

Fluctuating demand for healthcare professionals made easy - with the right partner

By [Donald McMillan](#)

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Over the last year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a sharp increase in the demand for healthcare professionals - from nurses to specialist doctors.



Source: Supplied. Donald McMillan, managing director at Allmed Healthcare Professionals.

Hospitals run efficiently and as a result, peaks and valleys occur due to the fluctuating admissions. Without agencies, healthcare facilities will either be overstaffed or understaffed. However, through a partnership with a Temporary Employment Service (TES) provider, healthcare facilities can meet their resource needs on a flexible, cost-effective basis.

Instead of healthcare professionals becoming despondent because they can't find permanent employment, medical professionals should align themselves with reputable TES providers in their industry, where they will be able to take advantage of multiple temporary opportunities in a variety of healthcare facilities, earning valuable work experience while generating an income.

The future is flexible

The days of only permanent-employment relationships are numbered in most industries. As economic conditions tighten in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, more employers will be looking to lessen one of their biggest operating expenses, which is salaries and costs associated with human resources. Instead of downscaling permanently, or running the risk of having too many staff and not enough patients, utilising the services of a TES provider can enable medical facilities to upscale when need be and downscale when there is a decrease in work, thereby achieving resource efficiency.

The impact of Covid-19

The pandemic and our government's response to curbing its spread over the past 18 months or so has had a major impact on the demand for medical resources. With the hard lockdown and the various alcohol bans, there was a sharp decrease in trauma cases and alcohol-related accidents.

Elective and non-emergency surgeries were limited for most of 2020 which meant that these medical resources weren't needed, while on the other hand, the demand for ICU nurses and healthcare professionals to run the Covid wards varied per province and per facility, shifting with fluctuating infection numbers.



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From a psychological perspective, the pandemic took its toll on healthcare workers and many suffered from exhaustion as a result of a new environment that was totally unknown and stressful. Permanent staff allocated exclusively to Covid-19 wards soon became exhausted or compromised and had to self-isolate, which also played a part in the shifting dynamic of healthcare professionals, thus needing drastic changes in the way resources were assigned and utilised.

Flexibility unlocks efficiency

Realistically, all of those elective procedures and preventative or early-detection screening tests, such as mammograms, ECGs and the like, that were postponed during lockdown are going to have to be done at some point. This means that the healthcare industry can expect to have to play catch-up to make up for the past 18 months, in addition to addressing each forthcoming wave of infections as they arise.

By partnering with a TES provider to handle the varying nature of their resource demand, the healthcare facilities can benefit from access to a large database of highly-trained, pre-screened candidates. These candidates have sought-after skills and can be placed anywhere in the country with almost immediate effect, thereby circumventing the usual time-intensive permanent recruitment processes that take weeks, if not months to complete.

Temporary has loads of opportunity

In addition to unlocking flexibility for healthcare facilities, TES providers also offer individuals the ability to have total flexibility and control over their working circumstances. Especially important is the opportunity for nurses who have finished their community service to find placement in their chosen fields. Temporary employment is the ideal springboard from which to gain vital workplace experience and skills much faster than would be possible if permanently employed in one facility.

By outsourcing their variable resource management to a TES provider, healthcare facilities relieve themselves of all the associated costs and headaches - from payroll and employee relations to skills development.

Utilising a flexible model makes it easier for these facilities to achieve operational efficiency despite fluctuating patient numbers. From a medical-professional perspective, by aligning themselves with several reputable TES providers, it is possible to ensure that they have a steady, varied stream of income-generating assignments at various healthcare facilities all over South Africa, if they so choose.

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