



Performance Reviews Set the Course to Improve Care, Efficiency, Cost, and Standardization

Getting credible, risk-adjusted clinical feedback data to its active physicians was a challenge for United Regional Health Care System.

The health system was conducting time-consuming chart reviews that severely limited its sample size. Providers paid attention to the results, but didn't dive into the data because it lacked credibility and was not risk-adjusted. Many clinicians felt that their patients were "sicker" than those in the sample, so they didn't give the results much consideration.

"Even when The Joint Commission introduced specific standards to provide an ongoing professional practice evaluation (OPPE), we struggled with how to accomplish this in a meaningful and practical way," said Darlene Adams, director of quality management at United Regional Health Care System.

HIGHLIGHTS

Location:
Wichita Falls, TX

Scope and Services:
United Regional provides the Wichita Falls area with the only comprehensive cardiac care facility and Level III trauma center. The health system also offers bariatric services, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedics, surgical services, and women's services, to name a few.

Solutions:
CareDiscovery®
CareDiscovery® Quality Measures

Course of Action

To provide its physicians with credible performance data, United Regional began using Truven Health CareDiscovery®. This enabled the health system to run provider-specific, risk-adjusted performance reports. The easy-to-read and easy-to-explain single-page format helped the quality department gain both credibility and influence with the providers. Because the results were risk-adjusted, providers knew where they stood in comparison to the national average.

The data wasn't seen as a judgment of good or bad care, it simply placed the physicians's care on a continuum so they could see what was similar and different from other providers. "CareDiscovery gave us the ability to take the 'gotcha' factor out of review and replace it with an approach more centered on improving patient care," said Adams.

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Results

Being able to provide easy-to-read, credible, risk-adjusted feedback reports to providers has taken United Regional another step toward true teamwork between the hospital and the physician. CareDiscovery also helped the health system focus on areas to improve care, efficiency, cost, and standardization.

United Regional set the goal of providing a feedback report to at least 50 percent of its active providers by the end of 2010. The organization actually exceeded this goal with 75 percent of its physicians receiving the feedback report and being given an OPPE for review. The remaining 25 percent of the physicians, although active, did not have enough data (at least 30 admissions per year) for a report and/or did not provide inpatient care as a consultant or surgeon (Anesthesia, Pathology, and Radiology and Emergency Department).

One hundred percent of the health system’s department chairs were able to review their entire department staff. And the organization’s credentials committee was able to incorporate the OPPE reports into each of its monthly meetings and recommend focused professional practice evaluations (FPPE) for providers.

“With The Joint Commission issuing its standards for OPPE and FPPE, we found CareDiscovery to be the best product for compliance,” said Adams. “We looked at other products, but none provided risk-adjusted data and their report formats were not as easy-to-read or as relevant as the Physician Insights Report. It was the only product able to give us the ability to truly look at all providers consistently and without bias.”

In 2011, United Regional Health Care System was acknowledged for its accomplishments in the pursuit of excellence in Clinical Performance with a Truven Health Healthcare Advantage Award in Performance Efficiency. The Healthcare Advantage Award was established in 2005 to honor and recognize customers who have used solutions and tools from Truven Health AnalyticsSM to achieve outstanding success at their organizations.

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