

Healthcare Workplace Economy December 2010

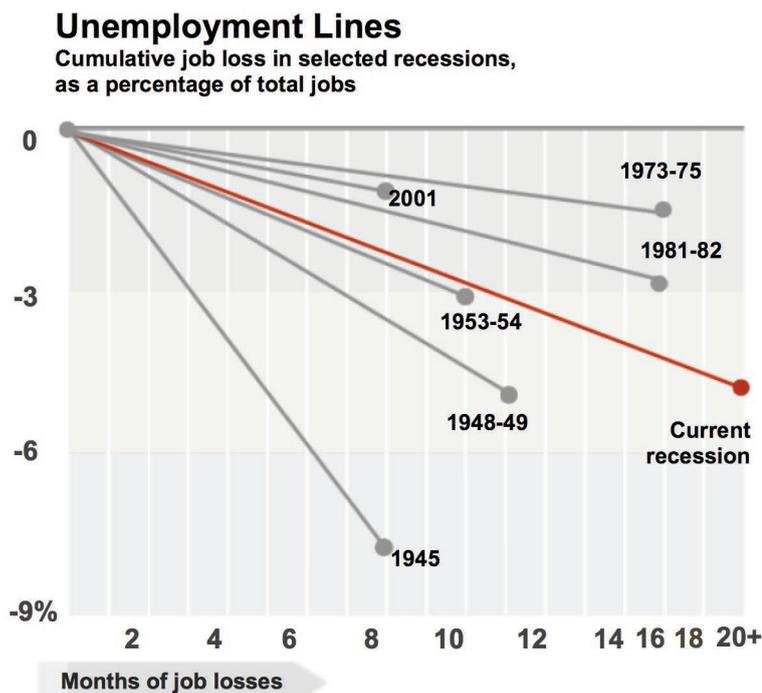
Jobs Report Summary for the Healthcare Industry Based on the BLS Report with November 2010 data

This month's Bureau of Labor Statistics jobs report brought with it a good indication that job growth is continuing. In fact, the private sector added 50,000 new jobs in November. By all accounts, that is good news and indicates that the economy and labor market are moving in the right direction. The only issue, however, is that it is not moving there as quickly as many economists, employers and job seekers had hoped.

A highlight of the major trends resulting from this month's report include:

- **Temporary employment:** Since its low point in September 2009, temporary help services have added 494,000 jobs. November experienced a particularly significant increase in job opportunities, adding just under 40,000 positions for the month. This continued rise in temporary employment confirms that employers remain cautious to bring on full-time hires but are seeing the value, efficiency and productivity that this talent pool brings to their organization.
- **Professional services:** One of the strongest segments of the job market in this month's report was professional and business services which added 53,000 jobs for the month. This indicates that one of the most resilient areas of the labor market continues to be those jobs that require a higher level of education and skills. Within professional services, the strongest

Private sector growth continues



JOBS GAINED IN NOVEMBER

39,000

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

9.8%

WORST UNEMPLOYMENT RATE SINCE

1983

Source: Labor Department

growth areas included jobs in IT, architecture and engineering, all of which have very low unemployment rates and continue to experience a true “war for talent.”

- **Healthcare:** One of the strongest job sectors through all phases of the economic lifecycle, the healthcare industry continued to see significant growth in November, adding just over 19,000 new jobs. As the U.S. population ages and healthcare providers begin to think through their staffing plans in advance of healthcare reform, we anticipate this sector continuing to be among the fastest growing areas for new job opportunities.
- **Retail:** ‘Tis the season for retail jobs. With the holidays quickly approaching, early reports indicate that retailers have seen an increase in consumer confidence year over year. To get ready earlier than usual, retailers saw a spike in employment in October and moderate decline in November. It will be important to see where this indicator goes in December during the busiest month for most retailers – a significant add to retail jobs next month would be a welcomed indicator. We will keep a close eye on next month’s report which will serve as a sign for just how strong the 2010 holiday shopping season really is turning out to be.

As the U.S. labor market continues to find its footing following the economic crisis of the past few years, the road to recovery is going to be a constantly evolving journey. In order for unemployment to drop below its current level of 9.8%, a wide range of job seekers including the currently unemployed, underemployed and discouraged will need to find new opportunities. The consensus is that we will get there, but not without some patience, caution and perseverance.

Soliant insights:

The November 2010 report fell significantly short of economists’ predictions of job growth. Given the rise in private sector jobs, November will most likely prove to be one month of a step backwards instead of a re-direction downward. Looking at the average number of the past three months, the

labor market remains on an upswing. In addition, BLS revisions from September and October support this as these numbers were revised to show 38,000 additional job gains than previously reported.

The November increase in temporary jobs reiterates the need for continued flexibility. At Soliant, our clients look at a flexible workforce as invaluable, as they are uncertain about the pace of the recovery. The rise in unemployment to 9.8% should not come as surprise to many as this reflects previously discouraged unemployed workers re-entering the job market. It is generally understood that the economy needs to add at least 100,000 to 125,000 jobs a month to keep pace with new workforce entrants. Permanent, private sector hiring does continue to grow and while the slow pace clouds optimism, this is a small step in the right direction.

Of interest

Home monitoring devices to help ease world health burden

Source: www.yahoo.com

While the debate is still out on whether home monitoring devices are cost-effective or ready for widespread adoption, many believe these devices have the potential to relieve pressure on healthcare systems. Home monitoring devices move care out of institutions and into the comfort of patients’ homes. “The world is literally running out of doctors and nurses,” stated Soeren Mattke, senior scientist at Rand who led a study on the cost-effectiveness of home monitoring devices. Some hope the U.S. health reform law will help drive the demand for home monitoring devices.

Impact on the workforce

The introduction of home monitoring devices would allow doctors and nurses to more efficiently collect information on patients with chronic diseases – freeing up valuable time that could be directed toward other issues and cases at hand. Home monitoring devices would allow for healthcare professionals to perform their daily tasks in a timelier manner.

Impact on employers

The time saving component of home monitoring devices would allow doctors and nurses to allocate more time to other patients that require more attention than the run of the mill glucose tests, blood pressure and heart rate measures needed to observe the chronically ill.

Benefits of turning healthcare employees into problem solvers

Source: www.hbswk.com

Hospitals depend on their staff to use error-reporting systems to improve patient safety throughout their facility. Through conducting patient-safety and informative campaigns while serving as role models, managers can encourage employees to take the next step to do more than just report problems when they occur. By actively engaging in problem solving, healthcare professionals can work together in finding solutions to everyday issues at hand.

Impact on the workforce

The encouragement from managers to get involved in problem solving shows healthcare professionals that as a team both managers and employees can work toward one common goal – improved patient safety. By working together both parties benefit in taking pride in their workplace.

Impact on employers

Because one of the more important aspects of running a healthcare facility is patient safety, encouraging the use of error-reporting systems can help hospitals run more efficiently. This will result in fewer reports and less paperwork, allowing managers to focus on their positions instead of tasks such as filing claims.



Soliant[®]
Health

www.soliant.com • 800.849.5502 • ©2010 Soliant Health