



5 Key Insights on Workplace Culture and Connection in Healthcare

Culture and connection matter to healthcare organizations. But the day-to-day employee experience doesn't always reflect it.

These five insights from the 2026 State of Workplace Culture and Connection highlight where progress is happening in healthcare, and where gaps remain.



motivosity

1 Healthcare employees are lonely and in need of connection.

Key findings:

89%

of healthcare employees say connection has increased, yet 55% still feel lonely at work.

78%

of healthcare employees feel connected to their immediate team, but only 66% say their organization supports cross-team relationships.

67%

of healthcare employees say feeling valued is a top driver of a positive work experience.

Key takeaway:

Strong teams don't automatically create a connected organization. Belonging has to be built intentionally across the full employee experience.

What healthcare organizations should do:

Move beyond frequent touchpoints and build meaningful connection across the care environment.



Reinforce recognition and appreciation in real time across clinical and operational roles.



Increase visibility into how different roles contribute to patient outcomes and organizational success.



Use ongoing feedback and recognition touchpoints to strengthen belonging in daily interactions, not just programs.

2 Recognition is inconsistent across healthcare teams.

Key findings:

66%

of healthcare employees receive regular recognition from managers, but only 44% from peers.

67%

of healthcare organizations lack recognition programs.

Key takeaway:

Recognition is happening, but it's too top-down and inconsistent. Without the right systems, peer recognition and daily appreciation don't scale.

What healthcare organizations should do:

Embed recognition into the daily flow of care delivery.



Enable simple, peer-to-peer recognition across shifts, roles, and locations.



Recognize contributions in real time during shifts, handoffs, and team huddles.



Make recognition visible across units and departments to reinforce shared impact.

3 Employees trust their managers more than leadership.

Key findings:

44%

of healthcare organizations cite it as a top challenge, and only 11% report high trust in leadership.

82%

of healthcare employees feel connected to their managers.

Key takeaway:

Culture is shaped at every level of leadership. When leaders aren't visible and managers aren't equipped, the employee experience becomes inconsistent.

What healthcare organizations should do:

Make leadership visible and equip managers to deliver culture on the frontlines.



Ensure leaders participate in recognition and team communication across care environments.



Reinforce values through consistent, observable actions, not just messaging.



Equip managers with tools that surface team sentiment and make it easy to take action.

4 Culture is a priority, but few organizations invest.

Key findings:

67%

of healthcare organizations lack recognition programs, and the majority do not use ERGs (89%), coaching (56%), or engagement tools (56%).

Key takeaway:

There is a clear gap between prioritizing culture and investing in the systems needed to support it (especially at the frontline).

What healthcare organizations should do:

Build the infrastructure that makes culture consistent and scalable.



Implement centralized platforms for recognition, rewards, and feedback across all teams.



Invest in coaching, mentoring, and peer support programs for frontline leaders and staff.



Ensure tools and processes work across shifts, locations, and roles—not just corporate teams.

5 Flexibility drives employee satisfaction, but rewards drive retention.

Key findings:

55%

of healthcare employees say flexibility and PTO drive satisfaction, while 89% say perks and rewards drive retention.

88%

of healthcare employees value professional development and 67% value cash-based rewards.

Key takeaway:

Flexibility and time off are baseline expectations, but long-term retention depends on meaningful rewards and clear growth opportunities.

What healthcare organizations should do:

Align rewards and development with the realities of healthcare work.



Offer timely, tangible rewards that reflect frontline contributions.



Use recognition and rewards programs to reinforce performance, engagement, and retention.



Ensure rewards are equitable and accessible across shifts, roles, and locations.

Build a better employee recognition program with Motivosity

Reduce burnout and increase retention with Motivosity, the people-first Recognition and Rewards solution for today's workforce. Creates more engaged employees, automate your programs, and build human connection across teams, shifts, and timezones.