

# THE HEALTHCARE TALENT PLAYBOOK

Solving Staffing,  
Technology, and  
Regulatory Challenges



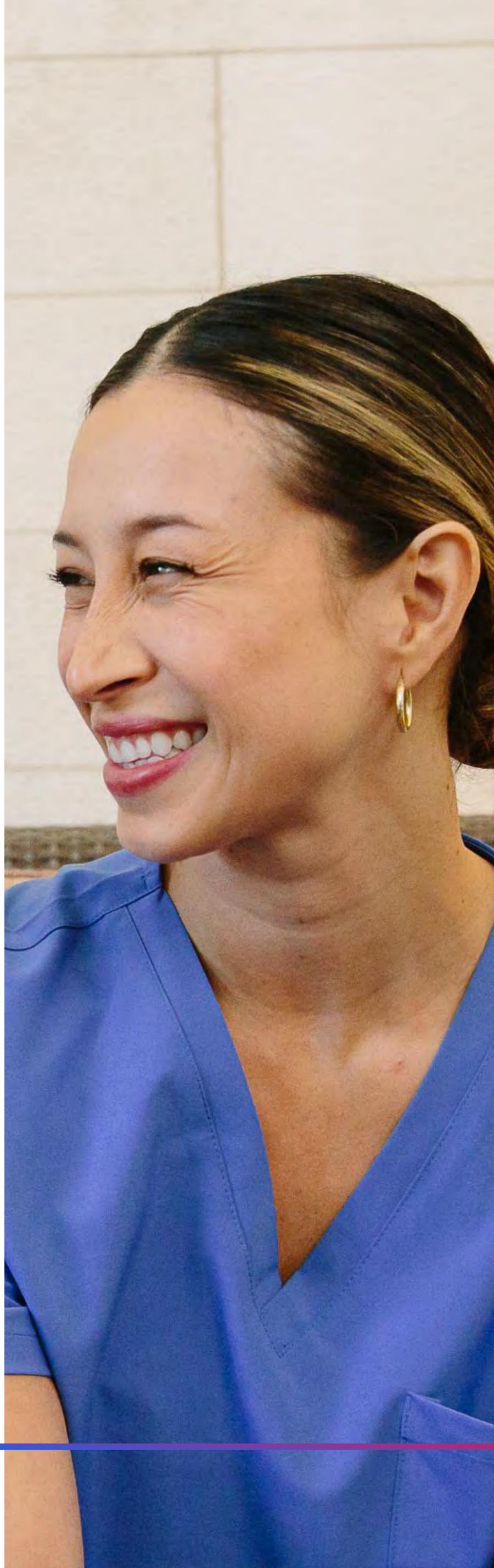
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Staffing shortages, regulatory uncertainty, and rising labor costs threaten your ability to deliver quality patient care. But what if these challenges weren't roadblocks—what if they were your greatest opportunities for transformation?

You're not alone in facing these workforce challenges: 81% of healthcare executives surveyed for [Deloitte's 2025 Global Health Care Outlook](#) say hiring and talent shortages will have a moderate or significant impact on their 2025 strategies. The question is: how will you respond?

By adopting a strategic approach, you can turn workforce constraints into a competitive advantage. This guide helps you rethink traditional hiring, leverage technology, and build adaptive workforce models that position your organization for long-term success.

Instead of reacting to shortages, take control. Redefine talent acquisition, accelerate hiring with intelligent screening, and create a workforce strategy that's built for the future. Let's explore how you can lead this transformation.



## DECODE YOUR WORKFORCE ECOSYSTEM

Before solving workforce challenges, you need to understand their root causes. A fragmented hiring strategy won't fix systemic workforce issues, and it can make them worse.

### Map Systemic Workforce Challenges

Shortages aren't caused by a single issue. They result from structural bottlenecks across education, credentialing, burnout, and shifting workforce expectations. Organizations are struggling to replace experienced clinicians, while limitations in nursing school capacity prevent them from expanding the talent pipeline quickly enough.

"We don't have enough nurse educators," says Zach Daigle, chief customer experience officer at Cive and president at PreCheck, a Cive Company. "We're not seeing that the nurse enrollments are increasing to meet the demand that we're seeing." Add in growing patient demand, longer hospital stays, and evolving care delivery models, and the pressure only intensifies.

### Identify Interconnected Talent Barriers

Staffing shortages don't exist in a vacuum. Delays in credentialing, disjointed onboarding processes, and limited scheduling flexibility all affect how quickly new hires can begin providing care. Many healthcare organizations still treat recruitment, compliance, and workforce operations as separate functions. But in reality, they're deeply intertwined—and solving for one requires addressing the others in tandem.

### Move Beyond Surface-Level Recruitment Fixes

Contingent workers—like travel nurses and contract clinicians—are often seen as a short-term patch for staffing shortages. But in reality, they can play a vital role in a long-term, agile workforce strategy. Rather than relying on contingent labor as a reactive measure, leading healthcare organizations are integrating these roles into their broader talent architecture.

When managed intentionally, contingent workers bring flexibility, geographic reach, and specialized expertise that can complement core teams. The key is to treat them as an extension of your workforce—not an exception—by applying consistent screening standards, offering clear onboarding pathways, and aligning assignments with clinical priorities.

This strategic approach helps reduce burnout, balance staffing needs, and create a more resilient organization overall.

### Manage an Increasingly Complex Compliance Landscape

Healthcare workforce regulations are evolving rapidly, and staying compliant is more complex than ever. New federal proposals—like mandated staffing ratios—are already facing legal pushback, including [a multi-state lawsuit led by Indiana and Arkansas](#) aimed at halting the federal nursing home staffing rule. Meanwhile, state-level policy shifts—such as [proposed Medicaid cuts in Colorado](#)—are creating financial uncertainty that could limit provider capacity and disrupt staffing models.

For organizations operating across multiple states, these differences can create delays and inconsistencies in hiring and onboarding. To keep pace, healthcare leaders need scalable systems that adapt to changing requirements and ensure consistent standards across all worker types and locations.

By mapping out these challenges, you gain the insights needed to create a workforce strategy that works.

### Action Items:

- **Conduct a Workforce Ecosystem Audit.** Map out your current workforce structure, including full-time staff, contingent workers, educators, and administrative roles. Identify gaps, overlaps, and dependencies across functions like recruitment, compliance, and onboarding.
- **Analyze Credentialing and Onboarding Timelines.** Gather data on how long it takes new hires to become fully onboarded. Look for bottlenecks and implement process improvements or automation to reduce delays.
- **Develop a Contingent Workforce Strategy.** Shift from using travel nurses and contract staff as emergency fixes to treating them as part of a long-term workforce strategy. Standardize onboarding and credentialing for all worker types, and create clear criteria for when and how to deploy contingent resources.
- **Create a Workforce Compliance Playbook.** Document and regularly update your organization's compliance requirements across all states of operation. Include a plan for adapting to evolving regulations and designate compliance leads to monitor state and federal policy changes.

## REIMAGINE TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGIES

If traditional hiring methods aren't delivering the talent you need, it's time to take a different approach. To build a resilient workforce, you must challenge outdated recruitment practices and tap into new talent sources.

### Break Traditional Recruitment Boundaries

Forward-looking health systems are building direct pipelines into education and training institutions. In some cases, they're even acquiring or co-developing nursing programs to secure access to graduates and shape curricula around clinical demand, Diagle says. These moves shift talent acquisition from reactive to proactive and give organizations greater control over their future workforce supply. Additionally, employers can offer options for employees to shift from labor-intensive clinical roles to educational roles, which can extend the employee life-cycle.

### Strategically Leverage Untapped Talent Pools

The traditional healthcare workforce isn't the only answer. International nursing graduates, professionals from adjacent industries, and workers reskilling after displacement by automation all represent untapped potential.

"It's worthwhile to start looking at other industries to see, how are they being impacted by AI and automation?" Diagle says. "Certain types of skilled workers could translate into a clinical position with a two year program." By widening the aperture and rethinking minimum experience or credentialing pathways, employers can find new sources of talent that align with evolving care models.

### Turn Workforce Constraints Into a Strategic Advantage

Rather than seeing labor constraints as a fixed barrier, leading organizations are using them to drive change. This includes reevaluating the balance between early-career and seasoned professionals, creating new roles for educators or mentors, and investing in internal mobility programs. These strategies not only address gaps but also promote greater workforce agility and engagement.

### Use Technology to Strengthen Your Talent Strategy

Technology is playing a central role in how organizations source, assess, and hire talent.

From AI-powered candidate screening to skills-based resume matching and digital credentialing, healthcare employers are beginning to modernize their hiring processes. These tools reduce time-to-hire and support more equitable, data-informed decisions—especially critical in a labor market where every day counts.

The shift from point solutions to integrated technology is transforming healthcare operations.

Ardent Health Services, for example, transitioned from using siloed, point-based solutions to a more integrated digital infrastructure that connects EHRs, patient portals, and internal systems. This shift allowed the organization to streamline workflows, reduce friction in patient and staff interactions, and create a more unified experience. As a result, Ardent improved operational efficiency and empowered its workforce with tools that better support hiring, onboarding, and day-to-day clinical delivery.

By rethinking how you acquire talent, you can turn hiring challenges into growth opportunities.

### Action Items:

- **Build Partnerships With Educational Institutions.** Explore opportunities to co-develop curricula, sponsor training programs, or offer clinical placements tailored to your workforce needs.
- **Expand Candidate Sourcing to Untapped Talent Pools.** Create sourcing strategies for international candidates, displaced workers, or professionals from adjacent industries. Partner with immigration experts, workforce development agencies, or community reskilling programs to access these groups.
- **Audit and Modernize Your Recruiting Tech Stack.** Review your current recruiting tools to identify gaps and redundancies. Prioritize solutions that offer integration with existing HR and clinical systems and explore AI-enabled tools that can accelerate screening, matching, and credential verification.

## IMPLEMENT INTELLIGENT SCREENING SOLUTIONS

Background screening has evolved from a regulatory requirement into a core component of workforce strategy. When done right, it not only protects patients and providers but also accelerates onboarding and builds long-term workforce integrity.

### Reduce Organizational Risk With Advanced Verification

Inconsistent screening standards across worker types—employees, contractors, students, or volunteers—can introduce blind spots and liability. Standardizing verification processes ensures that everyone with patient access is held to the same standard. Tools like continuous license monitoring and real-time alerts also help organizations stay ahead of compliance issues, rather than reacting after the fact.

#### *How a Midwest Health System Unified Risk Management Across Its Workforce*

A regional health system in the Midwest needed a more cohesive approach to screening as they expanded into new markets and acquired additional facilities. Their previous process lacked consistency and created onboarding delays across locations. With Cive, they unified their screening program across all hospitals, standardizing processes for both employees and non-employed personnel like students and contractors.

This change not only reduced hiring bottlenecks, but also improved safety, compliance, and visibility across the entire workforce ecosystem.

### Turn Background Screening Into a Competitive Advantage

Background screening is a valuable source of workforce intelligence. A well-designed screening program helps you uncover patterns that go beyond pass/fail results. You can identify trends around candidate quality, time-to-hire, and retention risk across roles and departments. By analyzing this data, you gain a clearer picture of where your hiring processes succeed—and where they create unnecessary friction.

Predictive models take it a step further, helping you forecast which candidates are likely to thrive, which roles carry elevated compliance risks, and where targeted improvements can strengthen your overall workforce strategy.

Cive's platform is designed to integrate smoothly into existing HR workflows, acting as the connective tissue between systems. Whether you're using separate platforms for applicant tracking, payroll, or talent management, Cive can feed verified candidate data back into those systems. This ensures downstream processes like payroll, succession planning, and internal mobility are based on trusted, audit-ready information—streamlining operations and improving data integrity across the board.

### Accelerate Hiring With Smarter Screening

Long turnaround times on background checks and credential verifications are a common barrier to timely onboarding. Integrating screening into applicant tracking systems and job offer workflows can significantly reduce administrative delays. By automating consent collection and synchronizing data entry points, healthcare organizations are removing days from their time-to-hire without compromising quality.

Consider the difference solutions like Cive can make. Instead of waiting for a separate background check request after offer acceptance, Cive integrates directly into the offer process. When a candidate clicks "Accept," they're immediately routed into the screening workflow—collecting consent and launching the background check on the spot. This streamlined approach eliminates up to two days of processing time and creates a seamless, automated experience for both candidate and employer.

#### *How One Health System Accelerated Onboarding Without Sacrificing Compliance*

A large national health system with 100+ hospitals needed a way to reduce onboarding delays while maintaining strict compliance standards across multiple states. By partnering with Cive, they implemented a centralized screening process that provided real-time visibility, standardization, and automation—cutting onboarding times and improving candidate experience.

The integration of background checks, license verifications, and real-time reporting helped the organization move away from decentralized, manual workflows and toward a modern, scalable solution. As a result, they strengthened compliance while accelerating the path from offer to day one.

## IMPLEMENT INTELLIGENT SCREENING SOLUTIONS

### Enhance Candidate Experience While Maintaining Compliance

Candidates expect a smooth, transparent hiring process. Screening delays or duplicate credential requests can create frustration—and increase the risk of losing top talent to more efficient employers. By modernizing screening practices, healthcare organizations improve the candidate experience while reinforcing a culture of safety and accountability.

By integrating intelligent screening solutions, you build a workforce that is not only qualified but also aligned with your organization's goals.

#### Action Items:

- **Create a Unified Screening Policy.** Develop and implement a standardized background screening policy that applies to all worker types—including contractors, students, and volunteers—to eliminate inconsistencies and ensure equal safety standards across your entire workforce.
- **Leverage Screening Data for Strategic Insights.** Analyze background check trends to identify patterns that inform workforce planning and uncover areas where hiring processes can be optimized.
- **Integrate Screening Into the Job Offer Workflow.** Automate the initiation of background checks by embedding screening into your job offer process.
- **Streamline Communication Around Screening Status.** Keep candidates informed with real-time updates on their screening progress to reduce uncertainty, improve transparency, and enhance overall satisfaction during the hiring journey.



## BUILD ADAPTIVE WORKFORCE ARCHITECTURES

The pace of change in healthcare is only accelerating. To stay competitive, you must design a workforce architecture that is flexible, data-informed, and built to adapt.

### Anticipate Future Roles and Skill Gaps

As healthcare technology advances, new roles are emerging in virtual care, digital workflow coordination, and data analytics. Employers must not only plan for these roles but begin assessing whether existing staff can be trained to fill them. Skills-based planning enables organizations to map current capabilities against future needs and make smarter hiring and development decisions.

### Design a More Flexible Talent Acquisition Framework

Rigid workforce models no longer serve today's needs. Organizations must shift from fixed staffing ratios and full-time-only models to hybrid frameworks that accommodate a mix of full-time, part-time, per diem, and contract roles. This flexibility creates space for returning clinicians, supports better work-life balance, and ensures continuity in times of volatility.

### Predict Workforce Needs Before They Become Problems

Workforce development isn't just about filling roles—it's about preparing for what's next. Organizations that track workforce trends, patient demand, and projected retirements using AI-powered analytics can proactively invest in training programs, upskilling pathways, and succession planning. With the right foresight, you can prevent shortages before they happen and improve care quality across the board.

### Turn Workforce Challenges into Organizational Strength

A resilient workforce isn't built overnight. It's designed through systems that promote agility, consistency, and integration. That means aligning your workforce strategy with clinical goals, using unified systems to manage staffing across roles, and continuously evaluating the impact of hiring, scheduling, and credentialing decisions. Resilient organizations can navigate disruptions, maintain quality care, and adapt faster than the competition.

By building a workforce that can adapt and evolve, you gain a competitive edge in an unpredictable healthcare environment.

## Innovate to Support Care Delivery in a Changing World

Even as workforce, regulatory, and financial pressures intensify, healthcare leaders are finding creative ways to advance patient care. These innovations often extend beyond staffing and into broader operational resilience. For example, some hospitals are investing in infrastructure—[like Valley Children's on-site energy microgrids](#)—ensuring continuity of care during power outages and natural disasters. Others are developing care delivery models that blend in-person and virtual services, supported by data-driven workforce planning and predictive staffing models, and [adopting new technology](#).

These strategies reflect a deeper truth: innovation in healthcare isn't just about keeping up—it's about leading forward. By building systems that are more adaptable, connected, and resilient, healthcare organizations are not only addressing today's challenges but also setting a new standard for how care is delivered tomorrow.

### Action Items:

- **Conduct a Skills Gap Analysis Aligned to Emerging Roles.** Evaluate your current workforce's skills against projected needs in areas like virtual care, analytics, and digital coordination—then create a roadmap for internal training or new hiring to close those gaps.
- **Build Role Templates for Nontraditional Work Arrangements.** Develop job templates and onboarding pathways for part-time, per diem, and contract positions to create a more agile, responsive staffing model that attracts a broader talent pool.
- **Adopt Predictive Analytics to Forecast Staffing Demand.** Implement AI-powered workforce planning tools to model future staffing needs based on retirement projections, patient volume trends, and regional labor market data.
- **Align Workforce Metrics With Clinical and Operational Goals.** Establish KPIs that link hiring, scheduling, and credentialing data to patient care outcomes—so you can assess and improve how your workforce strategy supports quality and agility.

## FUTURE-PROOF YOUR HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE WITH CISIVE

The future of healthcare will be shaped by the decisions you make today. Addressing workforce challenges isn't just a matter of fixing what's broken—it's about building something even stronger. By understanding your ecosystem, rethinking your hiring strategy, modernizing screening, and designing for agility, you can create a healthcare workforce that's ready for whatever comes next.

Cisive is here to help. Our screening and workforce intelligence solutions are built for the complex, high-stakes environment of healthcare. We help organizations accelerate hiring, reduce compliance risk, and unlock insights that support better decision-making.

As the healthcare industry evolves, we're evolving with it—building integrated APIs, expanding real-time monitoring, and delivering workforce analytics that go beyond basic background checks. Whether you're hiring a clinician, onboarding a volunteer, or scaling a workforce transformation, Cisive gives you the tools to do it faster, smarter, and safer.

**Let's build a stronger workforce—together.**

