CoxHealth

A five-hospital system in Southwest Missouri, CoxHealth used ISO 9001 to tackle its issue with patients being readmitted to its facilities within 30 days of discharge. It’s an issue that has led to the Medicare program imposing financial penalties on hospitals that do not improve.

CoxHealth found a surprise – its inpatient readmission issues really were connected with individuals who needed better outpatient care. Particular attention was given to patients who had five or more hospital admissions through the emergency room, a cohort that tends to have a significantly higher readmission rate than average. It was found that many of these patients were seeking care through the ER due to dental pain, mental health, and social issues. It was determined these patients were not receiving the right outpatient care to meet their ongoing healthcare needs.

CoxHealth began arranging for better care in the surrounding communities, including collaborations with federally qualified health clinics in order to provide more comprehensive primary care. It also embedded social workers in its emergency departments to better evaluate the needs of patients who showed up seeking care, ensuring they were sent to the right provider. CoxHealth also established a Community Health Advanced Practice Paramedic Program (CHAPP) to conduct frequent home visits by specially trained paramedics to address the medical, behavioral, and social needs of such patients. As a result, there was a 16 percent decrease in emergency room visits from these specific patients. Among those who received CHAPP services specifically, there was a 97 percent drop in ED visits while they were enrolled in the 12-week program.

“The DNV GL accreditation process and ISO 9001 aligns with our strategy to integrate value based payments and population health. Our partnership and implementation of an ISO 9001 Quality Management System process approach has created synergy and progression toward our goals,” said Arlo Stallion, CoxHealth’s System Director of Regulatory Affairs and Medical Staff Services.

Charleston Area Medical Center

The flagship facility for an 838-bed hospital system in West Virginia, Charleston Area Medical Center has had to confront one of the state’s biggest healthcare problems: The high prevalence of strokes. A resident of the state is nearly 2.5 times as likely to suffer a stroke than a resident of Colorado, and twice as likely as a Minnesotan.
Using ISO 9001 as a guide, Charleston was able to address the state’s stroke issue by creating more timely interventions for patients suspected of suffering a stroke, including hiring an additional radiologist to speed imaging interpretations. Between April 2016 and April of last year, the number of ischemic stroke patients who received clot-busting drugs at Charleston Area Medical Center more than quadrupled compared to the same 2015-16 time period.

Charleston Area Medical Center received the highest level of the Stroke Quality Achievement Award from the American Stroke Association for the years 2014-16. In 2015, the hospital was the recipient of a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

Academic Research

Researchers at James Madison University in Virginia, Michigan State University and Miami University in Ohio have concluded that DNV GL’s accreditation process is embraced by hospital nurses and physicians, helps hospitals better meet their performance objectives, and improve the hospital’s relationship with their patients. The formal findings will be published later this year.

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