THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL NURSING

2018 report created from the viewpoints of travel nurses.
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The Future of Travel Nursing

Introduction

Nursing has always been a critical piece of the healthcare industry. While the primary responsibilities of a nurse have remained consistent over the years, there is no doubt that the healthcare industry is evolving. Nurses must adjust and adapt when needed while staying focused on their primary objective; to deliver quality care to your patients and their families.

There are many similarities in the responsibilities between a traveling nurse and a non-traveling nurse. However, one could argue there are more opportunities for a travel nurse to find work. As a travel nurse, you have the flexibility of being able to work where needed.

According to the U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, nurse employment is set to increase by 15% from 2016 – 2026. Growth will occur for a variety of reasons; one of which being the growth of the aging population. As the need grows, nurses can make the choice right for them. One of those choices is whether to become or stay a travel nurse.

A recent survey was sent to a large sum of travel nurses, each with their own unique background. The results of this report reflect their individual viewpoints on the future of travel nursing. These results do not reflect the opinions of Host Healthcare.
Demographics

The following is a demographic breakdown of the travel nurse who completed the survey.
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**Age Range**

- Younger than 30: 4%
- 30 - 39: 9%
- 40 - 49: 9%
- 50 - 59: 27%
- 60 - 69: 18%
- Decline to state: 33%

**Education Level**

- College Degree: 66%
- College Degree + Certifications: 31%
- Master's Degree: 3%
Nurse Experience

To get a fair sample, we survived travel nurses with a variety of experience and specialties.
Travel Nurse Experience: Quantitative Insight

The following charts outline the thoughts and feelings travel nurses have about the travel nurse industry.

**Years Experience as a Travel Nurse**

- 1 Year: 6%
- 2 Years: 6%
- 3 - 5 years: 3%
- 6 - 10 Years: 3%
- 10 - 15 Years: 3%
- 20+ Years: 63%

**Are you worried you won't find your next travel assignment?**

- Yes: 48%
- No: 52%
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Favorite Part About Being A Travel Nurse

- The ability to travel from assignment to assignment: 65%
- Meeting new people: 19%
- The money you can make: 16%

Least Favorite Park About Being A Travel Nurse

- Not finding the jobs you want: 42%
- Difficulty with housing: 32%
- Being away from friends and family: 7%
- The facility politics: 3%
- Pre-assignment needs: 6%
How Many More Years Are You Planning To Be A Travel Nurse?
Travel Nurse Experience: Summary & Key Findings

As stated in the introduction, there is a growing demand for nurses. When surveyed, over 90% of travel nurses are planning to work at least one year more. However, the majority of travel nurses surveyed stated they are worried that they won't find a new travel nurse assignment. Why is that? If we now know the overwhelming favorite part of being a travel nurse is the ability to travel from assignment to assignment why would the majority of people surveyed fear there won't be a new assignment for them?

It comes down to location, location, and location. People are excited to travel. They are sold on traveling from city to city. However, fear sets in when there are no jobs in the locations a travel nurse desires.

For travel nurse agencies, the focus needs to be on educating travelers on specific locations. There are plenty of great locations to work; some of them might not be known by your travelers. Educate them. If you reference the first graph on page 6, 65% of those surveyed said their favorite part about being a travel nurse is the ability to travel. Money on the other hand came in as a distance second in terms of why people travel.

For travelers, the more flexible you can be in your location means the more confidence you can have that you will find a new travel assignment following your current assignment. If your top location isn’t available expand your preferred location. Have an open conversation with your recruiter on your desire to work in a specific location. It’s also important to know that experience matters. The more experience you have as a nurse, the more selective you can be when deciding where to travel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>1 - 3 More Years</th>
<th>4 - 6 More Years</th>
<th>10 More Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s Your Feeling Towards Being A Travel Nurse?

Below are the motivating factors for travel nurses.

**What is your top motivating factor to continue working as a travel nurse?**

- Traveling the country: 50%
- Meeting new people: 34%
- Making more money: 13%
- Growing your career: 3%

**What is your top motivating factor to stop being a travel nurse?**

- Thinking about retirement: 26%
- Want to be closer to family: 29%
- A desire to flip to perm: 10%
- Lack of benefits/low pay: 10%
- Looking to settle down in one location: 10%
- Not finding anything good: 9%
- Going back to school: 6%
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Are you feeling burnt out as a travel nurse?

- No: 88%
- Yes: 12%

How likely are you to recommend travel nursing as a career?

- 5: 39%
- 4: 10%
- 3: 29%
- 2: 19%
- 1: 3%
Summary & Key Findings

Motivating Factors

We are seeing a pattern in the #1 motivating factor that keeps people sticking as a travel nurse; traveling the country. However, it is interesting to see a large jump in money being a motivating factor to continue working as a travel nurse. From this it’s clear that while money isn’t the initial factor in wanting to be a travel nurse, it is a top factor in someone continuing to be a travel nurse.

There were almost double the factors noted that people stop being a travel nurse. Whether that is to flip to perm or be close to family, the top factor to no longer be a travel nurse is staying put. It is very interesting when age is added to the factors of no longer wanting to be a travel nurse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Lack of benefits / low pay</th>
<th>Not finding anything good</th>
<th>Stay in one place</th>
<th>Thinking about retiring</th>
<th>Try something different</th>
<th>Want to be closer to family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger Than 30</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
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The 40 – 49-year-old group makes sense to have a desire to stay in one location. This group is more likely to have a growing family or a family that is at an age where picking up and moving is tough. Perhaps the biggest surprise comes from the group younger than 30 years old. This group’s #1 reason for no longer being a travel nurse is due to wanting to stay in one place.

Burnout

This data conflicts other agency’s report that travel nurses are experiencing burnout. Yes, the roles and responsibility of a travel nurse are stressful at times. However, our data is clear that people are not leaving the travel nurse industry due to burnout.
How Likely Are You To Recommend Travel Nursing As A Career?

When surveyed, most people recommend travel nursing as a career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>1-5 Scale on likelihood to recommend travel nursing as a career</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Younger than 30</td>
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One point of concern surrounds the age group younger than 30. 81% of this group rated below average to average when deciding to recommend travel nursing as a career to others. This means that recruiters need to do a better job with this cohort. Find them better travel destinations or check in with them more frequently to ensure their experience is positive.
What Is The Future Of Travel Nursing?

Everyone in the healthcare industry has an answer to this question. However, few reports have asked travel nurses what the travel nursing industry will look like in 2018?

There were a lot of single word adjectives used to answer this question: competitive, booming, and unsure. The volume of different answers means the 2018 forecast is a little cloudy. Experts will look at trends to attempt to gain some understanding of the industry in 2018. Like other industries, there are good times and down times. However, one thing that separates the healthcare industry compared to others is the constant need that exists.

People will always need health care. Thus, there will always be a need for nurses; and that won't change in 2018. Whether you are a first-time travel nurse or someone who has been a travel nurse for years, there is no better time than now to be in the healthcare industry. 2018 will continue to be an exciting time to be a travel nurse. After all, the healthcare industry will continue to push the needle on what is possible to save lives. At the front lines will be nurses providing the constant care for your patients.