



# CENTURY REHABILITATION'S EXPANDED RECRUITING SERVICES HELPED GULF COAST LTC CLOSE ITS STAFFING GAP

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**Committed to helping clients achieve both clinical and financial goals, Century's comprehensive recruiting program is helping LTC facilities reduce reliance on agency staff and achieve their hiring goals.**

**20+**

**YEARS  
EXPERIENCE**

With more than 20 years in therapy recruiting, Century Rehabilitation has expanded its services to recruit for all facility positions.

**245+**

**POSITIONS  
FILLED**

Gulf Coast LTC, with 24 facilities throughout Texas, filled more than 245 jobs in the first four months with Century's recruiting services.

# A COMPREHENSIVE RECRUITING APPROACH

TODAY'S CHALLENGING JOBS MARKET REQUIRES EXPERIENCE, UP-TO-DATE TECHNOLOGY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, A TENACIOUS AND PERSISTENT APPROACH TO FINDING CANDIDATES AND KEEPING THEM ENGAGED THROUGHOUT THE HIRING PROCESS.

## THE LONG TERM CARE WORKER SHORTAGE HAS REACHED A CRITICAL LEVEL

COVID-19's devastating impact on the healthcare workforce continues to be a widespread issue. Facilities are struggling to fill a variety of open positions as workers of all skill levels job-jump for higher wages or leave healthcare altogether due to burnout. Complicating this thorny situation, many skilled nursing facilities have had no option but to turn to staffing agencies, paying a premium to fill open positions to deliver quality care and meet staffing requirements.

Since 1999, Century Rehabilitation has built a highly regarded reputation as a provider of therapy care and consulting services to skilled nursing and senior living facilities. Building this reputation required, among other expertise, outstanding recruiting capabilities in the challenging therapist jobs market. With labor shortages at facilities reaching critical levels, Century responded by expanding its internal recruiting team and applying its services to a wide variety of healthcare facilities and roles. Century's approach and experience immediately demonstrated an impact on clients by not only delivering qualified candidates but also remaining engaged with those candidates until they start their new position.

The company has developed a suite of recruiting services that can be tailored to each client's staffing needs.

## FACING A SOARING VACANCY RATE, GULF COAST APPROACHES CENTURY FOR HELP

In early 2022, Gulf Coast owners BJ Bergeron and Louis Nicholson approached Century owner and president Richard Pellerin and CEO Tammy Tuminaro for their help in tackling the problem of filling other staffing positions. Pre-COVID-19, Gulf Coast's annual staff vacancy rate averaged 7%, an industry norm. But in early 2022, Gulf Coast's vacancy rate had risen to 17.5%, the result of both skilled and unskilled workers leaving the industry in record numbers.

Gulf Coast faced difficulty in finding Restorative Nursing Assistants (RNAs), Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), as well as housekeeping, dietary and environmental services support staff. The nursing assistant shortage was forcing the Texas-based provider to rely on staffing agencies, spending more than double the average hourly wage rate compared to permanent hires.

## DISCUSSION

"For two years now, we've seen a trend of workers leaving the industry, or moving to an agency or traveler role," says Nicholson. "We've been seeing this across our entire subsector of healthcare, especially skilled nursing. We had tried a number of solutions but recognized what we were doing was not working."



**Louis Nicholson**  
Owner, Gulf Coast LTC

"One of Century's biggest differentiators as a therapist recruiter has been to create interest in open positions with candidates who aren't actively searching, but could have an interest in new opportunities," Tuminaro says. "In healthcare, you have to be completely focused on going after potential hires. If it was easy, companies like ours wouldn't exist."



**Tammy Tuminaro**  
CEO, Century Rehabilitation

Century's team got to work on how to recruit for Gulf Coast's company-wide positions. One of Century's biggest differentiators as a therapist recruiter, Tuminaro says, has been to create interest in open positions with candidates who aren't actively searching, but could have an interest in new opportunities.



**"Recruiting in today's market requires a much more labor-intensive approach," says Century's Chief Strategy Officer Steve Helmke. "You need good technology, but you also need a team that knows where to find candidates that may not be seeing your job postings. That takes time and experience. Most healthcare facilities simply aren't staffed at those levels."**

Steve Helmke  
Chief Strategy Officer, Century Rehabilitation

*In the spring of 2022, Gulf Coast contracted with Century to expand its recruiting services beyond therapists and help move the needle on a 17.5% overall vacancy rate. Within five weeks, the vacancy rate dropped to 14%, with 41 new employees hired. Four months later, more than 245 hires had been completed.*

## THE IMPACT OF STAFFING SHORTAGES ON LONG-TERM CARE

*Staffing shortages place long-term care facilities in a compromised position. Without new staff, census numbers—and revenue—remains stagnant. The majority of vacancies at Gulf Coast are LVNs and CNAs, nursing assistants who provide patient care at the bedside. Among other tasks, LVNs dispense medicine, monitor equipment and change bandages, while CNAs feed, bathe and turn patients, take vitals, assist with personal grooming and other services.*

*"We're still providing the care patients need because we're filling the positions short-term," says Nicholson, "but we're paying double the rate because we've had to rely on agency staff."*

*Unable to recoup the cost of sustained higher wages, many skilled nursing facilities nationwide are facing an annual loss in revenue. Six out of 10 nursing home providers report operating at a loss last year, according to the AHCA's State of the Nursing Home Industry report. The situation is expected to worsen since anticipated regulatory changes concerning staff-to-patient ratios will place additional pressure on facilities to keep positions filled.*

*Moreover, Nicholson says that the reliance on temporary staffing agencies creates a lack of consistency among workers at the bedside. Permanent staff perform more efficiently because they have both institutional knowledge and familiarity with each patient's case.*

*"When you're constantly having to bring in someone new, you're giving up continuity of care, you're giving up that consistency," Nicholson says. "You have that nurse who comes in, and while they are filling that role for the day, they don't know the residents they're taking care of like a full-time staff member would."*

6 <sup>OUT</sup> OF 10

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# CENTURY'S COMPREHENSIVE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Century's Director of Recruiting Hollie Davilla was charged with creating a tailored solution for Gulf Coast's needs. Davilla worked closely with Gulf Coast's local facilities to learn more about their vacancies, along with past strategies that had been unsuccessful. Century then implemented the following capabilities:



Technologies to attract and engage recruits throughout their candidacy.



Job posting and marketing strategies that improve awareness and interest from both active and passive candidates.



Processes that ensure candidates remain engaged through their start date, not just through acceptance of an offer.



Communications, such as weekly status calls, with Gulf Coast to implement procedures and fine tune to improve hiring and retention.

***"It's been a 360-degree attack, much more strategic, and not just throwing darts at a board," Nicholson says. "Century has been able to tap into a higher volume of potential applicants. They're able to get us in front of a lot more candidates than we had seen previously."***

Davilla developed a comprehensive process for Gulf Coast's lower-skilled positions that included helping the company announce and post new jobs, recruit candidates, schedule interviews, make offers and finalize start dates. One of the biggest areas where Century has provided support is in ensuring there is consistent follow-up with candidates, a time-consuming but crucial step. Century's approach has been to create a highly efficient, seamless process designed to stop prospective candidates from falling through the cracks, Davilla says.

"For many of these positions, we're not giving candidates specific interview times, but a range of times where they can show up with their IDs, complete an application and be interviewed on the spot," Davilla says. "We do background checks while they're in the building, and they could be offered a position right then."

Capitalizing on face-to-face meetings with candidates, and completing the tasks required to onboard them in one sitting has helped yield more hires, Davilla says.

For CNA positions, Davilla says it's not uncommon for 50% of candidates to fail to show up for scheduled interviews, so she and her team invested time in systems that reduce no-show rates, including same-day, follow-up texts to remind candidates of interview times, along with incentives like restaurant coupons, which applicants receive when they show up.

Century is tenacious, says Nicholson, going beyond the norm to connect personally with candidates and encourage them to consider a career at Gulf Coast.

"They're just bulldogs in terms of trying to get the candidate into the facility for an interview," Nicholson says. "They've provided soup-to-nuts services. It's working because they speak the nursing language and they're already in health care."



## RECRUITING CHALLENGES

Recruiting for long-term care has been particularly challenging in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Health Care Association's 2022 State of the Nursing Home Industry report exposes the depth of the dilemma.

87%

Share of nursing homes facing moderate or high staffing shortages

98%

Share of nursing homes reporting difficulty in hiring new staff

61%

Share of nursing homes limiting new admissions due to staffing shortages

According to the AHCA's 2022 State of the Nursing Home Industry report

## RELIEVING THE BURDEN FROM HR TEAMS

Century's approach is to create a good-fit solution for its clients. It starts with understanding their specific pain points in finding, screening and hiring candidates, says Tuminaro.

"Most HR departments already have so many things on their plate, and they don't have time to focus on really targeted recruiting, not to mention follow-up, screening and hiring," Tuminaro says. "We see this as an opportunity to help relieve the burden from HR administrators who are spending too much time trying to fill open positions with little success. We have true, experienced recruiters who are very good at finding potential candidates, and we're able to laser-focus on finding the right people."

Success, adds Davilla, lies in taking on tedious tasks—including personal follow-ups with candidates via email, phone call or text. Such tasks are usually too much for busy HR teams, as well as clinical and operational managers often tasked with recruiting for today's larger number of open positions. But these steps are key because they increase the likelihood that a candidate will follow through with an interview and say yes to an opportunity.

### CNAs: THE 'POSTER CHILD' FOR THE CHALLENGE

CNAs are a critical position for long-term care facilities, Tuminaro says, calling them the "poster child" for the current health care staffing shortage.

"A lot of these workers simply left health care during the pandemic," Tuminaro says. "But recruiting them back is essential to helping long-term care facilities navigate their current staffing difficulties."

The nursing assistant shortage has serious repercussions for the industry as a whole.

"It's a real problem because if you don't have a consistent group of caretakers, you can't provide outstanding care or increase your census," Tuminaro says. "If you can't take on new patients, you can't grow."

Nationwide, 61% percent of nursing homes are limiting new admissions due to staffing shortages, according to the AHCA report.

# THE DRAMATIC RESULTS

In the spring of 2022, Gulf Coast contracted with Century to expand its recruiting services beyond therapists and help move the needle on its 17.5% overall vacancy rate. Within five weeks, the vacancy rate dropped to 14%, with 41 new employees hired.

**Four months later, more than 245 hires had been completed.**

"In today's environment, we felt partnering with Century for recruiting help is a must. Our agency costs are 4 times higher than in-house staff and turnover costs us roughly 20% of an employee's annual salary," Bergeron says. "Driving the process from the corporate level just makes sense, it alleviates some of the time and expense at the facility level."

**BJ Bergeron**

Owner, Gulf Coast LTC



## CREATING A FLEXIBLE SERVICE MODEL BACKED BY DECADES OF EXPERIENCE

*To meet the needs of diverse clients, Century offers services based on a client's staffing needs, regulatory concerns and other management considerations. For recruiting, that can range from a single job posting to full outsourcing of an organization's recruiting needs.*

*The company uses leading-edge technologies, proactive engagement with potential candidates, face-to-face strategies, community relationships, and a highly experienced team to ensure the right approaches are put in play.*

20+

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

**"Recruiting in today's healthcare labor market takes more hours, more expertise, and better tools than it did before COVID," Tuminaro says. "It requires an aggressive and engaging recruiting approach, which is part of Century's DNA."**

**Tammy Tuminaro**

CEO, Century Rehabilitation



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