

Published on [Becker's Hospital Review](#)

Title: 5 Hot Topics Around Nurse Retention

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Can data and analytics improve nursing outcomes?

That was the question at the heart of “Better Nursing Outcomes Using Data and Predictive Analytics,” a panel discussion at last month’s Becker’s Hospital Review Health IT + Clinical Leadership conference. The panel, which was attended mostly by nurse leaders, was moderated by [Arena](#) president Myra Norton. The other panelists were:

- Mike Rosenbaum, [Arena](#) Chairman and CEO
- Lisa Cox Schaeffer, Executive Vice President and COO/CNO at [Regional One Health](#)
- Micha’le Simmons, Research Lead with [Advisory Board’s HR Advancement Center](#)

Here are a few highlights from the wide-ranging discussion:

1. “Hiring has changed.”

Hiring has always been a mix of art and science. But Lisa, who has worked in nursing management and leadership roles for over 30 years, says that the hiring process was far more weighted toward the “art” side when she first began her career. Hiring decisions were primarily based on gut feel. Reviewing a person’s resume was as far into the “scientific” realm as most hiring managers got.

But with the advent of data and analytics, the scientific aspect of hiring has come to the forefront. More and more hospital systems are applying data-driven tools like Arena to the process.

2. “Retention is a huge issue.”

Part of this shift is due to a growing need for high-quality nurses who are likely to stay in their roles. Nurse retention is a huge issue in the market today, according to Micha’le, who is currently leading research on workforce analytics exploring how Human Resources (HR) leaders can invest in building their analytic capabilities. Retention has significant consequences for healthcare organizations. Churn impacts quality of care and overall nurse morale.

3. “Nurse leadership and HR need to have a strong partnership.”

Myra shared that nurse leadership needs the support of a strong human resources team, and vice versa, to move the needle on retention and other operational challenges.

The skill sets needed for success in both HR and nurse leadership are changing. A fluency with data is an increasingly important skill as more data-driven tools are used throughout the hiring process as well as on the job. Otherwise, it can be difficult to get broad adoption of these tools, despite their proven efficacy.

4. “Predictive analytics can expand your hiring pool.”

Many healthcare organizations struggle with a dearth of applicants for nursing positions. Some have tried to use assessments to evaluate their applicant pool in the past, but struggled because it only further limited the number of eligible candidates.

But as Mike noted, predictive tools like Arena aren’t the same as assessments with cut scores. In fact, Arena can expand your hiring pool. The traditional way of hiring is to look at individuals only for the role to which they’ve applied. But Arena can look at candidates who have applied to other positions as well, and identify those people who might be successful in currently open roles.

5. “Data can help hiring managers make better long-term decisions.”

As a nurse leader desperate to hire nurses, it can be difficult to take retention into account. You’re likely much more focused on just filling an open position to make your life (and your nurses’ lives) easier right now. But data-driven tools can serve as a useful reminder by helping to quantify the risk of hiring a candidate with a low likelihood of retention. Often, it’s better to wait a few weeks to find another candidate rather than put someone in the role who is likely to leave in a couple months.

Arena provides each hiring manager in a healthcare organization with a report that shows who they hired in the past six months, and of those employees, how many have left. This helps the hiring managers connect the dots and encourages them to continue to think long-term when making hiring decisions.

About the Author

Michael leads marketing activities at Arena, including thought leadership, demand generation, awareness and brand. He brings more than fifteen years of marketing, product, business development, and strategy experience in the data analytics and software industries. He holds an

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