

# How Novant Health Alleviated Pressure on Nurse Managers, Improved Employee Engagement, and Reduced RN Turnover by 15%



## Background

Novant Health is a not-for-profit integrated health system caring for patients and communities in North Carolina and South Carolina. The health system has received numerous awards for patient care from leading organizations including U.S. News and World Report, the World Health Organization, Becker's Hospital Review, and the Joint Commission. Several of its hospitals and medical centers have received Magnet recognition.



19 medical centers and over 850 care locations



Over 3,400 beds



Nearly 40,000 team members and physician partners

## Key Challenges

- Heightened nurse turnover and strain on nurse managers during the pandemic
- A surge in costs related to agency use, vacancies, and incremental overtime
- Nurse managers handling larger expanded spans of control and responsibilities

## How the Laudio Platform Helps

- Centralizes and streamlines core leader workflows (e.g., check-ins, communication, recognition) that make an impact on nurse retention
- Aggregates data from multiple other systems so leaders don't have to search for information in separate places
- Makes data actionable with dynamic leader recommendations for timely, meaningful team member engagement

## Impact

Novant Health completed its Laudio rollout across its two main regions in 2022. Deploying the platform as a key component of an overarching nursing retention plan resulted in a number of 2023 achievements:

**15%**

points RN turnover reduction

**\$90M+**

decrease in agency nursing costs

**\$5M+**

RN replacement & incremental overtime costs avoided



*"Laudio is extraordinarily helpful for improving retention and turnover; we also saw it as an opportunity to invest in our managers and try to make their lives easier. It's extremely important that we think about what our managers are doing every day and how we make that simpler for them – because it is complex."*

**Michael Vaccaro, DNP, MHA/MBA, RN**

Charlotte Market Chief Nursing Officer, Novant Health

**THE CHALLENGE: Improving nurse engagement and retention while supporting overburdened nurse managers**

Like many health systems, Novant Health became increasingly concerned about nurse retention as the pandemic unfolded. Alongside this, the health system experienced increased agency, vacancy, and incremental overtime-related costs. At the same time, nurse managers were assuming larger spans of control and responsibilities, putting a strain on them and limiting the level of personalized engagement that was feasible with their team members.

Novant Health's leadership saw the need to find new ways to streamline work for their nurse managers and ease their administrative burdens. They sought to make managers' workloads more sustainable and enhance their wellbeing while positioning them to have regular, impactful interactions with their team members – a key factor in nurse engagement and retention.

Cutting down on the number of different systems managers needed to use on a daily basis was a key goal. Existing systems were not integrated and pertinent data was not accessible in actionable ways, resulting in valuable time going towards searching for information and missed opportunities for team engagement.

**THE SOLUTION: Purpose-built technology that centralizes nurse managers' work**

The Laudio platform offered the opportunity to not only centralize and simplify managers' core workflows, but also leverage AI to help managers identify and act on timely interaction opportunities with their teams like never before. Novant Health's Greater Winston-Salem region went live in April 2021, followed by its other main region, Greater Charlotte, in April 2022.

Novant Health's nurse managers use the Laudio platform in a wide variety of ways, including:

- Leveraging Laudio's dynamic recommendations, including for recognition and celebrations, that facilitate timely, personalized team member engagement. This is foundational to the health system's nurse leader communications strategy.
- Planning, tracking, and following up on new hire check-ins at key intervals. The system prompts managers to schedule check-ins at 30, 60, and 90 days and lets them document conversations and track follow-up actions as needed.
- Fostering connections with team members, managing performance, and supporting team member success through one-on-one discussions that are documented in Laudio.
- Viewing key employee information in one place, including milestones, certifications, and attendance patterns. Laudio pulls this data in, organizes it, and makes it actionable with user-friendly visualizations and timely prompts.

This technology has both replaced manual processes and reduced the need for nurse managers to access multiple systems to do their work. "For our nurse managers, Laudio is a solution that makes their work more manageable," said Michael Vaccaro, Charlotte Market Chief Nursing Officer.

## THE IMPACT: Reduced nurse turnover, incremental overtime, and agency costs

Novant Health ramped up use of the Laudio platform and made it central to the system's retention initiative, which in turn supported manager efforts in driving employee engagement, reducing turnover, and helping reduce labor costs. Costs avoided spanned RN replacement costs, agency staffing costs, and incremental overtime costs.

Leveraging Laudio as a key part of its strategy, Novant Health reduced nurse turnover by over 15 percentage points and saved \$90M in agency costs in 2023, the first full year the first two locations were live on the platform. That year, the health system avoided 48 FTE RN terminations and \$4.8M in replacement costs – with managers classified as strong Laudio users achieving an almost 3% higher year-over-year increase in RN retention rates than lower users.

Novant Health's employee engagement surveys have also shown a correlation between utilization of the Laudio platform and employee engagement scores. The strongest Laudio users have outstanding engagement scores – in the 90th+ percentile. Facilitating impactful and efficient team engagement is one of many ways the platform has improved work for nurse managers. Denise Mihal, Chief Nursing & Clinical Operations Officer, said, "Laudio automates so much for nurse managers; it helps them become more accountable and effective while making their lives easier."

The platform also gives managers greater visibility into team work patterns and oversight of incremental overtime. This positions them to intervene early when necessary, for example, by sending supportive messages to check in and offer resources to help, then acknowledge progress. Using Laudio to manage related issues – leaving late, arriving early, and skipping breaks – Novant Health saved \$175K over a 12-month period.

## CONCLUSION: A digital foundation for nurse manager enablement and nurse retention

Laudio has become integral to Novant Health's nursing operations; Michael Vaccaro shared that when they need a new process, "Our first thought now is 'can we build this in Laudio?'" Expanding on the early success, Novant Health recently launched a system-wide Nursing Retention Committee and selected Laudio to be a key digital resource to support its strategy. The health system is now rolling the Laudio platform out to its third major region, the Coastal Market, as well as implementing the newest module, Leader Patient Rounding, at current sites to simplify leader rounding and drive consistent patient experience practices system-wide.



*"Laudio has proven to be an excellent resource for our nurse managers and team members as it improves timely communication, connection and recognition. Laudio automates manual processes and gives the nurse managers the tools they need to have easy access to data and prompts interactions with their team members. Retention is a primary leadership responsibility and Laudio makes it easier for nurse managers to have the oversight and accountability for their workforce."*

**Denise Mihal, MBA, RN**

EVP, Chief Nursing & Clinical Operations Officer,  
Novant Health