

In-Person / MS Teams Meeting
Sheriff's Department 3rd Floor
Special Operations Center (SOC)
1750 E. Benson Highway
Tucson, Arizona 85714

1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Horwitz called meeting to order at 2:00 P.M.

PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH:

Dr. Paul Horwitz, President
Dr. Kathryn Kohler
Dr. Gail Smith
Ms. Carolyn Trowbridge

COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Ms. Nancy Johnson, Nancy Johnson, RN, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, El Rio Health
Ms. Judy Rich, President and Chief Executive Officer, TMC Health

A quorum was established (5)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Kohler led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. MINUTES ADOPTION

None Currently.

4. FACTUAL PRESENTATION

- Dr. Horwitz noted that Pima County Health Department (PCHD) has a vacancy rate of 26.5% for full-time FTD's that are funded and not filled, and is losing good people due to pay issues and other factors.
- Dr. Horwitz invited Ms. Judy Rich, TMC Health, and Ms. Nancy Johnson, El Rio Health, to speak on retention and recruitment practices that they have employed to decrease their employee vacancy rates.
- Ms. Rich observed that the number one reason that people stay, or leave, is their image. Team members need to feel valued, and that is as simple as recognition at a staff meeting, or a thank you card.
- Ms. Rich noted that people are very much at risk in their first year, so TMC's retention policy is to have management meet with new team members at 30-, 60-, and 90-days, and again at 6 months. All meetings are reported to Human Resources as an accountability measure to ensure no one slips through the cracks.
- Ms. Rich advised that recruitment today requires a fast and nimble interview process that includes making a decision based on credentials, and then offering the position immediately.
- Ms. Rich stated that the main criteria job seekers at TMC ask for are help with paying off loans; the specifics on the conditions of employment; how extensive the orientation period is; having the flexibility to work from home; and offering flexible work hours.
- Ms. Rich mentioned that TMC has dropped from a 24% vacancy rate to a 17% vacancy rate in 2022.
- Ms. Johnson agreed that employee's need to feel valued above all.
- Ms. Johnson noted that El Rio is a federally qualified health center and has a loan forgiveness program for nurse practitioners, therapists, psychiatrists and doctors, and anyone on staff who has worked there for 10 years or more is eligible to apply for loan forgiveness from the U.S. Public Health Service program.

- Ms. Johnson mentioned that many registered nurses who apply to El Rio do not want to manage staff and prefer to do patient care or case management for the 24/7 home triage program.
- Ms. Johnson indicated the biggest recruitment challenge for El Rio has been getting medical assistants (MA). El Rio has collaborated with Pima Community College to set up workforce development programs where front line employees are paid to finish the MA program and then are required to work at El Rio for 2 years; this also is done with nursing licensing.
- Ms. Johnson advised that El Rio has been growing quickly, at a rate of 7% annually, and currently has a 14% vacancy rate for 2022.
- Both Ms. Rich and Ms. Johnson stated that the ability to advance in the organization is an important part of employee retention.
- Dr. Horwitz inquired what the common themes for exit interviews have been at both TMC and El Rio, and the top three reasons for leaving are (1) don't like the boss, (2) don't like the work hours, and (3) personal reasons.

5. DISCUSSING POSSIBLE APPROACHES

- PCHD might explore a loan forgiveness program for RN's or LPN's, or outreach workers who may have student loans, with loan forgiveness after 10 years of service.
- PCHD should have staff members give presentations to students to introduce them to public health.
- PCHD needs to have a marketing campaign directed at new graduates to introduce the Health Department as a place where they can make a difference working in public health service.

6. POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MEL ZUCKERMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

- Dr. Horwitz will research the possibility of having a partnership with the Zuckerman School of Public Health.

7. ESTABLISHING NEXT MEETING DATE

- To be decided.

8. SUMMATION OF ACTION ITEMS AND PROPOSAL OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Dr. Horwitz plans to research if PCHD qualifies with the U.S. government for loan forgiveness.
- Dr. Kohler mentioned that if the government cannot reimburse student loans, perhaps PCHD should consider approaching a private company (or two) to agree to do that.
- Ms. Rich recommended that Dr. Horwitz contact Jenny Baarstad at TMC to discuss their recruitment program.
- Ms. Johnson recommended that Dr. Horwitz contact George Toy at El Rio to discuss the loan forgiveness program.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 P.M.