

How VHA Home HealthCare Built Its Most Reliable Referral Program in its 100-Year History



RESULTS POWERED BY  Caribou

Executive Summary

VHA HomeHealthcare (VHA) is confronting the caregiver shortage head-on through igniting a powerful referral engine with Caribou Rewards. To fulfill their mission of creating more independence for each individual they serve, a team of reliable, consistent, and experienced caregivers is essential.

*The **Caribou** team's attention to detail is unmatched. Their ability to integrate with Workday has been critical to the referral program's success, making it effortless to manage. Most of all, everyone on the Caribou team has been attentive, supportive, and eager to help us achieve our goals - becoming one of our most reliable sources of new hires for VHA.*



Ernesto Sequera

Director, Human Resources –
Talent Acquisition and Onboarding



Highlights



200+ new hires in one year

VHA was able to hire key roles across Registered Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Personal Support Workers, among others. There were a total of 1800 applications received in 2023, which became a key candidate driver for the business.



28% improvement in new candidate performance

Hires from the Caribou referrals program consistently had better retention than other channels. There was a 16% difference at the critical 90-day milestone, and a 28% improvement at the 180-day milestone, illustrating hires through Caribou stay longer.



\$57K given back to the frontline

Employees earned points at every step of the journey when they referred a candidate. Through the app, they could visualize the progress of their referrals at all stages of the process, which drove more participation and point earnings. Caregivers earned \$57K extra income across VHA between January and December 2023.

Context

VHA Home HealthCare (VHA) is a not-for-profit charitable organization that offers 24/7 health care and support services to people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. With over 100 years of operation under their belt, VHA has continually evolved to meet the expanding needs of their clients. Based in Toronto, Ontario, VHA's footprint around Canada's largest city is substantial, with clients across the Greater Toronto Area, Kingston, and Ottawa (operating under the name Champlain Rehab Solutions.)

VHA's mission is centered on creating possibilities for more independence for each individual they serve, while championing their needs and delivering high quality care with great heart. Integral to that mission is a team of reliable, consistent, and experienced caregivers. However, like many agencies, VHA has been affected by the caregiver shortage, and a partnership with Caribou was the ideal way to find new creative solutions that could drive measurable outcomes, quickly.

Problems

The caregiver shortage has cascading impacts across the entire business--evidenced by fewer billed hours, employee burnout, higher turnover, to name a few. In the case of VHA, there were three business-critical issues that Caribou needed to solve:



Positions were taking too long to fill:

Traditional recruitment methods needed a boost. VHA has long believed that great people know great people, and revitalizing their referral program.



Lack of capacity was impacting the volume of client care and billable hours:

Unfilled positions across various departments was impacting VHA's ability to fulfill the demand for various types of care.



Attrition for new hires was too high

Consistency of care hinges on caregivers staying with VHA - and VHA wanted to improve retention rates at key milestones in the caregiver journey.



Solutions

Examining VHA's challenges led Caribou to maintain a razor-sharp focus on improving their employee referral engine via Caribou Rewards. Following a pilot period, VHA rolled the program at scale to all 3000+ employees at VHA. The team at VHA firmly believed in the adage that great people know great people, and they wanted to see what would happen by doubling down on that bet.

Here's what Caribou and VHA rolled out together:

Staff Rewards

VHA team members were awarded points in the Caribou Rewards app for each step on the referral journey, from sharing a job to an applicant interviewing, to a successful hire. Offering small but meaningful rewards at high frequencies led to consistent participation from staff.

Caribou Coaching

Caribou's team of experts led frequent coaching sessions with the VHA team, ensuring the team was maximizing potential results. These coaching sessions also allowed Caribou & VHA to closely monitor adoption and engagement from staff.

Seamless Integrations

Caribou's new integration with Workday ensures the success of VHA's referral program can now be easily tracked and measured, without adding any added pressure on the HR team.



2023 Results



221 new hires in the span of one year

VHA was able to hire key roles across Registered Nurses, Occupational Therapists, and Personal Support Workers. There were a total of 1800 applications received in VHA's first year scaling up Caribou Rewards via referrals, becoming a reliable candidate driver for the business.

Highest conversion rate from any other candidate channel

With 1 in 8 referrals from Caribou getting hired, VHA employees had a high level of engagement with Caribou Rewards. This high level led to 1,825 applications for the organization. In total, VHA hired 221 individuals from Caribou referrals, resulting in a 12.1% conversion rate.



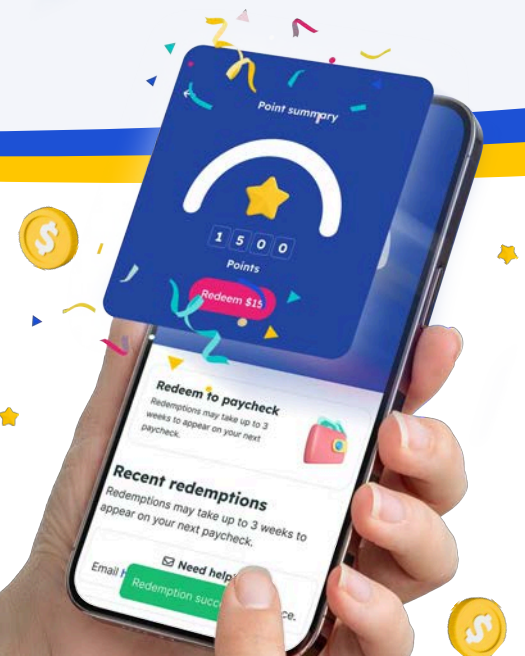
28% improvement in new candidate performance

Hires from the Caribou referrals program consistently had better retention than their counterparts in all milestones. There was a 16% difference at the 90-day milestone and a 28% difference at the 180-day milestone, confirming that Caribou hires are retained at a higher rate than those sourced from other channels.



\$57K given back to the frontline

Through Caribou Rewards, employees earned points at every step of the referral journey. They were able to visualize the progress of their referrals at all stages of the hiring process, increasing engagement and activity. Overall, caregivers across VHA earned an extra 57K income in total for their referral efforts between January and December 2023.





About VHA Home HealthCare: VHA was founded in 1925 as the Visiting Homemakers Association with just 14 support workers assisting new mothers. Since then, VHA has grown significantly, with over 3,000 team members today. We are proud to celebrate VHA's 100th anniversary in 2025.

Throughout the past century, VHA has remained committed to providing high-quality, compassionate care to vulnerable populations, helping them maintain their independence and live safely at home. [Learn more about 100 years of providing spectacular care at VHA.](#)


VHA is dedicated to collaborating with clients and their families to deliver care centered on each individual's unique needs and preferences. Learn more about our [client-centered approach](#) and [available services at VHA.](#)



About Caribou: Caribou is a rewards and engagement application built to elevate care agencies to world-class employer status. With programs designed to make caregivers feel seen and valued, Caribou fuels excellence across your entire organization, improving retention, recruitment, and staff performance, all while improving overall operational efficiency. Caribou's referral programs have generated thousands of hires for agencies, moving the needle on the caregiver shortage that impacts the lives of millions. Find out more about Caribou's mission at www.caribou.care

See how **Caribou**
can work for you.



 Caribou powers success for influential agencies

