

1) Care Connect

Mercy Medical Center

Mary Orr, Communications and Media Specialist, Sisters of Providence Health System;
Mary.orr@sphs.com

WINNING
ENTRY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Massachusetts hospital committed to deliver the highest quality care with the greatest efficiency at the lowest costs. To do so, hospital leaders launched a bold transformation initiative called CareConnect. This innovative approach to care delivery applies many proven processes and tools used in other industries to ensure that planes fly safely, packages arrive on time, and manufacturing plants deliver expected volumes of quality products exactly when they are needed. These logistical principles are succeeding robustly in delivering high-quality, extremely efficient patient care.

Leaders from this hospital recognized the need for big, sustainable change. The traditional model for patient care was inherently inefficient. Before CareConnect, each department and clinical service area tended to operate independently. So even the most dedicated nurses and doctors struggled with communication gaps and imperfect care handoffs, extending stays for patients and creating frustration for patients and caregivers alike. And inefficient care drove down patient and service volumes while inflating care costs.

To tackle these challenges, the hospital leaders knew it would take more than just a single performance improvement project in one department or a new software system in another. The hospital set out to completely transform care operations to become fundamentally and continuously efficient. And it has succeeded by all measures— throughput efficiency, improved care quality, patient experience, physician and employee satisfaction, and lower costs.

With CareConnect, the entire organization embraced three key transformational changes:

A Program for Unified, Patient-First Culture Change: Hospital leaders knew that transformative change requires the enthusiastic participation of everyone in the organization. It's a whole new way of thinking. Executive and leadership focus groups and tools established a patient-first, zero-defect system aim and culture the entire hospital has embraced with passion.

New Care Coordination Model: A hub-and-spoke "production" model coordinates efficient team action across all departments to ensure every patient receives the right care at the right time in the right setting. A central "hub" continuously connects to ED, OR, nursing units, and service areas. The hospital established new processes, LEAN and Six Sigma tools, and roles to most efficiently manage simultaneous demand from all patients for limited care resources.

Enabling Technology: The hospital defined standard operating procedures for efficient, reliable delivery of high-quality care and outstanding patient experience. Then it adopted software built specifically to let doctors and caregivers easily and quickly see and do everything they need to provide that exceptional care for all patients, all the time.

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Since launching the innovative CareConnect initiative in May 2013, this hospital has realized dramatic improvements in efficiency, throughput, care quality measures, patient satisfaction, and physician and employee engagement. It has enjoyed two record years of operational and financial performance. Some highlights:

- Realized a financial benefit of \$10.1 million through the end of 2014, based on significant cost savings through greater efficiency and increased revenue from higher patient and service volumes.
- Reduced average patient length of stay by a full day, from 4.6 to 3.6
- Cut the time from a pending patient admission to assigning the patient a bed from 73 to 21 minutes, a 71 percent improvement
- Reduced length of stay of observation patients by 4.8 hours
- Cut by more than half the number of patients who left the emergency room without being seen, driving the average down to 1.85 percent
- Reduced observed-to-expected (O/E) ratio for targeted discharges from 1.34 to 1.06 over a nine-month period
- Reduced patient 30-day readmissions to 9.6 percent, down from 13 percent
- Made a 50 percent improvement in inpatient satisfaction percentile ratings
- Climbed from 41st to the 67th percentile in employee engagement scores
- Won the Press Ganey 2013 Commitment to Excellence Award, reflecting the largest annual increase in employee engagement scores
- Reduced the door-to-door time for emergency room patients by an hour
- Reduced hospital-acquired pressure ulcers (HAPU) by more than half
- Improved SCIP bundle from 94 percent to 97 percent