



Aureus Medical Group's newest facility in Omaha, Neb., houses Aureus' recruiting, records and documents departments. It's also home of Aureus University, the corporate training and development center. *photo/courtesy Aureus*

direct-hire employees and managed service programs. The fact that we are experienced and established in both nursing and allied health

also increases efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

BY CRAIG WOLF

### What's the most valuable lesson you've learned from your customers?

We've learned that after all is said and done, it's trustworthy relationships that make the difference in this industry. Patients must trust our customers to deliver life-sustaining care, and in turn, they must be able to trust us to deliver on our word.

### What educational programs do you offer clients or staffers?

We have an extensive screening process to ensure that Aureus health care professionals meet all credentialing and educational criteria. After joining the Aureus team, employees are given thorough safety training. We also offer continuing education reimbursement, employee newsletters with interesting trends and facts, and CEU and safety information updates on our Web site. Our staffing professionals undergo an ongoing, demanding training program. Educating our recruiters about the health care staffing industry and the needs and expectations of our clients is essential for Aureus to function as a true partner. Following initial training, we offer continual educational seminars on industry and health care issues.

### How important is it to offer a total staffing solution in health care?

Our customers turn to us because their time is very limited and their need is pressing. Because Aureus offers a total staffing solution, we're able to meet these urgent needs rapidly and with the lowest possible cost alternative. We are proud to offer our customers not only traditional traveling health care professionals, but also local market employees,

### What sets your customer service apart from others?

Responsiveness. After more than 20 years in this industry, we understand that when employees and customers call us, we must be accessible. We've implemented a no-phone-goes-unanswered policy in all of our offices. Our staff members pick up calls whether they are directed to their extension or not. When calls must go to voice mail, we are sure to return the call by the end of that same day.

Our staffing supervisors often form close, personal relationships with our medical field employees. This has a very positive effect on employee retention rates.

Finally, our goal in meeting customers' needs is always to present candidates that meet their specific criteria within 48 hours of a request.

### What are customers' biggest concerns when using outside agencies, and how do you address them?

The biggest concerns are cost vs. patient care. Aureus customers are able to reduce overtime costs, increase retention of their regular staff, and provide the best quality care. Because we provide a wide range of staffing options in addition to travelers, our clients know that we are offering them the lowest cost alternative possible to meet their needs.

### What common mistakes do customers make when shopping for staffing agencies, and how can they avoid them?

One of the biggest mistakes is using an agency that is not well-established. Inexperienced agencies often have few candidates and do not attract the most qualified health care professionals. Also, facilities should be sure to take full advantage of what an established agency like Aureus can offer them—combined billing, a large database of candidates, an established screening process for candidates and higher levels of customer service. Look for reputation above all else. ■

*Craig Wolf is the vice president and general manager of Aureus Medical Group, Omaha, Neb., a leading nationwide staffing firm serving the health care industry in allied health and nursing.*