When the hospital CEO of the 294-bed Wilson Medical Center in Wilson, N.C., needed three temporary leaders within a 16-month period, he called Intalere supplier Nielsen Healthcare Group. The busy executive appreciated the fact that Nielsen does all of the time-consuming, front-end work interviewing and verifying candidates’ qualifications.

The facility’s first request was for an interim CFO. Wilson Medical was preparing for an audit, and someone was needed who could walk in and immediately dive deep into the books to ensure things went smoothly. Nielsen quickly found the right candidate, who started work a little more than two weeks after Wilson’s request. The temporary CFO not only helped the hospital obtain a clean audit opinion, he initiated an action plan on the auditor’s minor recommendations to tighten up Wilson Medical’s accounts receivables process.

In October 2011, the interim CFO contacted Nielsen with his own request. “I need a good No. 2,” Bruce Nielsen, president of Nielsen Healthcare Group recalls him saying.

An interim director of finance joined Wilson Medical Center in November 2011. He subsequently became a permanent employee after proving to be a good fit for the hospital and its leadership team. Wilson also tried to hire the interim CFO permanently, but he declined, enjoying the challenge of temporary assignments. Wilson ultimately hired another CFO, and the temp walked away with a glowing letter of recommendation.

Nielsen explains that the majority of their candidates enjoy temporary assignments, for a variety of reasons. Some have personalities that like to “swoop in and fix” a situation and move on to another challenge; others enjoy the flexibility of working only when they want to, or working in various places so they can see more of the country.

Wilson Medical Center still was not through with Nielsen. After the “money team” was in place, with a new CFO and finance director, Nielsen was asked in November 2012, to find a chief nursing officer (CNO). Again, a little more than two weeks later, the interim CNO walked into Wilson Medical.
She brought more than 20 years’ experience in large and small, for-profit and non-profit healthcare settings. Wilson leadership immediately appreciated her high-energy, can-do attitude, which has been key in successfully preparing the hospital for changes resulting from healthcare reform.

For 22 years, the St. Louis-based Nielsen Healthcare Group has matched qualified interim leaders with hospitals, home health agencies, nursing care facilities, medical groups and other healthcare clients nationwide.

Nielsen bases its fee on the compensation which the candidate receives, and exercises no control over the amount or form of compensation. Compensation terms are negotiated between the client and the candidate.

What Nielsen does have control of however, is a unique network of over 17,000 candidates who have sent in their credentials in search of interim opportunities. All of the candidates are vetted for their education; licenses, registrations, certifications; and for any Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General sanctions. And all candidates are presented with a minimum of three relevant, written managerial or professional references.

“Also, we only present candidates who have recently served in the requested capacity,” said Bruce Nielsen. “Our clients want their interim leader to be able to hit the ground running.”