A Success Story from Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare

The Client: Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare (TMH) in Tallahassee, Florida, is a 772-bed nonprofit 501(c)(3), multispecialty academic medical center committed to transforming care, advancing health, and improving lives with an ultimate vision of leading the community to be the healthiest in the nation. Serving a 17-county region in North Florida and South Georgia, TMH is comprised of an acute care hospital, a psychiatric hospital, multiple specialty care centers, three residency programs, 23 affiliated physician practices, and partnerships with Doctors' Memorial Hospital, UF Health and Weems Memorial Hospital.

The Need: Prior to choosing the Healthcare SafetyZone®, this large health system used paper-based methods to gather and report information. With such a system, the gap between gathered information and actionable knowledge was vast. Once TMH began to pursue an electronic solution for its reporting needs, its priorities became clear and very ambitious: namely to find a risk management product that would allow it to transform virtually any information gathering need it might have into a simple, efficient, electronic process that would engage the entire organization in reporting awareness and foster learning that would ultimately impact its entire culture of safety.

> "Clarity believes in quality and leadership in risk management. Their expertise goes to the core of the industry. We went with Clarity ultimately because they are a healthcare company and not strictly a software company."
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> Judy Davis, Director/Corporate Risk Manager, TMH

The Impact: Related to its primary goal of easier and more efficient reporting of safety events, the initial benefit was clear: reporting time dropped from an average of 20-25 minutes per paper form, to an average of 5-8 minutes per electronic form.

The benefits reached much further than simple reporting times, though; TMH began to look at other ways it could use the SafetyZone. Due to the flexibility of the system, TMH transformed many of its reporting, education, and safety processes into automated electronic processes that could be accessed system-wide.

TMH uses the Healthcare SafetyZone® for:

- Safety Events
- Adverse Events
- Employee Accidents
- Patient Complaints
- Claims Management
- Code Review
- Nursing Peer Review
- Trauma Review
- Internal and External Death Reporting Including Prisoner Reporting to the State Medical Examiner
- Life Safety Drills
- Security Issues
- Environmental Care Rounds

Reporting Transparency and Efficiency

The State of Florida has required healthcare providers to complete incident/safety event reports since the late 1980s. Prior to using the Healthcare SafetyZone, this was an arduous paper-based process. When developing its new electronic safety event reporting processes, it was easy for TMH to include the existing statutory requirements and expand its questions to incorporate the AHRQ common formats. Even while expanding its reporting templates, average reporting time still dropped from 20-25 minutes per paper form to only 5-8 minutes per new, expanded, electronic form.

In another example, CMS requires TMH to review all patients who have been restrained and report any and all patient deaths where restraints were involved. Now because TMH can document what has been done and show its review process with the SafetyZone system, TMH can easily meet the requirements of CMS, greatly streamlining review.

Mandatory State Reporting

Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) performs annual risk management reviews to ensure that all risk management programs are compliant with statutory regulations. Having the SafetyZone makes it easy for TMH to show how its communications architecture is structured for safety events, and the system's inboard analytics allow TMH to easily meet the state's three-calendar-day requirement for risk management review of all safety events.

In another example, TMH must report deaths and other metrics related to state prisoners who come through the organization. By creating a few simple questions on its report forms, TMH is able to track all the metrics required by the state and regularly report those data with very little extra effort.

> *"We didn't realize the full capacity of the system when we started. At first we were collecting just basic safety-related events, but after attending Clarity's training sessions and hearing from other users of the SafetyZone, we realized we can use it for anything we need to report. In fact, we've just gotten approval to include our environmental care rounds on the system. This system can do whatever you need it to do. It is a very useful tool."*
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> Judy Davis, Director/Corporate Risk Manager, TMH

Knowledge to Action

TMH has a Falls Committee that meets once a month to review all Falls-related events. By using the SafetyZone and its analytical tools, the committee quickly noticed a spike in Falls linked to change-of-shift time. In realizing this circumstantial relationship, TMH has been able to add extra checks at the times when patients are most vulnerable such as staff shift changes.

Real-time Transformation

The following is an example of an actual event that, through the SafetyZone, became an opportunity for real and immediate safety enhancement: An elderly person was admitted to TMH with several co-morbidities and placed on telemetry. During rounds, it was discovered the patient's telemetry was off and immediate intervention was provided to the patient. A safety event was filed as there was a communication failure between the nurse and the monitor tech. The incident happened at 10pm, and by 8am the next day, through the immediacy of the workflow and review structure, TMH was able to implement a double-check system for the telemetry monitor techs and modify a function of unit secretaries as another system check.