



A Success Story from Bellin Health System Continuous Learning with the Healthcare SafetyZone®

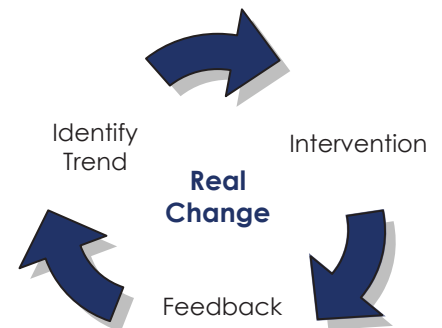
The Client: Bellin Health System in Green Bay, Wisconsin, is an integrated healthcare delivery system consisting of primary and specialty care clinics, hospital services, home health services, retail pharmacies and mental healthcare including a 167-bed acute care multi-specialty hospital, a critical access hospital and an 80-bed psychiatric facility.

The Need: Bellin has always had a commitment to quality with a strong infrastructure in place to support improvement efforts. However, it did not always have a systemic way to make sense of all the information that can and should contribute to improved quality and reduced safety events. Bellin recognized that the information it needed for improvements was buried in a pile of paperwork, which it couldn't possibly keep up with. Keeping this in mind, members of the Bellin staff set out to identify a solution that would help them learn rather than just log safety events.

Ahead of the Curve: In September of 2012, the Institute of Medicine published a report brief entitled, *Best Care at Lower Cost – The Path to Continuously Learning Health Care in America*. This report called for “a more nimble health care system that is consistently reliable and constantly, systematically, and seamlessly improves. In short, the country needs health care that learns by avoiding past mistakes and adopting newfound successes.” With Clarity Group's web-based system, the **Healthcare SafetyZone®**, Bellin found a way to achieve transparency and streamline information. Since it started using the SafetyZone system in June of 2011, the staff have continuously learned from its activities and seen many positive improvements across the organization.

“It was impossible to keep up with and make sense of a pile of paper. How could we identify the real themes and opportunities for improvement? We weren't learning and we needed a system that would help us learn.” - Colleen M. O'Brien RN, ASQ-CMQ/OE

The flexibility of the SafetyZone system allowed Bellin to easily integrate it into its existing quality infrastructure and expand its use beyond basic incident reporting and follow-up. Bellin has embraced the SafetyZone as a “learning system” and continues to discover new benefits from it. One such benefit is that it is easier for staff to respond quickly to an event and take the information full circle. Bellin believes that the responsibility for quality and safety belongs to the entire organization and not one leader within a department. Quality teams regularly review errors, interventions and outcomes so that the staff can see the value of regular reporting and experience positive rather than punitive outcomes.



Initially, Bellin set a goal for a 10% increase in adverse event reporting, but after only four months, the organization had achieved a 50% increase. Staff members have seen the impact of their reporting and are now suggesting new ways to use the SafetyZone as a learning system to lead to further improvements.

The SafetyZone at Work: Patient Feedback

Capturing patient compliments and complaints in the SafetyZone system facilitates efficient follow-up and analysis of issues, which helps the staff more effectively identify underlying problems and drive change. Adding the SafetyZone to its repertoire of tools used to assess customer satisfaction allowed Bellin to create a clearer picture of what was going on with information from multiple sources and make critical adjustments to its customer service classes.

- Over 25% increase in reporting of patient complaints or compliments
- Decreases reliance & resources on expensive customer satisfaction surveys
- Ability to quickly generate patient feedback reports with streamlined information for regulatory compliance

The SafetyZone at Work: Adverse Drug Event

With upwards of five unique Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) in an integrated delivery system, Adverse Drug Event (ADE) information was collected by multiple systems and not conveyed from one provider to the next. The SafetyZone system provided a way to streamline the communication process – facilitating the distribution of all information on inbound ADEs back out to one designated point – the pharmacy.

- Eliminates potential repeat ADEs with patients in the future – helping ensure patient safety
- Supports new workflow policy & procedure
- Facilitates better communication among providers & facilities

The SafetyZone at Work: Product Changes

When Bellin made the switch to a new Electronic Health Record (EHR), the organization wanted to track any safety or quality issues related to the system conversion. By using the SafetyZone system in this way, staff members identified recurring problems and leaders provided the implementation team with feedback on the process, which they could ultimately use for future installations. Bellin believes using the SafetyZone for product changes will help ensure it is identifying unanticipated issues early in the process.

- Facilitates knowledge management in a meaningful way
- Flexibility & customization allows users to employ the SafetyZone for their unique needs
- Provides concrete evidence of areas that need improvement or adjustments

"Bellin Health System is committed to continuous improvement and to being a learning organization. We are very pleased with our selection of the Healthcare SafetyZone[®] as a system-wide tool that supports these commitments, engages staff and accelerates our decisions on interventions that are needed to reduce the potential for patient harm."

Colleen M. O'Brien RN, ASQ-CMQ/OE