes and results related to reducing staff turnover, identify and strengthen systems and processes that are already optimal.
7. *Implement pertinent interventions.*
  - Address underlying causes (including root causes) of the challenges and obstacles to efforts to reduce staff turnover.
  - Develop opportunities for staff to be involved in nursing home processes and continually strive to keep staff engaged (i.e., provide an anonymous staff “comment box”, establish bulletin board to highlight staff successes)
  - Evaluate retention and reasons why staff stay and link that to reasons why staff leave
  - Implement pertinent generic and cause-specific interventions.
  - Address issues of individual performance and practice that could be improved in trying to improve staff turnover.
  - Refer to *Staff Turnover Resources* for resources and tools that can help to address this goal.

## Approach to Implementation (cont.)

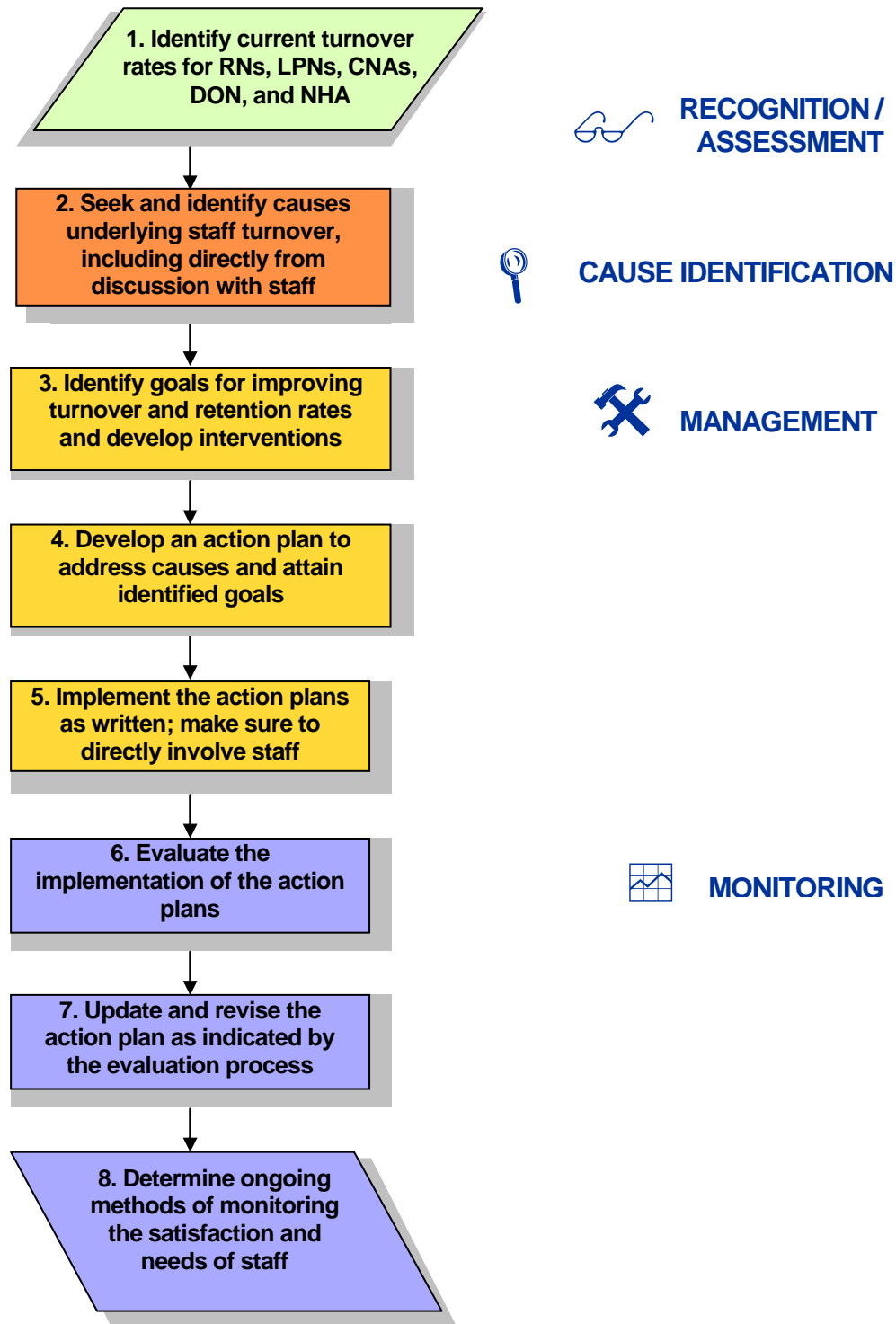
### Monitoring




#### 8. *Reevaluate performance, practices and results.*

- Recheck for progress towards getting “the right thing done consistently in the right way.”
- Use the *Staff Turnover Process Review Tool* to identify whether all key steps are being followed.
- Use the *Staff Turnover Process Framework* and related references and resources from Steps 2-4 above, and repeat Steps 2-7 (Recognition / Assessment, Cause Identification, and Management) until processes and practices are optimal.
- Continue to collect data on survey and group meeting results and processes.
- Evaluate whether changes in process and practice have helped attain desired results.
- Adjust approaches as necessary.


## Flow Diagram – Staff Turnover Process Framework




## STAFF TURNOVER PROCESS FRAMEWORK

PROCESS STEP	EXPECTATIONS	RATIONALE
 <b>PROBLEM RECOGNITION / ASSESSMENT</b>		
1. Identify current turnover rate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders periodically gather data and other information related to staff turnover.</li>   <li>- Senior leaders involve all levels of staff in the assessment process</li>   <li>- Senior leaders review and analyze its turnover data to identify what problems are occurring, and where, when, and how often they occur.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying the turnover rate helps to determine areas for improving staff stability, and provides a benchmark for developing a quality improvement action plan.</li> <li>- AHCA's 2007 study of vacancies and turnover showed high annual turnover for staff RNs, LPNs, and DONs.</li> <li>- Turnover among CNAs has improved since 2002 but remains high nation wide. Average annual CNA turnover rates were greater than 66% in more than half the states.</li> <li>- National vacancy rates were also high in general. While CNA vacancy rates are relatively stable across the states, RN and LPN vacancy rates are high across the majority of states.</li> </ul>


## STAFF TURNOVER PROCESS FRAMEWORK (cont.)

PROCESS STEP	EXPECTATIONS	RATIONALE
 <b>CAUSE IDENTIFICATION</b>		
<p>2. Seek and identify causes underlying staff turnover.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders involve all levels of staff to help identify factors causing or related to turnover, including trends and patterns.</li> <li>- Senior leaders address poor staff satisfaction as a potential cause for increased turnover and consider methods of improving satisfaction (i.e. staff task force to identify problem areas, conduct an anonymous staff satisfaction survey and utilize results to improve satisfaction).</li> <li>- To help identify these underlying causes, the group may assess for trends and patterns related to CNAs, RNs, other staff, specific shifts, weekdays versus weekends, etc.</li> <li>- The group completes a root cause analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifying trends, patterns, and causes can help alert senior leaders to readily address issues that may be resolved with simple approaches, as well as helping to identify other cause-specific interventions.</li> <li>- Numerous studies have identified factors related to job satisfaction and other issues that affect an individual's willingness to remain in a workplace.</li> <li>- Assessing feedback from staff helps facility to develop responses and interventions specific to needs/concerns of staff</li> <li>- Examples of areas that have been identified as contributing to turnover include deficits in management styles and practices, lack of orientation, work design and practices, support of staff efforts, human resource management and sufficient staff and resources.</li> <li>- See for example, Centers for Medicare &amp; Medicaid Services (CMS): <i>Appropriateness of Minimum Nurse Staffing Ratios in Nursing Homes. Phase II</i> [Online]. Available: <a href="http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CertificationandCompliance/downloads/StaffingPhaseII.zip">http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CertificationandCompliance/downloads/StaffingPhaseII.zip</a>.</li> </ul>

## STAFF TURNOVER PROCESS FRAMEWORK (cont.)

PROCESS STEP	EXPECTATIONS	RATIONALE
 <b>MANAGEMENT</b>		
3. Identify goals for improving turnover rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders work with staff to establish a specific and realistic strategy to address factors associated with staff turnover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Goal setting allows senior leaders to envision potential achievements through their quality improvement efforts.</li> </ul>
4. Develop an action plan to address causes and attain identified goals).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders use findings determined through the <i>Cause Identification</i> step (Step #2) and engage staff to help develop an action plan to meet the established goals. This may include (but not be limited to):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and incorporate a written plan of action into the overall quality improvement process.</li> <li>• Identify specific interventions to be implemented Identify specific time frames for completing the interventions (i.e., greater staff input, system of rewards, improved supervision, opportunities for advancement).</li> <li>• Identify the staff responsible for implementing the interventions within the identified time frames.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An action plan provides a “roadmap” to meeting goals.</li> <li>- Without an action plan to guide the quality improvement efforts, it is less likely that the goal will be achieved and sustained.</li> <li>- Interventions that address specific causes may provide more definitive and enduring improvements. Some general interventions such as ways to recognize desired staff performance are also beneficial.</li> <li>- In determining appropriate interventions, senior leaders should consider utilizing available resource material and best practices from expert sources.</li> </ul>
5. Implement the action plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders involve staff in developing strategies to communicate the goals, interventions, time frames, and responsible parties related to the action plan.</li> <li>- Senior leaders provide all involved parties with a copy of the action plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The success of the plan depends on various factors, including understanding by involved parties and the support given to making definitive changes in work environment, work flow, care processes, etc.</li> </ul>

**STAFF TURNOVER PROCESS FRAMEWORK (cont.)**

PROCESS STEP	EXPECTATIONS	RATIONALE
<b>MANAGEMENT (cont.)</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders involve staff in developing and implementing policies and procedures to address specific elements of the plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All parties involved should be aware of their responsibilities and understand the expectations to which they will be held accountable.</li> </ul>
<b> MONITORING</b>		
<p>6. Evaluate the implementation of the action plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders involve staff to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the action plan implementation, including (but not limited to) the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are interventions being implemented as written?</li> <li>• Are the action plan interventions being implemented within the identified time frames?</li> <li>• Are the identified responsible staff members implementing the action plan interventions?</li> <li>• What are the results /findings related to the implementation of the action plan interventions?</li> <li>• Has there been a good response to the action plan (i.e. reduced turnover)</li> <li>• What unanticipated barriers have been identified during implementation of the action plan?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluation of the progress of implementation allows senior leaders to determine if they are “on the right track” or need to take a different path to try to meet their goal.</li> <li>- Barriers commonly arise as action plans are being implemented, which necessitate revisions in order to achieve the goal.</li> </ul>

### STAFF TURNOVER PROCESS FRAMEWORK (cont.)

PROCESS STEP	EXPECTATIONS	RATIONALE
<b>MONITORING (cont.)</b>		
7. Update and revise the action plan as indicated by the evaluation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The approaches implemented by senior leaders result in sustained improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive changes need continuing support in order to be sustained.</li> </ul>
8. Determine ongoing methods of monitoring the satisfaction and needs of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior leaders periodically monitor turnover, vacancy and retention rates, and the status of factors that were identified as influencing turnover.</li> <li>- Senior leaders involve staff to periodically conduct staff satisfaction surveys.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustained improvement requires monitoring both results and the status of processes and issues that influence those results.</li> </ul>

## STAFF TURNOVER SELF MONITORING TOOL

**Purpose:** To determine if all process steps are completed quarterly and report to QA and A.

PROCESS RECOGNITION/ASSESSMENT			
		YES	NO
1.	Identify current turnover rate (and retention rate).		
CAUSE IDENTIFICATION			
		YES	NO
2.	Involve staff to identify varying causes and contributing factors for staff turnover.		
MANAGEMENT			
		YES	NO
3.	Involve staff to help identify goals for improving turnover rates		
4.	Develop an action plan to address causes and attain identified goals.		
5.	Involve staff in implementing the action plan.		
MONITORING			
		YES	NO
6.	Evaluate the implementation of the action plan.		
7.	Update and revise the action plan as indicated by the evaluation process.		
8.	Determine the ongoing methods of monitoring the satisfaction and needs of the staff.		
Date:			
Nursing Home Name:		Nursing Home Address:	

## STAFF TURNOVER RESOURCES

RESOURCE	LOCATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<b>Literature / Latest Research (cont.)</b>		
You Are Worth It	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	1201 L Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20005 Phone: (202) 842-4444
Mentoring for Eldercare Workers	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
Solving the Frontline Crisis in Long - Term Care	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
CNA Mentoring Made Easy	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
CNA Career Ladder Made Easy	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
Supervising Front-line Staff: The Managers Guide for Leading Caregiver Staff	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
A Practical Guide to Managing the Multigenerational Workforce	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
Managers as Mentors: Building Partnerships for Learning	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
The 7 Hidden Reasons Employees Leave	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
Becoming an Effective Health Care Manager	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
The Personal Side of Leadership	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
Leading the Way: Practical Management Skills	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	
How to Be a Nurse Assistant (Training Library)	<a href="#">American Health Care Association</a>	600 North Plankinton Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53203 Phone: (800) 248-1946
Everyday Excellence	<a href="#">American Society for Quality</a>	

## STAFF TURNOVER RESOURCES (cont.)

RESOURCE	LOCATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<b>Literature / Latest Research (cont.)</b>		
A Practical Guide Recruitment and Retention: Skills for Nurse Managers	<a href="#">hcPro healthcare Marketplace</a>	200 Hoods Lane Marblehead, MA 01945 Phone: (877) 727-1728
CNA Training Advisor: Lesson Plans for Busy Staff Trainers	<a href="#">hcPro healthcare Marketplace</a>	
LTC Nursing Assistant Trainer (Free E-zine)	<a href="#">hcPro healthcare Marketplace</a>	
CNA Training Solution Video Kit	<a href="#">hcPro healthcare Marketplace</a>	
Long-Term Care Nursing Leadership and Management (See: Nurse Staffing in Long-Term Care Facilities, Nursing Workforce and Nursing Shortage, Recruitment and Retention)	<a href="#">University of Minnesota Center for Gerontological Nursing</a>	School of Nursing University of Minnesota 5-140 Weaver-Densford Hall 308 Harvard Street Minneapolis, MN 55455 Phone: (800) 598-8636
Various resources available under Workforce	<a href="#">Society for Healthcare Strategy &amp; Market Development</a>	3280 Summit Ridge Parkway Duluth, GA 30096 Phone: (800) 242-2626
Decent People, Decent Company: How to Lead with Character at Work and in Life	<a href="#">Turnkett Leadership Group</a>	Publicist: Cathy S. Lewis & Co. Publicists 196 Van Dale Road Woodstock, NY 12498 Phone: (845) 679-2188
The Cost of Frontline Turnover in Long Term Care	<a href="#">PHI</a>	349 East 149 <sup>th</sup> Street, 10 <sup>th</sup> Floor Bronx, NY 10451 Phone: (718) 402-7766 Email: <a href="mailto:info@phinational.org">info@phinational.org</a>

## STAFF TURNOVER RESOURCES (cont.)

RESOURCE	LOCATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
<b>Specialty Organizations and Links</b>		
Geriatric Care Specialist Certification	<a href="#">National Association for Health Care Assistants</a>	1201 L Street NW Washington, DC 20005 Phone: (800) 784-6049
Resource listing for Caregivers	<a href="#">National Association for Empowering Caregivers</a>	425 West 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street Suite 9B New York, NY 10011 Phone: (212) 807-1204 Email: <a href="mailto:info@care-givers.com">info@care-givers.com</a>
National online library of resources on direct care workforce issues and solutions	<a href="#">National Clearinghouse on the Direct Care Workforce</a>	349 East 149 <sup>th</sup> Street, 10 <sup>th</sup> Floor Bronx, NY 10451 Phone: (718) 402-7766 Email: <a href="mailto:info@phinational.org">info@phinational.org</a>
Retention, Recruitment and Turnover Resources	<a href="#">PHI</a>	4057 Battleground Avenue Greensboro, NC 27410-8410 Phone: (336) 282-9370 Email: <a href="mailto:info@hermangroup.com">info@hermangroup.com</a>
The Workforce Stability Institute – Retention Resources	<a href="#">Retention Connection</a>	
National research and demonstration project to reduce vacancy and turnover rates	<a href="#">Better Jobs, Better Care Program</a>	Better Jobs Better Care Program Institute for the Future of Aging Services, AAHSA 2519 Connecticut Ave. NW Washington, DC 20008-1520 Phone: (202) 508-1216 Email: <a href="mailto:bjbc@bjbc.org">bjbc@bjbc.org</a>