TRAVELER TIPS
TIPS FOR TRAVEL NURSES
by travel nurses

JANUARY 2015 EDITION

SCOUTING OUT THE BEST DESTINATIONS

ADDRESSING PROBLEMS

OVER 27 TRAVELER TIPS INSIDE!

BONUS!
TRAVEL NURSE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

MAKING FRIENDS
HAVING FUN ON ASSIGNMENT
We asked several Medical Solutions Travelers...

What tips for success they’d offer new Travel Nurses and Travel Allied Health Professionals. Follow these pointers, for a smoother ride while you’re on the road!

First, here are some tips from Traveler and Medical Solutions Clinical Nurse Manager, Joe B., RN, Alumnus CCRN

1. **If possible, get to your destination two days in advance to scout things out.**

To avoid being late the first day of your assignment, make a “dry run” getting to the hospital at least a day before orientation. Ask about traffic patterns at different times of the day. Locate parking at the hospital. Also, locate your local pharmacy, all-purpose retailer, and grocery store. This makes life easier when you need to pick something up, especially after a difficult shift.

2. **Address any problems or concerns at your assignment immediately.**

Don’t let issues escalate and always utilize the chain of command for resolution: Charge Nurse, House Supervisor, Nurse Manager.

3. **Don’t let the scrutiny of being new bother you.**

You may feel like you are being watched on your first few shifts, and you probably are! The staff don’t yet know you or your skill level. Just do your job with confidence and accuracy, as always.

4. **Know your schedule!**

There shouldn’t be confusion on which days you’re expected to work.

5. **Keep your cell phone in your pocket or bag.**

Most hospitals have a cell phone policy; know that policy and adhere to it.

6. **Don’t ever say something like, “That’s not how we do it where I come from.”**

This can be offensive to hospital staff.
Don’t try to change a hospital overnight.

So your new unit doesn’t do things exactly the way your last one did – that’s OK! Be open to change and learn how your new team operates. If you see an area for potential improvement, ask for time with the Nurse Manager.

Don’t broadcast personal issues or problems.

Whether it’s yours or someone else’s, keep personal issues off the floor. One perk of Travel Nursing is the chance to go from hospital to hospital, without getting caught up in politics or gossip. Enjoy it!

Always use your Charge Nurse and/or Policy and Procedure manual as a resource.

While everything is grounded in evidence-based care, some things may not be done exactly the way you’re accustomed to.

Go with the flow.

As a Traveler, know that you may get some of the more difficult assignments. Stay flexible and try to see such challenges as an opportunity for professional growth.

Finally, remember that Medical Solutions has three full time RNs on staff, with a vast amount of combined experience. These Clinical Nurse Managers are available to speak with, ask questions, bounce things off of, and help you resolve issues when following your chain of command isn’t providing solutions.
Traveler Nina C., Traveler of the Month March 2014
“The job not only requires knowledge in nursing but an ability to assimilate with other people and organizational structures. My career as a traveling nurse has given me a whole new life that I highly recommend for others.”

Traveler Thomas C., Rising Star March 2014
“Find out how the facility you’re working at does things. Never speak badly of a place you work at no matter how bad it is.”

Traveler Roger W., Traveler of the Month April 2014
1. “Understand that you are taking an assignment because of a staffing shortage and people need your help. You are not being asked to work at a location because they have an abundance of staff and everything is peachy. Be flexible and willing to work around others’ needs. Expect a certain amount of chaos. That’s what you’re there to help mitigate.”
2. “Thirteen weeks is a very short period of time. If you are unhappy with an assignment, be patient. It will be over before you know it.”
3. “Always plan on being the ‘new guy.’ There is a learning curve with every assignment. You need to be patient with yourself as well. Don’t get too frustrated too quickly. You’ll get it.”

Traveler Barbara H., Traveler of the Month May 2014
“Tips I would give newbies on traveling is to be flexible. Assignments and details can change in a heartbeat. You need to go with the flow and not get stressed. Always be courteous and gracious at an assignment. If three different people say the same thing to you thank each and every one of them. They are not doing it to belittle you they just don’t know what other people have told you. Show confidence in your skill, not arrogance, for that radiates to the staff nurses. Go do things with staff members if asked, a great way to see the area and form a friendship with the staff.”

Traveler Jennifer H., Rising Star May 2014
“When traveling, always be open minded to different techniques and learn anything you can from others. With that, be prepared to teach others the knowledge that you have. As you come into a new assignment/facility be honest about your training, be flexible to do anything which includes cleaning...yes..cleaning, and be positive in any situation.”
Traveler Amy R., Traveler of the Month June 2014
“Be friendly! Smile! Say ‘Hi’ to everyone. Remember names, participate in potlucks, and after work get-togethers. Ask about families. Let coworkers get to know you. Go to work happy that you’re employed at that facility.”

Traveler Linda R., Rising Star June 2014
“When going into a new hospital, remember that you are there to help them so just do your job and don’t get involved in any of the politics. Just enjoy the freedom you have meeting new people and taking in all the sites.”

Traveler Danielle A., Traveler of the Month July 2014
“Don’t be afraid to ask for help — all those stories of hospital staffdisliking travelers aren’t true 99% of the time; they like the extra help. Be adventurous and enjoy your temporary new home.”

Traveler Ryan N., Rising Star July 2014
1. “Ask as many questions as you can and don’t be afraid to ask for help.”
2. “Trust your instincts. You know what you are doing or you wouldn’t be doing this.”
3. “Get to know the people you are working with. They will be your lifeline.”

Traveler Dan A., Traveler of the Month August 2014
1. “Take a deep breath, remember this isn’t your first rodeo, and that though you are in a new setting, you are fully capable of providing the quality care to patients that you already have up to this point in your career.”
2. “Make friends, and make them quick! Not only do you want to establish a good rapport with your team for the sake of the patients, but for yourself. Having a sense of community as you move from one place to the next is key for your emotional health as a Travel Nurse.”
3. “You’re a Travel Nurse, so travel! Check out as many sights as you can! I know you are tired after 3-plus 12 hour shifts, but there is life to live. So whether that means relaxing in a coffee shop, taking a hike on the ocean hillsides, or exploring a new neighborhood in town, get going! Adventure is out there!”

Traveler Ashley C., Rising Star August 2014
My tip is to have fun. Don’t let anyone steal your joy or get you caught up in their mess or unhappiness. Think for yourself — especially those who travel with others. Be open to new people and adventures. Keep learning no matter what your experience level is. Don’t forget that patient care is always your top priority. Remember why you became a nurse. Every day you have the ability to positively impact people’s lives.

Visit www.medicalsolutions.com/traveler-tips to check out our ongoing collection of Traveler Tips!
Across
4. Fixed, regular payment, usually meant to pay for something specific. An allowance.
5. Country of origin of first documented nursing school dated 250 B.C.
10. A journey made by car, bus, etc
11. ________ nurse, usually assigned for a shift, who is responsible for the immediate functioning of the unit

Down
1. The I-90, Longest interstate highway in the US begins in Seattle and ends in what city?
2. Smallest US state
3. Typical length of a travel nursing assignment (in weeks)
4. Correct place to check an infant’s pulse is between the elbow and ________
7. Last name of the nurse who created the American Red Cross in 1881
8. Largest coffeehouse company in the world