

## **Professional Association Retention and Recruitment: A Strategic Plan and Strategies to Expand Membership**

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**Introduction:** Membership and active participation in professional organizations has been shown to increase networking, promote professional collaboration, engage professional nursing students, and provide valuable information on industry trends occurring in healthcare. Organization leaders world-wide have expressed concern regarding the decrease in interest and participation in organizational membership (Goolsby & Debois, 2017). With decreasing membership enrollment rates and engagement within a local nursing organization, it is necessary to evaluate and change current marketing strategies utilized by the organization. In addition, a strategic plan for the organization is necessary to keep goals on track.

**Objectives, purpose, goals:** The purpose of this scholarly project is to increase recruitment membership, and active participation in a local professional nursing organization. Professional organizations like FVHPs provide their members a group to develop and share their voice regarding the problems encountered in practice. Objectives: • Review and analyze current membership recruitment process • Perform Systematic Review of Literature to determine best practices for professional organization recruitment • Develop marketing approach including updated website, improved utilization of social media sites and online registration. Create a strategic plan for the organization to align goals.

**Intervention/practice:** Reviewed and analyzed current membership recruitment process of a local professional healthcare organization. Obtained qualitative surveys from members at organization events. Analyzed membership enrollment rates and compared to previous year. Performed a systematic review of literature to determine best practices for professional organization recruitment. Developed a strategic plan to be utilized by the organization. Developed a marketing approach including an updated website, improved utilization of social media sites and online registration.

**Results:** A 40% increase in membership over one year was found after implementation of strategies and strategic plan was adopted. A paired t-test was conducted showing the research was statistically significant. The organization is now thriving and providing continuing education to healthcare members in the NE Wisconsin area.

**Conclusions/implications:** These results have greatly benefited the local community, and could easily be translated to other professional nursing organizations across the country and even the world.