Human Resources: Strategy and Competitive Advantage

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# Part 1: Comparison of Current Workforce to Future Needs

St Anthony Medical Centers ER is on alert due a chemical spill, caused by a train derailment, which has caused a surge of patients. According to Jackie Sandoval, the Chief Nursing Officer, before the derailment they were having staffing problems. They have had to use staff from other floors for coverage and they have exhausted the PRN staff float pool and staffing agencies for coverage. They have pulled 3 beds from med-surg to handle any pediatric overflow and they have transferred 2 patients from pediatrics to med-surg to make room for any ER admissions, they now have beds available since they transferred two patients. It appears they are utilizing the staff they currently have and have the ability to use their float staff or call agencies in case they need additional staff members. They do have nurses that are cross-trained that can be pulled from another floor and utilized. I know being a labor and delivery nurse myself; I would not be comfortable being asked to take care of ICU patients. When you work as a specialized nurse, it is very difficult to move to other areas within the hospital because the patients in other areas are unlike the ones you generally take care of.

According to Geoffrey Vaughn, President and CEO, hiring additional staff is not in the budget due to hiring staff for a new diabetes center. The diabetes center does not keep the same hours as an ER so their staff is unable to assist. My analysis of the current workforce is that this is a common problem for hospitals; they hire minimum staff because the patient numbers are different everyday. The Vila Health staff ratios for general medical care are 1:5 and the adult intensive care is 1:2 since these patients tend need more care. If they are regularly exhausting the PRN nurse pool and hiring temporary staff, nurses that are utilized from these sources are usually at a higher cost. It seems like they should hire a few full time nurses as a lower cost instead of paying the PRN and agency nurses and then utilize the PRN staff and agency staff as needed if census were to increase or a major incident should occur needing additional staff. The issues caused by the difference between current and future staffing capacity depends on future gaps and surpluses in the work force, diversity statistics, population demographics, health and safety statistics, and turnover rates.

**Part2: Staffing Plan and Competitive Advantage**

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# References