

Absolutely Amazing



USN Team Delivers Uninterrupted Care from Crisis Staffing to Holiday Work Stoppage

Case Study

Situation Overview

A northern California hospital system, engaged with USN for advance planning of an expected work stoppage, was experiencing incredibly complex staffing challenges due to the trifecta of high volumes driven by RSV, influenza and COVID-19.

Within days, a crisis addendum was signed with the initial request for a small number of staff to cover Pediatric Intensive Care Units. This quickly increased to a request for more than 300 clinical staff spanning all specialty nursing areas, ER techs, OR techs and respiratory therapists to ensure staffing for the system and community during this surge. A customized solution was developed with two, four and

six-week assignments, along with extension options or “4-shift cancellations” as the crisis continued to unfold.

USN enacted immediate recruitment for seasoned crisis and strike clinicians in addition to pivoting staff still on-site at an unrelated job action to this new crisis assignment.

USN’s ability to handle multiple significant projects concurrently and pivot in the moment illustrates USN’s superior management of timelines, projects and logistic components on a dime.

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Julie Askew
USN Senior Director Client Relations
and Workforce Disruption Planning



▾ All-Hands-on-Deck

The USN team managed deployment of clinicians through census fluctuations from campus to campus, many times shifting clinicians as needed based on surge spikes and community demands. The intensive, all-hands-on-deck effort required urgent provisioning and compliance turn-around, with the first group deployed in less than five days.

“Our priority was identifying fully vetted and interviewed staff, with experience in both strike and crisis situations so we could get them on the floors taking care of patients immediately,” says Julie Askew, Senior Director Client Relations and Workforce Disruption Planning.

“Prioritizing returning clinicians who had previously worked at the system through crisis or strike within six months, limited or eliminated the amount of orientation necessary. Ensuring clinicians could be added to the schedule immediately upon arrival, quickly bolstered staffing at a time when facility staff were inundated.”

“We are proud of our track record of being a good steward of our clients’ time, resources and labor dollars as demonstrated by reducing orientation costs by an estimated 28% while providing continuity of care to the community.”



▾ Committed to Service

Michael Kindernay, Senior Director of Recruitment, says that the USN culture was critical in meeting the crisis needs of the client. “We have worked hard to develop a culture that puts an emphasis on a mentality of service,” Kindernay says. “Whether we have clinicians working in strike environments or filling a crisis or travel assignment, we encourage them to view their work as a service to the community and we are honored to be called upon in all times of crisis.”

This engagement illustrates that USN has unrivaled expertise in finding a way to meet client needs by creating an effective, efficient and well-defined plan to address virtually any variable that may arise. Through the Ingenovis Health organization, USN can coordinate filling any associated specialty for strike or crisis staffing. Truststaff, Faststaff, HealthCare Support, VISTA Staffing Solutions, Springboard Healthcare and CardioSolution (“Ingenovis Health” brands) combine to make USN one of the most dynamic staffing solutions in the market.

▀ A One-of-a-Kind Solution

In concert with the crisis staffing program, which ran for more than four months throughout the system during the grips of a California “triple-demic”, the union declared a 9-day strike through the busy holiday season to encapsulate Christmas and New Year’s. Hospital leadership was confident that USN would execute seamlessly, allowing uninterrupted care to the community.

In addition to the hundreds of crisis staff on assignment, another 573 nursing and allied clinicians were deployed during the stoppage due to higher census, after exceeding the original estimated needs. USN was focused on excellent patient care, smooth operations and ensuring staff satisfaction over the holiday timeline without impacting any crisis staff already in place. Again, USN prioritized returning staff and reduced orientation costs by 49% with the philosophy that returning caregivers are better for the hospital, patients and continuity of care. Most importantly, positive feedback from the client’s leadership team and firsthand from patients and families commended replacement clinicians for their “phenomenal” service, “extreme care toward patients” and “calm and supportive care.”

One act of appreciation stood out above the rest. A clinical member of the USN team received a thank you note from a patient’s family member. This family member, who was one of the striking nurses, thanked the USN nurse for the compassionate care he provided, and the great job all around that USN was doing to ensure continuity of care. Karen Fountain, MBA, MSN, BSN, RN, Director of Clinical Operations said, “We have the capability and willingness to do what others in our industry cannot do. Team members and clinicians were honored to be providing care and support through the holidays, knowing they were critical in assuring uninterrupted and compassionate patient care. We are all very proud of that.”



▀ Trusted Quality

A visit from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) in the early days of the engagement resulted in a full review of USN clinician credentialing records, resulting in pristine outcomes with zero deficiencies. “They came and went without issue,” says Fountain. “USN was not notified that CDPH was in the building until they left. Our expectation is to pass every inspection with flying colors when working with regulators. This accolade from CDPH speaks to the quality of our work and commitment to our clients.”

Working with USN

With USN as your strategic partner, you have a trusted ally in staffing and strategy, no matter how complex or extreme the situation is. Kindernay states, “We are nimble and able to adapt to ensure our clients receive the support they require. No matter the challenge we are ready to respond.”

- ▾ USN has the expertise required to create workarounds for provisioning and other operational components and is ready at a moment’s notice to deliver, whether in a strike, disaster or other healthcare crisis.
- ▾ USN’s “all-hands-on-deck” mentality ensures flexibility to pivot when needed. The USN team is in close communication with facility leadership teams to ensure all needs are met during the work stoppage and remains committed after the crisis is over to evaluate performance and assist your facility in getting back to normal operations.
- ▾ The long-standing reputation for reliability and delivery on urgent and crucial needs, often with minimal advance notice, is a point of pride for USN. With more than 30 years’ experience and 350+ job actions, you can trust USN will provide comprehensive, turn-key solutions throughout preparation, deployment and management.
- ▾ In a crisis USN understands that you can’t work from a template. Our team continually surveys the situation to propose alternate strategies and chart out the best course forward. Our nimbleness and adaptability in service of our clients is the best in the industry.
- ▾ As one of the companies of Ingenovis Health, USN provides established expertise with a fresh perspective and is able to draw on the resources of the other portfolio brands to maximize solutions specific to your organization and need.

For more information about experiences like this or to discuss how we can help with your job action, contact us at:

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