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Cancer Treatment Centers of America growing, still hiring

By **Eli Arnold** - Nov. 5, 2009 11:01 AM
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Cancer Treatment Centers of America says it's growing and hiring in line with projections as it approaches its first anniversary.

When the national hospital chain opened its Western Regional Medical Center in late 2008, the company anticipated having 400 employees within two to four years.

Today, CTCA is on track to meet that plan, according to Ted Ramirez, director of talent for the Goodyear campus.

"Especially here at Western, we continue to see our (patient) volumes meet results and planning for the year. So it's really going to continue to drive our staffing," he said.

About 265 employees work at the hospital, up from 134 when the facility opened last December southwest of Interstate 10 and Litchfield Road.

The hospital opened with 14 in-patient beds and is expanding with 10 more.

Record unemployment has resulted in acute demand for jobs at CTCA. The Goodyear site received more than 35,000 applications over the past 16 months.

Even before it opened, the hospital processed nearly 20,000 applications, more than double the number when CTCA opened in Philadelphia in 2005.

"That's just indicative of the market right now," Ramirez said, adding that CTCA offers "highly competitive" wages.

The for-profit company operates hospitals in Chicago, Tulsa and Philadelphia. A fifth hospital is planned near Atlanta.

In Goodyear, there are a variety of labor needs, but nurses are expected to be in the greatest demand as time goes on. That's because CTCA's "high touch" environment has a particular need for nurses, Ramirez said.

"They're the individuals that I would say spend most of the time with our patients, ensuring that there's a good direct link between the physicians and our patients," he said.

The company is hiring primarily in the Valley, with most employees living in West Valley cities.

According to the hospital, one-third of its workforce lives in Goodyear. About 13 percent live in Phoenix.

Much of CTCA's work is outpatient services. The Southwest Valley hospital has 37 rooms akin to hotel rooms and plans to eventually expand to about 60 rooms. CTCA has contracted with nearly 15 hotels for overflow housing. "It's just a reflection that cancer care is needed," spokeswoman Tiffany Jenkins said.

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