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1 in 2 healthcare executives say they'll leave within a year

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<https://www.chartis.com/insights/1-2-healthcare-executives-say-theyll-leave-within-year>

The Buzz This Week

A recent survey of healthcare executives found that nearly half intend to exit their organization within a year. Of those, nearly one-third plan to leave “immediately.” Although these are large proportions, they are less than in 2024, when 66% intended to leave their organization within 12 months.

The survey was conducted by B.E. Smith, an AMN Healthcare company, and included 588 executives at hospitals, health systems, and medical groups. Nearly 40% were C-suite executives or trustees, and 14% were CEOs.

Several factors are likely contributing to the high rate of churn. As the peak of the pandemic becomes more distant, organizations are moving on from “crisis mode” and investing in longer-term strategies. Executives too are coming up for air, reexamining their positions and career paths. Mary Newell, Vice President of Physician and Leadership Search for AMN Healthcare, suggested that “post pandemic, many healthcare professionals are reassessing where, when, and how they work.”

Many healthcare organizations are still struggling financially. The percentage of respondents forecasting “better organizational health” this year fell by 19 percentage points compared to 2024, despite signs of modest financial rebound for some organizations. Some institutions have cut administrative roles, potentially causing uncertainty among those remaining and leading them to look into other opportunities. In addition, a drop in job satisfaction—32% in 2025, down from 38% in 2024—is likely pushing some to consider exiting. Finally, nearly 60% believe artificial intelligence will markedly change managerial jobs, which could potentially reduce the number of administrators needed.

Why It Matters

For years before the pandemic, the US had a shortage of clinical staff, particularly in certain specialties such as primary care and behavioral health, and in certain geographies, particularly in rural areas. Turnover rates spiked during the pandemic, particularly for nurses, and the use of contract labor soared. This recent survey suggests that administrative turnover could exacerbate the already destabilized healthcare workforce and put organizations at risk of losing leadership continuity and strategic momentum.

Interestingly, time spent at an organization seems to be a factor for both clinical and administrative turnover. First-year departures account for more than 30% of registered nurse turnover, and administrators least likely to leave their current organization have tenures of 10 or more years. It would behoove organizations to make extra efforts to monitor and support all employees early in their careers at the organization. A good first step would be going beyond employee surveys and conducting one-on-one interviews or focus groups to uncover drivers of discontent and source ideas for improving workplace experience. Exit interviews can also help identify opportunities for better supporting the workforce.

Depending on what is uncovered, approaches to improving job satisfaction and reducing turnover could include more comprehensive onboarding, flexible schedule options, education and advancement opportunities, and employee affinity groups. Regular town hall meetings to both disseminate important information and listen to concerns will ensure better alignment across the organization and demonstrate that leaders are committed to supporting their employees and engaging with them. For C-suite executives, having the right team composition can foster a strong culture and bond among executives, and will set the tone for the next generation of leaders.

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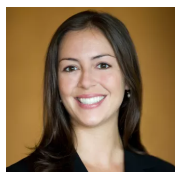
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