

The way it used to be

Recently, while working at a local hospital in town, I overheard a permanent staff member talking to a traveler about “the way it used to be.” He was talking about the way travelers used to be treated versus how they are treated now.

It used to be that travelers were treated with much protection and generosity, but now travelers don't have it so easy. They are not spoiled as much as they used to be. Travelers, now, must actually negotiate a little more and know what their rights are when it comes to dealing with travel nursing agencies.

These changes in the industry are partly due to the dramatic increase in the amount of agencies in business now. People discovered that there was much money to be made in staffing nurses. However, the amount of nurses did not increase. This means that you have, in general, the same amount of nurses working spread out over an increasing population of companies.

This means the companies must not only compete more for the nurses, they must also compete more for business from the hospitals. Hospitals have so many agencies to choose from that they are becoming pickier and less willing to pay as much per nurse given their increased negotiation power set up in the competitive market. The agencies are having to outbid one another to get the hospitals business. Thus, leaving less money to offer the nurse private housing with a pool, a view and a fireplace.

Does this mean that travel nursing has seen it's days and you should pack it up and go home? No way. It simply means you will have to change your approach as the industry changes. You will have to become a more informed traveler and stick up for your rights (the benefits you know you have coming to you). You may have to shop around for a good honest recruiter that will give you the scoop and fight for you. You may even have to compromise sometimes and take the private housing with a pool and no fireplace. Nevertheless, traveling is still a great way to see the country and to gather many fond memories along the way while making good money.