PENINSULA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER WON'T ERR ON PATIENT SAFETY

Profile

In 1990, Peninsula Regional Medical Center was already on a course to clinical excellence that has now put the Medical Center on the map far beyond its Salisbury, Md., address. What's fueling its success? An early and unwavering vision of clinical excellence that accurately predicted the necessary steps — a series of clinical information technology systems that result in better access to information, higher-quality documentation, more coordinated care, and above all, error-free care.

Challenges

Alan Newberry, the president and chief executive officer of the more than 100-year-old Medical Center, has set the bar high in terms of challenges. The organization's No. 1 goal is to be the safest hospital not only in Maryland but in the country. He says embracing the latest information technology (IT) fulfills that mission.

Answers

To Newberry – and the rest of the 2,800 physicians, nurses, clinicians, administrators and staff – it's all about safety. "Technology in a hospital is like putting seatbelts in a car," he says. "Once it's proven – and it has been proven that robotics, computerized physician order entry and bar-code scanning all reduce errors and save lives – then it's obvious that we needed to make that investment."

Newberry was equally confident that McKesson was the partner to provide the technology. "Looking at the array of McKesson solutions, we're convinced that there's not a better fit for our organization nor a better IT partner," he says.

Peninsula Regional Medical Center took the first step by implementing Horizon Clinical Documentation™ (now called Horizon Expert Documentation™), to automate the charting process for nursing and ancillary staffs, and Horizon Admin-Rx™, to uphold the five rights bar-code scanning of medication & IV administrations. Peninsula Regional then deployed McKesson's ROBOT-Rx™, which uses robotics to automatically dispense bar-coded medications in the Medical Center pharmacy. It then added Horizon Meds Manager™ to streamline pharmacy workflow, screen for drug interactions, review lab tests and complete orders more efficiently. And to securely store and dispense narcotics and other medications on nursing units, Peninsula Regional implemented McKesson's automated medication cabinets, AcuDose-Rx™. All the technologies are integrated, providing complete and fast access to vital patient information that improves the quality of care.

The organization is ready to close the loop on medication errors with the deployment of Horizon Expert Orders™ beginning in the first quarter of 2005 and continuing throughout the year. The system will provide physicians with clinical feedback in real-time about medication orders. To ensure adoption of CPOE, Peninsula Regional first rolled out McKesson's Horizon^WP® Physician Portal to its 300-plus physicians. The portal gets physicians accustomed to using information technology daily and also supports their need for quick access to up-to-date patient data. Most recently, the medical center rolled out Horizon Emergency Care™ for nursing and physician documentation in the emergency/trauma center.

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Alan Newberry,

President and CEO,

Peninsula Regional Medical Center

Results

With the implementation of Horizon Emergency Care, Peninsula Regional has effectively moved the emergency/trauma center into the continuum of care with the acute-care hospital, says Karen Poisker, vice president of Patient Care Services. "It allows us to transition the data collected in the ED into Horizon Clinical Documentation, improving care team communication and patient safety," she explains. "Nurses save time on assessments on the patient floors because they don't have to recollect data, and physicians and pharmacists have accurate histories when placing and filling medication orders."

Improved documentation has also fueled a reduction in medication errors. In the past six months, nearly half a million medications were administered without a single administration error using McKesson's medication management solution. That kind of peace of mind goes a long way from nurses and physicians to pharmacists and administrators to patients, according to Poisker.

Patient and care team satisfaction, of course, is music to Newberry's ears. "The journey to clinical excellence means making sure that we have created the safest environment possible," he says. "Additionally, it means giving the physicians and nurses better access to information for more coordinated care and giving clinicians throughout the system the ability to send and receive information faster even from remote locations. Those are hard things to measure or put a price tag on, but we know that there's true value there." �(«)

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