



# Case Study

## **Long Term Care and Rehabilitative Services Organization Benefits from Web-Based Event Management Tool**

Lexington Health Care offers skilled nursing care and short term rehabilitative care to residents and patients in Northern Illinois. The 10 facilities of Lexington Health Care offer a full range of services to support the needs of long term care residents and sub-acute care patients. The system has approximately 2,000 beds and the facilities are in various suburban locations across Northern Illinois. There are also more than 2,000 staff who serve the clients of Lexington Health Care.

Lexington Health Care incorporated the use of the web-based event management system the **Healthcare SafetyZone® Portal** (Portal) in 2005 to assist them in the capture and analysis of resident safety events. For Lexington Health Care, the Portal serves as a trigger system for the quick identification of quality and safety issues that may impact their residents and patients. Early identification enables management and staff to implement interventions that will help improve the delivery of healthcare services.

Before the Portal was implemented, Lexington Health Care used a paper system to manage their incident reports. The process was laborious and slow ... and it was not easy to create positive change from the data reported. Lexington Health Care needed a better solution, and they chose to work with Clarity Group, Inc. (Clarity) and the **Healthcare SafetyZone® Portal**.

### **Initial Goals ... and Fears**

The Lexington Health Care staff had some specific goals in mind when implementing the web-based system:

- Remove the paper reporting process
- Obtain more complete and objective information in a legible form
- Enhance the speed to which interventions are put into place
- Create a more efficient reporting and follow-up process
- Enhance the care provided to the Lexington Health Care residents and patients

While staff did not like the paper system, there was a real concern that because computer skills varied greatly, the staff would not report via computer and documentation of reporting would decrease. Debbie Randon, Director of Training and Development, worked with Clarity and the Lexington Health Care staff to put an implementation plan into place.

The plan was to provide hands-on training and a soft push to get staff used to the new system ... and it worked. The Portal was quickly operational at the centers and reporting began to increase almost immediately. The staff quickly saw that the Portal was easy to use and even staff with limited computer skills were able to submit event data quickly and with minimal training; they could also see how quickly follow-up ensued once a report was submitted. In addition, because the Portal is a web-based system, it requires very little time from the IT staff and that made the transition to the new system very easy.

### **What to Collect?**

The Portal is a highly customizable tool, and Debbie and the implementation team provided Clarity the paper forms that they were using as the basis for the event types to be collected. They worked on getting input from staff and managers and provided that information to the Clarity implementation team who constructed the reporting templates.

Today, the reporting templates encompass nine (9) different event types, but the templates can be revised easily as new areas need to be addressed or questions need to be changed for improved data collection.

### **Event Collection Templates in the Lexington Healthcare *SafetyZone*® Portal**

Falls	Missing Person
Pressure Ulcers	Infection Control
Medication Variance	Allegations of Abuse
Skin Tear/ Laceration	Miscellaneous
Bruises	

“There are many important aspects of the Portal’s reporting process, but the main one is that through the use of the Portal, we have been able to change the traditional ‘incident report’ into a change management tool. We receive complete information in a timely manner and we can react quickly through follow-up and investigation to prevent future events from occurring. The ability to address a resident’s or patient’s concern in near real time has become a tangible and meaningful benefit of using the Portal,” explains Ms. Randon.

### **Some Key Considerations: Factual, Complete and Actionable Data**

The Portal has enabled Lexington Health Care to gather specific and timely information, and more importantly, act on the information to create a safer environment. The Portal has the ability to make certain questions required, so that good, factual information is obtained at the point of reporting. In addition, the notification is immediately routed to all those who need to know, which supports communication among providers, and also enables quick interventions to take place as needed.

Ms. Randon provides a specific example of how this works within Lexington Health Care as a Fall is reported on a resident. “We have been able to customize our reporting template and incorporate specific interventions from the Portal data directly into the Care Plan for a resident. The manager can now look specifically at the Portal data and check the Care Plan in the medical record to make sure the follow through is there. This has created accountability for making the specific changes needed for that resident or patient and has enhanced the care provided in almost real time.”

### **The Power of a Picture**

The Portal comes with a full analytical function that provides information in the form of tables and graphs through the use of the Analysis Wizard. It is a robust and easy to use feature that supports care and staff management. As Ms. Randon describes the impact of this feature, “The staff wants to continuously improve their patient care and when they have the data that shows what needs to be done and the impact of the improvements they are making, it helps make those changes more permanent. A caregiver making a difference in patient care on the spot is empowerment!”

The analysis feature is also used by managers who check the Portal daily to determine if there is any special patient or resident need that has to be addressed. The data can show if a pattern is emerging for a particular resident or patient and help them plan their priorities for the day. Staff and managers fully appreciate the power of having that data at their fingertips.

The benefit of the analytical function is also seen in the trending analysis across all of the Lexington Health Care facilities. “Through the use of the Portal, we have been able to demonstrate the value of various interventions across the system and we have been able to see emerging issues that need to be addressed,” states Ms. Dana Mata, Vice President of QA/Risk Management. “This has helped us work more effectively as a group to protect our residents and patients, and it also serves to protect the interests of the Lexington system.”

### **Benefits Lexington Health Care Has Experienced**

The Portal has become an important part of the daily operations of Lexington Health Care. Some of the benefits they have seen are:

- The ability to make revisions to the reporting and follow-up templates to keep up with the changes in healthcare
- Reporting stays at a very high level because the staff sees the benefit of real time information
- Providing information to state inspectors has become more efficient and the information provided demonstrates the commitment to quality and safety of Lexington Health Care
- Timely and complete information enables quick follow-up
- Workflow is greatly enhanced due to the ease of use and real time follow-up
- Ability to address family concerns immediately helps to reduce dissatisfaction and helps ensure enhanced quality of care

## Lexington Health Care's Experience with the Portal

- Easy to implement with minimal IT staff resources required; Clarity manages the application
- Easy to use and requires minimal staff training, even for those less comfortable with computers
- Very flexible software application that enables us to customize it to our setting
- Hands-on and web-based training helps to orient new staff to the effective use of the system
- The Clarity implementation process and Help Desk provide consistent and effective customer service and offer suggestions for enhancing the functionality we can obtain from the Portal

For more information on how your organization can benefit from the **Healthcare SafetyZone® Portal**, please visit our website at [www.claritygrp.com](http://www.claritygrp.com) or call us at 773-864-8280.



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