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SUCCESSFUL RECRUITING BY AN ACADEMIC HOSPITALIST SECTION

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ABSTRACT

Statement of Problem: Because of changes in resident staffing, our academic hospitalist Section required a 50% increase (from 12 to 18 FTE) in faculty members in one year. Thus, we undertook an intensive recruiting effort that spanned 9 months. Innovation Objectives: In a cost effective way, to attract and screen a large number of applicants for a position with our Section of academic hospital medicine.

Program Description: In January and October, we advertised in national journals and on websites. We responded to over 100 inquiries with a standardized email describing our program, and with an invitation to formally apply by providing a letter of intent, current curriculum vitae, and three professional references. Over a 9 month period, we received formal applications from 68 physicians (53 were currently completing their residency, and 15 were practicing hospitalists). 5 were from our own residents, and 4 were from local hospitalists who had completed some training with us. These 68 applications and/or letters of reference were reviewed by our Hiring Committee. Using pre-established screening criteria, 26 of 68 (38%) applicants were judged competitive. Using standardized interviewing tools, Hiring Committee members interviewed by telephone 24 of these competitive candidates and their references. Of these, 18 were invited for an on-site visit. Findings to Date: Almost all of the invited candidates (16/18) visited our department for a one or two day visit which included face-to-face interviews, rounding, and social events. 12 of these 16 candidates (and 6 of 8 local candidates) were offered a position, and 5 accepted. Four of these had completed their residency in the past year. 3/5 (60%) of the successfully recruited faculty members had done some training at our institution. The recruiting cost included $6,431 for advertising and $14,292 for candidate visits; and required weekly meetings by our Hiring Committee. Key Lessons Learned: Using pre-established screening criteria and standardized telephone interviews, we targeted those candidates which we felt we were most likely to successfully recruit, and invited them for on-site interviews. We ultimately offered a job to 75% and hired 30% of those who completed an on-site visit. Over half of our successful recruits were from local candidates. The cost of our recruiting was $4,145 per successfully recruited physician.

RESULTS

![Graph showing total completed applications and positions offered](image)

- **Total completed applications (n=68)**
  - Competitive applicants: 26
  - Non-competitive applicants: 42
- **Total completed applications accepted and accepted**
  - Competitive applicants accepted: 12
  - Non-competitive applicants accepted: 4

![Graph showing costs](image)

- **Recruiting costs**
  - Advertising: $6,431
  - Candidate visits: $14,292

![Graph showing costs](image)

- **Costs breakdown**
  - Advertising: $6,431
  - Candidate visits: $14,292

![Graph showing costs](image)

- **Costs summary**
  - Total recruiting cost: $20,723

![Graph showing costs](image)

- **Costs comparison**
  - Average cost per successfully recruited physician: $4,145

CONCLUSIONS

1. Our success rate for successful recruiting was higher for local candidates than outside candidates.
2. Standardized telephone interview instruments led to more consistency and saved time by the Committee.
3. The Committee was frequently able to judge whether or not a candidate would be offered a job after completion of the telephone interviews; the on-site visit typically was more about recruiting the candidate rather than deciding to offer a job or not.
4. Our success rate in recruiting invited candidates was high (30%) and thus recruiting costs were low.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Pre-established screening criteria and standardized telephone interview instruments improved the Committee’s ability to target candidates who were most likely to be successfully recruited.
2. Over half of our successful recruits were from local candidates.
3. The cost of successful recruit was $4,145.

METHODS

1. Positions were advertised in national journals and websites.
2. Inquiries were sent standard email response with information about the program, minimal requirements, and request for CV, letter of intent, and three professional references.
3. Completed applications were screened by the Committee and voted competitive or not competitive.
4. Competitive applicants and references were interviewed by phone with standard interview instruments.
5. Committee reviewed phone interviews and voted to invite or not invite for on-site visit.
6. On-site visits included formal interviews with Committee members and Division Chief, rounds and conferences, and meals with Section members.
7. Committee reviewed on-site interview comments and voted to extend offer or not.