

Recruiting for Retention

Part Two: Marketing to & Finding Candidates

Powered by the National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network

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About 3RNET

3RNET is the most trusted resource for health professionals seeking careers in rural and underserved communities.

3RNET Mission

3RNET works to improve rural and underserved communities' access to quality health care through recruitment of physicians and other health care professionals, development of community based recruitment and retention activities, and national advocacy relative to rural and underserved health care workforce issues.

3RNET Vision

3RNET is the national leader for community-based health professional recruitment and retention, using interactive technologies and communication.

3RNET is a nonprofit organization focused on people. Our members connect professionals searching for jobs in rural or underserved areas with health care facilities.

3RNET is powered by the National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network which is made up of member organizations such as:

- State Offices of Rural Health
- Primary Care Offices
- Area Health Education Centers
- University programs
- State-based non-profit organizations
- Primary Care Associations

Learn more about 3RNET by visiting www.3RNET.org.



About this Guide

Where did this guide come from?

This guide includes the collective expertise of 3RNET and is powered by the National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network.

3RNET has been the leader in rural and underserved recruitment and retention best practices since 1995.

The content of this guide is based on content from 3RNET's longtime-published *Recruiting for Retention Manual*.

This streamlined, more modern guide hopes to further what the *Manual* always intended to accomplish: provide best practices by combining the years of collective expertise from 3RNET's National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network for rural and underserved healthcare recruiters.

“Recruitment”

Recruiting with a goal toward retention, or “recruitment” as a best practice is one of the core beliefs of 3RNET education. Recruitment is a term coined by one of 3RNET's previous Executive Director's, Tim Skinner. Tim, along with other early 3RNET leaders, believed passionately in the idea presented in this guide: use best practices to find the *best fit* for your organization.

About Marketing to & Finding Candidates

In today's marketing climate it is important to have a great virtual presence and that communication be candidate focused.

Recruiting health professionals can be competitive. So, it is important to put your best foot forward. And, since many job seekers browse for jobs online, we have compiled some strategies to consider as you work to create your best digital footprint.

How to Use This Guide

There are a few ways to approach the *Recruiting for Retention* guides:

- Read all four guides at once, from cover to cover.
- Focus on each guide individually as it pertains to your specific situation.
- Come back to individual sections or one individual guide for a quick reference.

Several of the tools (Recruitment Team Action Plan, Market Your Community Assessment, Budget Worksheet, etc.) can be viewed separately and used as stand-alone tools.

Learn More

For additional information on any topic discussed in the *Recruiting for Retention* guides contact 3RNET at 1-800-787-2512 or info@3rnet.org.

3RNET also provides primary care recruitment and retention training and assistance. If you feel more hands-on education could help, please contact 3RNET's Director of Education, Mandi Gingras at 1-800-787-2512 or gingras@3rnet.org.

Rural Specific

Many of the best practices, tactics, and ideas within this guide are both practical and useful for health care employers serving both rural and underserved (also urban underserved) populations.

Why? Although in some ways vastly different, there are many similarities within the employee-employer relationship that translate no matter where you are located geographically.

We recognize that even with similarities across the health care safety net, recruiting for rural areas presents unique challenges.

Throughout the guide, you'll notice this mark: *r* which calls attention to rural-specific considerations.

Introduction

Health care professionals are critical to the stability of medical services in rural and underserved areas. Recruiting and retaining hard-to-find health care professionals is one of the biggest challenges facing the health care industry. It's vital to use a strategic approach that emphasizes recruiting the right candidate who will stay for an extended period of time.

There is no single "right" way to recruit and retain health care professionals. Yet, there are certain critical activities or processes that should take place to ensure timely placement and lasting retention of a quality healthcare professional in your community.

Recruiting for Retention guides you step-by-step through the key elements of the recruitment and retention process. From assessing need to integrating the health care professional and family into the community, *Recruiting for Retention* explains the most important steps in finding and retaining the ideal candidate for your community.

We break down the four parts of the recruitment for retention process: planning and preparation, marketing to and finding candidates, matching and committing, and retaining for the lifecycle of the employee.

In each guide you will learn tips and tools for making your recruitment and retention efforts a more manageable, productive and efficient process.

As its title implies, *Recruiting for Retention* will show you how to build staff retention during the recruitment process itself – long before the employee begins with your facility.

Finally, *Recruiting for Retention* identifies state, regional and federal resources that can most help you in your recruitment and retention efforts, as well as help improve health care delivery in your community.



3RNET's Recruiting *for* Retention Core Beliefs

Process & Teamwork are Key

Recruiting is not a one-person activity. Even in small facilities one person may wear many hats but it takes a team to successfully recruit and retain employees. A process is also important so that you can ensure that all activities, strategies and compliance items are performed to enable a successful outcome.

Recruitment is Both a Science & an Art

If recruitment was a science, you could follow a manual, and everyone would succeed.

If recruitment was an art, there would be no best practices or guidelines to follow.

The most successful outcomes come from those organizations that have the person recruiting following a process and also adapting strategies depending on their circumstance.

Competition is Fierce, Therefore Communication Must be Candidate Oriented

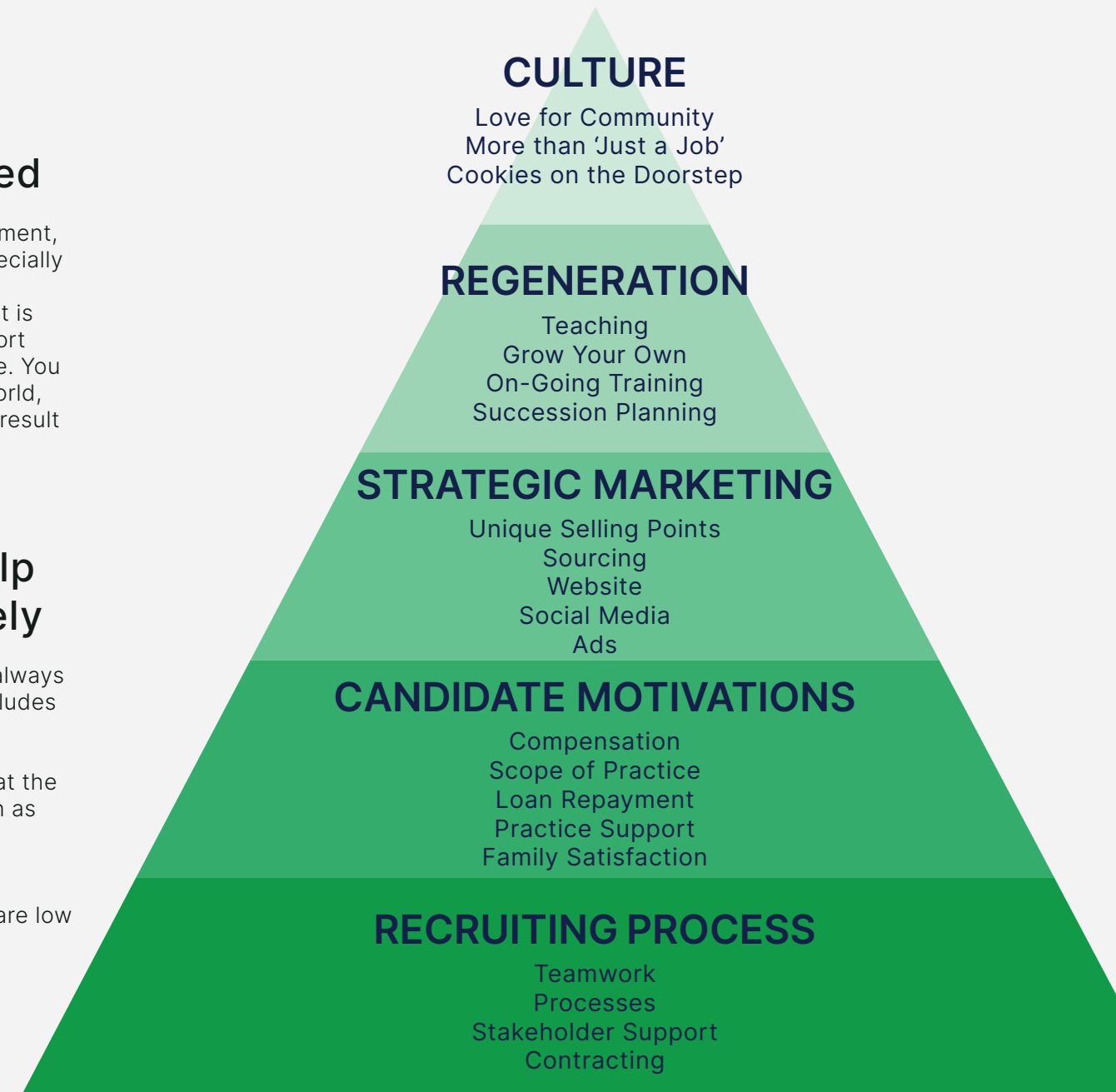
Communication is key in every aspect of employment, but even before that relationship starts, it is especially essential to start off on the right foot. When communicating your opportunity to a candidate it is important to think through what you think is important versus what would be important to the candidate. You might have the best "insert factor here" in the world, but if the candidate doesn't need or want it, the result is null.

People & Tools Exist to Help You Recruit More Effectively

Those who work in the health care industry are always aware of the cost of doing business and that includes recruiting and retaining employees.

The good news is there are many organizations at the state and national level that have resources such as incentive programs to help you.

Along with those organizations there are many marketing and technology tools available which are low cost or free.



Conduct a Virtual Assessment

In today's marketing climate it is important to have a great virtual presence and that communication be candidate focused. Recruiting health professionals can be competitive. So, it is important to put your best foot forward. And, since many job seekers browse for jobs online, we have compiled some strategies to consider as you work to create your best digital self, and to make sure your "virtual handshake" leaves a good first impression.

Strategies

Websites

In addition to a patient resource, consider your website as a recruitment tool. Your job postings lead the candidates back to your site and is where potential employees get their first glimpse into the type of employer you are.

Here's a simple checklist to ensure your postings are engaging as well as easy to find, use, and apply to:

- Add employee testimonials either as a video or a quote accompanied by a photo.
- List all job openings with a clear call to action.
- Make your "careers" section easy to navigate to. A good rule of thumb is generally no more than two clicks from the home page.
- Check that navigation and use is mobile friendly.
- Include information about your community, including maps/attractions. (A good use of your "unique selling points" from Part One.)

Application Process

Sometimes simple things can create barriers to applying to your positions.

Go through the application yourself (both on a desktop and mobile device) checking for:

- Ensure the actual application process is clear and easy to use on both desktop and mobile devices
- If you encounter any barriers, fix them.
- Limit the information you are requesting to that which is only necessary for the position. If you are asking too much, the applicant may get frustrated and quit the process part way through and a viable candidate is missed. Remember, you can always ask at a later point or next step.

Google Yourself

A first impression to candidates may be what they see if they conduct a web search looking for your website to apply for a job or learn more about your organization.

Search for your organization on the web -- Google yourself!

- What comes up?
- Have you "claimed" your business on Google?
- How do you address negative reviews? Respond to all reviews with professional responses.
- What comes up about your community that you can utilize or address?



Write Effective Job Postings

It is so easy to slip into the comfort zone of talking about what matters to you (employer) but with competition being so fierce, it is important to remember that communication should be candidate driven and your job posting is no exception to that.

It's a Job Ad, Not a Job Description

We are talking about the language you want to use to make your job opening stand out. We know there is a lot of importance in a job description, but we want to put our marketing caps on first.

So, what should you put in a job ad? What matters to the job seeker!

And what does matter? A common approach to answering what matters to employees is to apply Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to the workplace. In short, you want to be able to answer these questions (and, of course, include them in your job ad):

Belonging: Am I the kind of person you are looking for?

You can answer this question by telling your story, your employees' stories, teamwork, etc.

Example: We're looking for a motivated, mission-driven nurse who is looking to be part of our growth, as well as their own.

Fulfillment: Will I be content?

Answer this question by talking about the quality of care, clinical autonomy or making a difference.

Example: We see patients from pre-birth on up. We pride ourselves on our ability to provide health care for all aspects of our patients' health and wellbeing, and we're looking for someone committed to providing care for our diverse patient population.

Esteem: Will I be respected?

Answer this question by including statements about leadership, opportunities to teach, being an employer of choice.

Example: Our team is just that: a team. We thrive around our culture of respecting a team-based approach to care, and we see the results in the care we deliver. This position includes an opportunity for growth into a supervising role, as well as opportunities to precept nursing students through a local partnership.

Prosperity: Will I thrive?

Include statements about your culture, benefits, loan repayment, and competitive pay.

Example: Learn more about this job, as well as our focus on teamwork and our culture that emphasizes our team members' health and well-being as much as our patients.' We can't wait for you to see what we're about.

Audit Your Job Posting Language to be Inclusive

Clarity

No buzzwords like "Top Talent", "Self-starter", "Fast Paced", just daily activities or experiences

Shorter is better (250 words), keep it to a social media post.

Our attention span is shorter and more than likely your posting will be viewed on a mobile device.

No Guessing

Job titles are confusing and very employer specific.

Try Googling "Office Assistant" (4500 hits) and "Administrative Assistant" (80,000 hits). Even if you use "Office Assistant" internally when writing your posting use the more common title because that is the title that candidates will be searching for.

Tone

Write for people not about the work.

Break up sentence length.

Make your language sound like a conversation.
Tip: Use voice to text

Delete Bias In Your Job Postings

100 year old traditions can equal 100 year old biases.

Years of Experience

The number of years can be misleading. For example, compare a CEO of a small company which has an annual budget of \$300K and has been in that role for nine years versus a CEO of a company with \$50 million annual budget and three years of experience. If you listed minimum five years of experience you may lose out on qualified talent.

It the type of experience not necessarily the years of it.

Qualify don't Quantify.

No Bulleted Lists

Bulleted lists can be seen as a barrier to those who don't have the privilege of college education or experience.

To expand your candidate pool and to keep from deleting hope focus on a job pitch instead.

For Example: As our (Job Title), you will help____ so they can____. Every day you will _____. To thrive you must _____.

Job Pitch

Here's an example of a job pitch for a Reception/Check In position:

As our Check In person, you will use EPIC to check in patients that will get their medical needs met. Every day we'll rely on you to multitask priorities while managing the flow of incoming patients. To thrive in this role, you should have an interest in creating a career in helping people get the medical treatment they need. We'll teach you everything else you need to know.

Watch for Gendered Language

Try and avoid gendered language and opt for more gender-neutral wording. For example, rather than "he" or "she", use "they" or "them" to avoid excluding or rendering invisible any candidates.

Do Include Money, But Don't Include Benefits.

You can include salary ranges on the posting but be sure to explain them, "Salary starts at \$X and goes up to \$X, the person who gets the upper end of the range will have supervised # of people."

Unless there is something extremely unique about benefits, you can save that space for more on the daily activities. Most benefits are in the same ballpark.

College Education

In some cases, a college education is necessary, but for those positions it isn't a college education can be seen as a privilege.

Instead, for those roles that it isn't necessary, focus on what success looks like in the role:

Skills + Qualifications = "Here's what success will look like..."

Degree Requirements = "To thrive in this role, you've..."

Get Input From The Experts (Your Staff)

What matters to the hardworking, dedicated professionals with whom you already work? Why do they work there, and not somewhere else? Listening here is key! What key words and phrases carry meaning and impact?

Remember to keep your staff in the loop AFTER you get your ad put together, too.

Consider that your staff can create a powerful marketing team to help you get the word out.

Ask the hiring manager. Some good questions to ask are:

Typical: How can we "sell" your job to candidates in a job post?

Instead: What's special about this team as compared to other teams you've worked on?

Typical: What are the ideal candidate traits?
Instead: What do your best (Job Title) have in common?

Typical: How many years of experience are you looking for?
Instead: What would be a deal-breaker on a resume?
What are you scanning for?

Make it Visual

We have become very accustomed to seeing pictures, videos, and more when browsing online. And that means this is also true when we're looking at jobs online. So, what's a recruiter to do?

Section out your content so it's easy to read (and scan!). Keep in mind, many job seekers might be looking at your ad on a phone or tablet.

Include helpful links.

Add a link or embed a simple video. It doesn't have to be Hollywood level quality (keep it professional but give yourself some grace. Remember: an honest, simple video is better than no video). Include a short video of a current employee and why they like working at your place of employment, or even a virtual tour of your facility.

Use photos. Think about how you can use pictures to share more about your people, facilities, and surroundings.

Use Social Media to Source

Many employers already use social media to promote services, staff, fundraising opportunities, health information and trends but tackling social media to promote your job post is a great sourcing tool. Social media is an important aspect of your “virtual handshake”.

The most common social media used are Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram for job postings.

To make the management of your social media easier utilize a scheduler like Buffer or Hootsuite and a URL condenser like bitly.com.

Social Media Posts

A fun idea for Social Media post is to hold a contest with employees to come up with hashtags for your clinics, services, staff etc. then you can use those in the social media post.

When you write for social media, keep in mind that your posts will likely be different based on the platform you're writing for. If you are using one post for multiple platforms, keep in mind Twitter's character limit.

Some common hashtags for job postings for safety net facilities:

#ruralhealth #rural #physicians #nurses #nursejob
#physicianjobs #oralhealth #underserved

Social Media Ads allow you to target a small audience or a national audience. Reach a few hundred or few thousand people on a shoestring budget.

Utilize associations that your opportunity is affiliated with to strategically reach a targeted audience:

- 3RNET (you can easily share posted jobs to your social media from 3RNET's website)
- American Academy Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American Dental Association (ADA)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Indian Health Service (IHS)
- National Rural Health Association (NRHA)
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
- State, regional, or national nursing associations
- State, regional, or national medical assistant associations
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA)
- Veterans Administration (VA)



Where You Source Matters, Find What Works For You

After you've done the work to ensure you have a great job posting, the next step is to figure out where to display it and to identify all the places you can get candidates from.

Job Boards

Some of the more common job boards include: 3RNET, Indeed, PracticeLink, Profiles, CareerMD, NHSC, HealthCareers

Diversity Specific Job Boards

[Diversity Working](#), [Hire Autism](#), [Recruit Disability](#)

Employee Referral Programs

Many employers develop employee referral programs as part of their recruitment and retention plan. It has been proven that employees who join as the result of an employee referral have a higher retention rate and a faster on-boarding time.

Some tips for creating an Employee Referral Program include:

- Offer a referral bonus. The set dollar amount can vary by a number of factors from job type to financial consideration, but it is important to not set it to low; the amount should be high enough to entice employees to action.
- Ensure the rules are defined and simple. Outline how the employee can offer a referral and the terms that need to be accomplished to receive the payment. Some organizations wait until the probationary period is over to pay out, but this can lead to fewer referrals.
- Make sure the referring employee knows there aren't any negative consequences if it doesn't work out. Consistently assure employees of the "no negative consequences" rule when you are marketing the program.

- Create a working environment that naturally encourages employee referrals. Develop an environment in which employees have a natural "sales pitch" because employee engagement is high, and they are proud to work there.
- Leverage social media. One of the main ways employees may contact potential job applicants is through social media. Make sure your jobs can be shared via social media and allow them to have access, if possible, at work.

Virtual Job Fairs

In today's Covid-19 world and when you're strategically accounting for generational differences in your hiring, learning to navigate virtual job fairs is a must in your sourcing efforts.

Here are some ways to make the most of participating in virtual job fairs:

- Participate in "dress rehearsals" if given the opportunity with the vendor.
- If visiting residency programs virtual see if you can still provide food, i.e., food truck.
- Use a video conference (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet) as backup if the platform goes down.
- Use a video conference call to "coordinate" with those staffing your job fair.
- Have information readily available to cut and paste in chat about the job opportunity.

Residency and Nursing Programs

Building relationships to "build" your own is a great sourcing strategy.

- Create a relationship with a local residency program.
- Create a relationship with a local nursing school. Use this as an option to nurture growth of employees wanting to further their career.
- Create a relationship with medical assistant schools. Again, this can be an option for employees who want to grow their careers.



Free and Low Cost Tools

All tools are located in the Recruiting for Retention Resource Center (R4R Resource Center). When listed, use the reference number to identify the document or tool you're looking for.

Strong Website & Social Media Examples

Creating a strong first impression or “virtual handshake” is extremely important. If you're looking for some inspiration, here are some great examples that are hitting the mark when it comes to having a solid virtual presence:

[Reference 2.0](#)

Website

[Comtrea Health Center](#) (see also: Comtrea's [“Working at Comtrea”](#) page)

Infographic Guide

[Seven Tips to Improve Physician Retention, Engagement, and Burnout](#) from Jackson Physician Search

Facebook Page

[Baystate Health](#)

Job & Social Media Postings

This cannot be over emphasized: when promoting your jobs, make sure you are using a job ad and NOT a job description. We've got some great examples of attention grabbing job ads for promotion as well as effective, engaging social media posts to help promote your opportunities and organization.

[Reference 2.1](#)

Free & Low Cost Marketing Resources

Are you operating with a shoestring marketing budget? Would you like to further leverage your precious resource of time? This resource is a list of go-to tech tools to help you “work smarter, not harder” when you're marketing to and searching for candidates.

[Reference 2.2](#)



Rural Focused Strategies

Sourcing and strategies for rural can be especially challenging. Here are some tools and people who can help:

People

- 3RNET Network Coordinators
- Your State Primary Care Office
- Your local newspaper (still very effective in rural and frontier communities)

Tools

- J1 Visa Waivers
- State Loan Repayment Programs
- National Health Service Corps
- Community-Based Referral Bonus



Generations in the Workplace

Communication Preferences Vary By Generation

Each generation has a communication preference and will discover your sourcing in different ways. For example, one generation may be more likely to notice your posting on social media versus a different generation that may find you through a job board, and a third may come across your openings from one of your current employees. Include your job posting on many different platforms.

Understanding the general priorities of each generation can help you to tailor your language in your candidate focused job posting.

Boomers

Want:

- Flexible Hours
- Stability
- Healthcare

Tactics:

- Digital
- Traditional
- Get to the Point

Gen X

Want:

- Growth
- Work/Life Balance
- Stability

Tactics:

- Digital Savvy
- Mobile Friendly
- Promote Day-to Day of Role

Gen Y (Millennials)

Want:

- Growth
- Mentorships
- Flexibility
- Ability to Engage Digital

Tactics:

- Company Culture
- Social Impact
- How They Fit In

Gen Z

Want:

- Learning Opportunities
- Flexibility
- Virtual
- Contribution to Company

Tactics:

- Company Culture
- Social Impact
- Entrepreneurial Mindset



Conclusion

We hope this step-by-step guide is a useful tool in your candidate marketing and sourcing efforts.

Although there's no "right" way to recruit and retain health professionals, as this guide illustrates there are best practices you can implement in order to have your best chance at recruitment (and retention!) success.

As you continue to work on your recruitment efforts, remember: focus on what works for your organization!

Explore the complementing tools mentioned in this guide (available when logged into 3RNET.org).

Questions, Comments, & Feedback

Share with us! We love hearing from the hard working recruiters like you who are helping to ensure access to health care for all Americans.

For additional information on any topic discussed in the Recruiting for Retention guides contact 3RNET at 1-800-787-2512 or info@3rnet.org.

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