A Success Story from Kennedy Krieger Institute

The Client: The Kennedy Krieger Institute, located in Baltimore, Maryland, is an internationally recognized institution that provides inpatient and outpatient medical care, community services, and school-based programs for children and adolescents with learning disabilities, as well as disorders of the brain, spinal cord, and musculoskeletal system.

The Need: Prior to implementing the Healthcare SafetyZone®, Kennedy Krieger used a paper-based reporting system and a manual-entry database system to track occurrences. With eight separate campuses, the paper flow was cumbersome, inefficient, and difficult to maintain, creating the potential for large gaps between gathered information and actionable knowledge. Kennedy Krieger also sought to expand and enhance the tools necessary to analyze data and dive deep into events to spot potential issues and areas of improvement.

The Impact: Kennedy Krieger's priority is organizational safety (patient, student, visitor and employee) and it is the fundamental principle upon which all of its improvement initiatives are based. Using the Healthcare SafetyZone® to manage occurrences and accurately analyze data has allowed the organization to be proactive in its quest of performance improvement and drive change Institute-wide.

The Healthcare SafetyZone® has helped foster a culture of safety because now it is easier for staff members to identify and report actual or potential safety issues and concerns. The system serves as an avenue for staff engagement and participation by giving them the ability to act, communicate and follow-up on occurrences in a more efficient manner. Staff members see and understand the importance of reporting occurrences through the sharing of lessons learned and through the acknowledgment and recognition of those who report "good catches or near misses."

Kennedy Krieger's Incident Reporting System Requirements:

- User-friendly, web-based and accessible Institute-wide
- Real-time event reporting
- Features to expedite the event follow-up process and improve communications
- Flexible and customizable to meet the needs of *any* organization

Implementation of the SafetyZone system also eliminated duplicate data entry in three departments and resulted in significant cost savings for the organization. With the old system, the sheer volume of paper accumulated by year-end was too much to store on-site, requiring Kennedy Krieger to employ a vendor for records retention.

"There are many things we can do now that we couldn't do before thanks to Clarity's Healthcare SafetyZone®. The system's drill-down capability for investigating occurrences allows us to easily translate data into meaningful reports and use those reports for performance improvement purposes. It is also easier for department managers to communicate across campuses and share information quickly."

Theresa Paulsen, RN, Professional and Regulatory Affairs

The Healthcare SafetyZone® at Work: Communication and Follow-Up

Kennedy Krieger has seen significant improvements in communication and follow-up Institute-wide. Staff members have embraced the system because it takes less time to report and respond to an event, and it gives them more time to focus on their patients.

- Occurrences are entered into one system so there are no longer delays between when occurrences are recorded on paper to when they are added to a computer database.

- The appropriate team of hospital doctors and administrators all have access to the occurrence information the moment it is reported, making the follow-up process more efficient and action focused.

- Customized event alerts allow investigations to begin immediately and have led to improved response times from key personnel.

- Since data is easily shared and communicated between departments, the organization's nursing, medicine and behavior teams are able to review events together on a weekly basis.

The Healthcare SafetyZone® at Work: Data Analysis and Report Generation

With the old paper system, staff spent too much time coding each form and searching for the reports that were lost in translation. The Healthcare SafetyZone® streamlined the data analysis process and allows the staff to do more than create basic reports.

- Data analysts are able to produce more meaningful reports that track and trend, measure performance and project compliance.

- In-depth analyses are conducted to identify potential problems in daily routines and project areas of improvement.

- Staff are able to incorporate data into performance plans, and identify and analyze low events to prevent more serious events.

> *"When researching various event reporting systems, we found that many of the vendors offered systems that were designed only to accommodate specific types of healthcare organizations with little flexibility in customization. Clarity offers customization and service for a reasonable cost, and most importantly, their responsiveness to our needs and customer support is unbeatable."*
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> Theresa Paulsen, RN
> Professional and Regulatory Affairs

The Healthcare SafetyZone® at Work: Process Change

The data analyzed from the SafetyZone system is instrumental in improving safety and quality at Kennedy Krieger and changing processes. Specific examples include:

- Improved processes for the safe transport and handoff of tracheostomy and ventilator patients

- Improved and standardized interdisciplinary communication of patient falls

- Initiated processes that provide nursing support/contacts for injuries in non-clinical areas