

Compass One Healthcare and Shirley Ryan AbilityLab: A Collaborative Investment in People



From apprenticeship programs to first-time manager boot camp, Compass One Healthcare and Shirley Ryan AbilityLab have developed a workforce management program to retain and grow support services team members.



Challenge

Hospitals and health systems across the U.S. are struggling to attract and retain qualified workers. Nearly one-in-five healthcare workers quit their jobs during the pandemic. In the healthcare industry, an inability to hire and retain employees is costly. An analysis of workforce data in healthcare provided by Premier, Inc. in October of 2021 found that staffing shortages have cost hospitals \$24 billion over the course of the pandemic. Working together, Compass One Healthcare (Compass One) and Shirley Ryan AbilityLab created an innovative way to overcome what others could not.

Since 2001, Compass One has provided a variety of support services to Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, the No. 1-ranked physical medicine and rehabilitation research hospital based in Chicago. More than 250 associates work across four Compass One service lines, including Food & Nutrition, Environmental Services (EVS), Facilities Management, and Clinical Engineering. Therefore, a stable workforce is critical to serving this unique patient population.

Prior to the pandemic, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab President Nancy Paridy challenged the Compass One team to find creative ways to retain and grow its workforce. This led to a unique collaborative effort with Shirley Ryan AbilityLab leadership, highlighted by the Compass One onsite team's ability to create some new programs using resources and best practices from its Talent and Development corporate support team.

“We needed to talk about the elephant in the room, ‘The Great Resignation,’ and find ways to stop it from happening [here]. Employee retention is critical to maintain excellent patient care, and by investing in our people, we are helping them understand they can make this their career, not just a job. Compass One came to the table with an approach that is having a positive impact on the long-term growth of all employees. I’m thrilled with how we are continuing to evolve, not just at the operational levels, but getting to the heart of where we need to go.”

—Nancy Paridy

President & Chief Administrative Officer, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab



Solutions

Compass One developed a comprehensive Workforce Management program designed to retain and grow its employees by offering frontline workers training for new positions and opportunities for others to become managers. In each case, the associate is provided a path to advance their career in healthcare.

Additionally, the collaborative teamwork forged between Compass One and Shirley Ryan AbilityLab has led to improved patient care, with managers in Compass One service lines working more closely with the Nursing department to provide the support they need.

The specific elements of the Workforce Management program include:

1 Apprenticeship Training

Starting in 2020, frontline workers began training to work in a different line of service they would like to pursue outside of their department and current line of work. The training runs from March through November each year, and interest continues to grow. Five people are enrolled in the 2022 apprenticeship program with six graduates thus far.

During the apprenticeship, a person works their regular job and is paid to train in a new job on one of their days off. Examples of associates who have participated in the program include Tyran McKinney, an entry-level dishwasher in Food & Nutrition Services, who received training in 2021. He is now a maintenance technician in the Facilities Management department. William Jackson, who worked in Security for Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, also wanted to become a maintenance mechanic and took advantage of the program.

“The apprenticeship program helps us retain workers, and it helps our associates build careers. From my experience, I know people often just want an opportunity to learn on-the-job from someone they know and trust. As leaders, our job is to show the frontline what it’s like to respect each other and how to treat each other. Nancy Paridy and the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab leadership team are committed to a long-term strategy to build a stable workforce, and this apprenticeship program is one way we are accomplishing that goal.”

—LaMar Davis

Executive Director, Facilities Engineering & Support Services, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab

2 Leadership Boot Camp

To train frontline workers who want to become managers, a Leadership Boot Camp began in March 2022. People accepted into the program attend a series of in-person and online training classes for eight months. With a curriculum and guidance provided by Compass One’s Talent and Development team in collaboration with Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, classes are taught by various Compass One directors and regional managers representing other accounts and support service lines, along with key leaders at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, including Ms. Paridy and the Vice President, Human Resources.

Approximately 20 new frontline leaders enrolled in the inaugural Boot Camp and represent each Compass One line of service in addition to some Shirley Ryan AbilityLab non-Compass associates. The curriculum focuses on the five principles of leadership, helping trainees understand how to build working relationships, delegate tasks, resolve conflicts, and develop a vision for their group. Because they have never been a manager, they are also taught a holistic view of the health system and the importance of working with other support services at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab to be successful.



Using Career Blueprint, a competency assessment tool, Compass One’s Talent and Development team identifies strengths and weaknesses of associates who are training for entry-level management positions and helps develop their full set of skills.

3 Mentors and Customized Training and Development Programs

People attending the Leadership Boot Camp are also paired with a mentor who works in another service line and, possibly, another healthcare facility. For example, a manager in training in EVS is paired with a director in Facilities Management or Food & Nutrition Services.

This arrangement helps the trainee talk about any problems or challenges with someone from outside their own organization, providing them more freedom to discuss how to problem-solve and settle any issues. More than 20 Compass One associates at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab have mentors.

■ Nursing Engagement

A by-product of the collaboration between the two organizations is a stronger working relationship between Compass One's managers and the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab Nursing Department.

Because Shirley Ryan AbilityLab patients suffer from challenging physical problems, most need help getting dressed and eating before undergoing therapy. This means that services provided by Compass One, such as delivering a hot meal on time or making sure a room is cleaned properly, are critical to support the clinical staff so they can continue delivering the highest level of patient care and healing.

To further their collaboration, Compass One managers and nurses participate in regular rounding throughout the hospital. There are also monthly meetings where representatives from each service line review issues with Nursing. By meeting with nurses and learning their challenges, managers realize the need to work across service lines for Shirley Ryan AbilityLab to be successful.

Nurses also appreciate the collaboration. When surveyed in late 2021, 79% of the nursing staff responded favorably when asked, "Is the Food & Nutrition team working with nursing to resolve patient meal issues," representing a 21% increase in favorable responses before rounding and other initiatives started. And, when asked, "Has there been improvement in the teamwork between Food & Nutrition and Nursing," 77.6% of the nursing staff responded favorably.



Expand Food & Nutrition Nursing Engagement Program to all of Support Services:



Weekly Nurse Rounding



Monthly Nursing Focus Groups



Nursing Thank You Cards



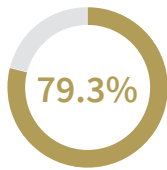
Looking to Duplicate Across Support Services 3rd quarter 2022



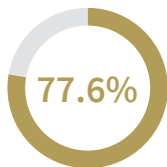
Quarterly Nursing Survey (began 3rd quarter 2021)

The survey measured effectiveness based on the initiatives above

Q4 survey results post-initiatives:



When asked if the Food & Nutrition team works with the nursing staff to resolve patient meal issues, **79.3%** of nursing staff responded favorably vs. the pre-initiative favorably score of **58%**.



When asked if there has been improvement in the teamwork between Food & Nutrition and Nursing, **77.6%** of nursing staff responded favorably.

“The Nursing team is really pleased with this new approach, and it’s helping them better serve their patients. Compass One is listening to our concerns and acting on them. We have successfully moved from a feeling of us versus them to being on the same team and working together.”

—Nancy Paridy

President & Chief Administrative Officer, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab



Results

■ Cross-Training Frontline Associates Leads to a Stable Workforce.

Giving associates an opportunity to train and work in another line of service has improved retention and productivity. The ability to work part-time in a new position while still keeping their old job gives each person the opportunity to find the work that best fits their skills and passion.

■ Management Development Across Service Lines.

The Leadership Boot Camp enables frontline associates to receive professional-level instruction and online resources to build a career in healthcare. Custom Training Programs provide each Compass One associate with access to mentors, on-the-job training, and access to online learning.

■ Retaining More Employees Means a Better Client Experience.

By cross-training employees for new jobs and training frontline associates to become managers, Compass One retains more associates, providing a seamless experience across all service lines. A more stable workforce translates into better patient care.

■ A True Partnership That Is Changing the Organization's Culture.

The collaborative approach to solving labor challenges has enabled Compass One and Shirley Ryan AbilityLab's leadership teams to build a strong working relationship. In addition, the teamwork approach has built a strong foundation with the Nursing department, leading to better patient care.

“With the holistic framework of our Workforce Management program now fully in place at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, it can become a model for other healthcare organizations. Shirley Ryan AbilityLab is an example of how to best invest in associates at all levels in the organization through leveraging our training and development programs. For healthcare client organizations, strengthening our team allows us to deepen our working relationship and demonstrate our commitment as their partner.”

—Jennifer Solomonson

Senior Director Talent and Development, Compass One Healthcare



Compass One Healthcare is the market leader in food and support services, with the union of two premier support service specialists, Morrison and Crothall. Our services offer a unique and specialized solution with its own support structure, allowing us to provide best-in-class service across healthcare facilities while also delivering the best possible experience to patients, staff, and visitors.



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