

# The Essential Role of Work-Life Balance for Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) Post COVID 19

*By: Matt Jordan, Jordan Search Consultants*

The COVID-19 pandemic irrevocably reshaped the healthcare industry, shedding light on the critical importance of work-life balance for healthcare professionals, especially Advanced Practice Providers (APPs). Nurse practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants (PAs) have long been the backbone of medical practices, shouldering significant clinical responsibilities while providing exceptional care. However, the pandemic amplified the emotional, mental, and physical toll that demanding schedules can take on healthcare providers. Today, work-life balance isn't just a preference for APPs; it's a non-negotiable factor influencing where they choose to practice.

## A Growing Trend Post-COVID

Studies and surveys repeatedly emphasize that burnout rates among APPs skyrocketed during the pandemic. According to the American Medical Association (AMA), **62% of healthcare workers reported experiencing symptoms of burnout in 2022**. Advanced Practice Providers are particularly vulnerable, given their dual role in patient care and practice management. Consequently, job seekers in this field now prioritize roles that ensure fair compensation, manageable schedules, and a healthy work-life balance.

Medical groups that fail to address these concerns risk losing top talent to organizations that demonstrate a deeper commitment to supporting their staff. As recruiters and employers, adapting to this trend isn't just beneficial for attracting the best APPs—it's crucial for sustaining long-term operational success.

## What APPs Are Looking For

### 1. Fair Compensation for Hours Worked

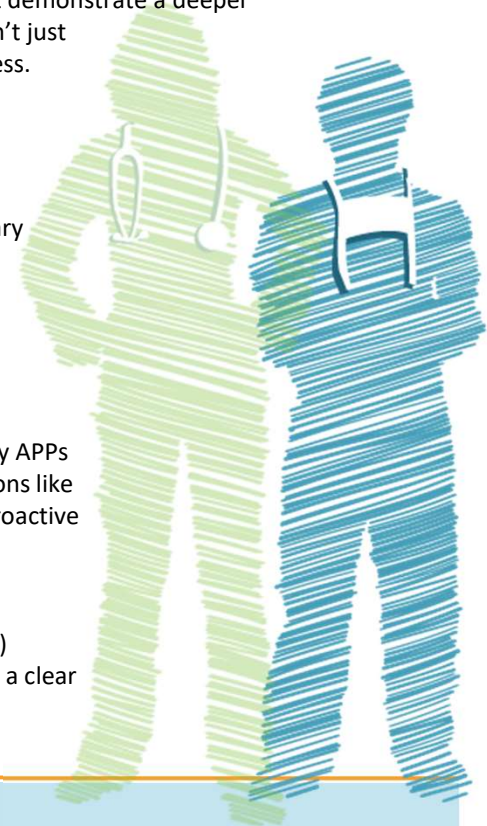
APPs are increasingly wary of roles that overpromise and underdeliver when it comes to salary and workload. Candidates want transparency about expectations and assurance that they won't be asked to compromise their well-being for productivity metrics. Competitive pay structures and incentive models, such as bonuses tied to achievable outcomes rather than excessive workloads, go a long way in signaling respect for their efforts.

### 2. Flexibility in Scheduling

Flexible hours and the ability to tailor work schedules have become key considerations. Many APPs are parents, caregivers, or individuals pursuing personal goals outside of work. Offering options like four-day workweeks, remote telehealth opportunities, or staggered shifts demonstrates a proactive effort to accommodate their needs.

### 3. Generous Time Off and Mental Health Support

Generous PTO policies, mental health days, and robust Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) resonate deeply with candidates. Employers that normalize taking time off for self-care send a clear message: their employees' well-being matters as much as patient care.



## What Medical Groups Can Do to Attract APPs

### 1. Focus on the Interview Process

Use interviews as an opportunity to convey the group's commitment to work-life balance. Discuss policies like patient caps, flexible scheduling, and protected time for administrative tasks. Be transparent about workload expectations and ask candidates about their ideal work environment to ensure alignment.

### 2. Craft Competitive Offers

When extending offers, emphasize how the structure of compensation, benefits, and time off supports work-life balance. Include details about competitive salaries, achievable productivity bonuses, ample PTO, and mental health support programs.

### 3. Structure the Practice for Sustainability

Ensure the practice's operations reflect its commitment to balance. This could involve limiting after-hours responsibilities, ensuring adequate staffing to prevent overwork, and offering telehealth options where feasible. These structural changes not only attract APPs but also retain them by creating a sustainable work environment.

### 4. Create a Culture of Support

Beyond tangible benefits, fostering a culture that values APPs as whole individuals is vital. Small gestures, like celebrating birthdays, hosting wellness events, or providing on-site counseling services, can create an environment where employees feel valued.

### 5. Incorporate Provider Feedback

Conduct regular surveys to gauge staff satisfaction and solicit feedback on workplace policies. Implementing changes based on this feedback demonstrates a genuine commitment to continuous improvement and employee well-being.

## Conclusion

The post-COVID era has shifted the priorities of Advanced Practice Providers, making work-life balance a key determinant in job satisfaction and career longevity. Medical groups that recognize and adapt to this trend will not only attract top-tier talent but also foster a healthier, more productive workforce. By investing in policies and practices that support work-life balance, these organizations can differentiate themselves in a competitive market while ensuring sustainable, high-quality care for their patients.

## Sources:

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