

## Retention: The Role of a Retention Specialist

What we learned...	What it means to you...
<p>The retention specialist program significantly reduced direct care worker turnover in participating nursing homes. (Cornell)</p>	<p>One individual can have a large impact on retention when he or she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Receives training in a diverse range of evidence-based retention strategies</li> <li>◆ Does an assessment of the specific facility and employee retention needs</li> <li>◆ Tailors the retention efforts to the assessment</li> <li>◆ Receives ongoing support</li> <li>◆ Takes ownership of the program and has the motivation and expertise to make it successful</li> </ul>
<p>In nursing homes with retention specialists, nursing assistants felt the administration made more of an effort to keep workers. They also had more positive views of the administration. (Cornell)</p>	
<p>While there were initially positive changes in the overall perceived quality of care, staff education and training in facilities with retention specialists, these improved outcomes were not sustained after six months.</p> <p>Researchers credit that lack of sustained change to initial excitement for the new program wearing off. (Cornell)</p>	<p>It is more effective to focus on a continuous, integrated approach to retention within the ongoing operation of the organization rather than on one specific program or training.</p> <p>Ongoing support and periodic booster training sessions (e.g., every six months) can help maintain momentum after initial retention training.</p>
<p>The combined evidence from the retention specialist study suggests that training a retention team rather than a single specialist may be more effective. (Cornell)</p>	<p>A retention team approach could include a direct care worker, nurse supervisor, director of nursing, administrator and others.</p> <p>This approach can provide opportunities for input from all staff; help spread the workload and lessen the impact if a team member leaves.</p>
<p>The most common challenge implementing the retention interventions was turnover in administrative staffing. (Cornell)</p>	<p>Retention efforts must address stabilizing the administrative team before these types of interventions can be sustained over time.</p>
<p>Additional challenges to implementing retention interventions included lack of time to work on the project and lack of financial and/or administrative support. (Cornell)</p>	<p>Retention initiatives need administrative support and buy-in to be successful.</p>