
Hospital Leaders: Provision of Childcare Can Be a Game-Changer



Workforce shortages are an issue faced by many hospital leaders. Implementing four basic child care policies in your institution, could be a game-changer when it comes to retaining workers - especially women, according to a recent article published in *Harvard Business Review (HBR)*.

During the pandemic, women have been disproportionately affected by the burden of child care, with more than 800,000 women reportedly leaving the workforce between August and September 2020. In order to retain women in hospitals, leaders will have to actively find ways to keep parents - especially women - in the workforce, the article said.

You might also like: The NIH recently approved a 24-month grant for researchers to develop sensors that can be embedded into mobile devices which could potentially detect COVID-19 particles on their surfaces. The General Electric Research team is set to begin developing miniature sensors that can be embedded into mobile devices in order to detect COVID-19 on their commonly used surfaces. [Learn more](#)

Four policies hospital leaders should consider implementing:

1. **Offer Flexible Work Schedules and Remote Work for All Parents :** Consider giving staff a choice in the number of days they work at home, the time it takes to commute to and from work, expectations for meetings, desired availability, and time-off policies.
2. **Create Support Structures for Parents at Work:** Create a workforce culture that acknowledges parents, so they don't feel that they have to hide their child care challenges from work. Implement time-off policies for home-schooling. Consider employee assistance programs, bereavement support and mental health assistance for increased stress.
3. **Increase Childcare Subsidies as Employee Benefits:** While providing childcare as a benefit may not provide the same tax incentives as providing health care, but when weighed against the costs of finding and hiring new employees, the investment in keeping parents employed by offering childcare proves its value. Additionally, women earn, on average, 82 cents for every \$1 earned by men, according to recent U.S. Census data.
4. **Provide On-Site or Local Childcare Spaces and Supervision:** Employers who can pool together to offer quality on-site or local childcare options for employees will see more productive and loyal employees. For many workers, the mere idea of being able to bring their children to work and know they are well cared for, safe and engaged, would be a game-changer.

Authors of the HBR survey reported that working parents - both mothers and fathers - are currently experiencing high levels of distress, with two thirds scoring in the range of high psychological distress on the standard K6 mental health scale used by researchers.

They argue that childcare is not a family issue, but a business issue. It affects how we work, when we work, and for many, why we work. Employer-provided childcare could also influence where we work, in that employees are less likely to move to a new job if it also means moving their childcare from a safe, trusted, and convenient environment.

Source: [HBR](#)

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