

AT A GLANCE

ORGANIZATION

- Health Central, Ocoee, Fl.*
- Acute, subacute and ambulatory care
 - 171 beds

SOLUTION SPOTLIGHT

- STAR Patient Location Tracker
- STAR 2000

CRITICAL ISSUES

- Manual, inefficient admitting processes
- Inefficient discharge services
- Low NRC+Picker customer satisfaction scores for cleanliness of rooms

RESULTS

- Reduced bed request and assignment time by 45 minutes, saving \$120,000 per year
- Improved bed service after discharge time by 85 minutes, saving \$280,000 per year
- Increased customer satisfaction scores by 15.6 percent

HEALTH CENTRAL OPTIMIZES BED MANAGEMENT AND PATIENT FLOW

Profile

Opened in 1993, Health Central exudes a progressive image inside and out. From its modern architecture to the latest in technology, the 171-bed acute-care hospital strives to provide personalized, comprehensive healthcare services. Health Central traces its roots to 1952, when the West Orange Healthcare District was created by a Florida legislature charter. Today, Health Central provides acute, subacute and ambulatory care in a growing area in and around Ocoee, Fla., which includes approximately 286,000 residents.

Challenge

Already coping with an annual growth rate of 7 percent in its service area, Health Central experienced a tremendous increase in its number of emergency cases when a nearby hospital closed. The hospital became filled to capacity. Emergency room patients consumed the overflow area in admitting, and some patients even waited overnight for a bed. At times, bed management staff would walk the floors looking for rooms that appeared clean and ready for a new patient. Occasionally, the rooms were not clean, resulting in patient complaints and low scores for “cleanliness of rooms” on NRC+PickerSM customer satisfaction surveys.

Health Central administrators responded to the hospital’s capacity challenges by building a new emergency center and expanding from 141 beds to 171 beds. However, physical expansion alone was not enough to keep pace with the rapid growth in admissions. Health Central needed a way to automate and streamline its bed management processes in order to meet the growing demand for services and prevent overflow in its waiting rooms.

Answers

Because integration with the hospital’s existing STAR 2000TM information system was of key importance, Health Central administrators turned to McKesson for a bed management solution. STAR Patient Location Tracker fit the bill. The tracking system enables healthcare organizations to predict and even accelerate bed availability, track bed utilization across the enterprise, and improve overall operational efficiency.

“STAR Patient Location Tracker has helped us redesign our entire admitting process,” says Marie Wujastyk, R.N.

Before Health Central installed the system, Cynthia Johnson, RN, Nursing Supervisor and Bed Management Coordinator, explains that physicians had to call the admitting staff who would then call the nursing supervisor to determine bed availability. The supervisor often had to call the physician back for more information.

“Because McKesson’s solution allows us to reserve beds in advance, we were able to change our process so that doctors can call the nursing supervisor directly,” Johnson says. “Now, patients have a bed waiting for them when they arrive, and the doctors have a single point of contact.”

STAR Patient Location Tracker also streamlined manual processes in the environmental services area. “When a patient is discharged, the system immediately changes the bed status and alerts the housekeeping supervisor to assign a resource to clean the room,” adds Wujastyk. The system also tallies the time from when housekeeping is notified until the time the bed is ready,

CASE STUDY

HEALTH CENTRAL • STAR PATIENT LOCATION TRACKER

*“STAR Patient Location Tracker
has made meeting our
responsibilities less stressful
and has improved
our department’s workflow.”*

Leonard Barone
Director, Environmental Services

allowing Health Central to establish performance measures and levels of standards.

Results

By using STAR Patient Location Tracker to automate its processes, Health Central reduced the time spent on addressing bed requests and bed assignments by approximately 45 minutes per day per shift, which equates to \$129,000 in savings per year. In addition, Health Central improved its bed service time after discharge by 85 minutes — a savings of \$280,000 per year.

STAR Patient Location Tracker improved efficiency in the environmental services department as well. Rooms are now placed on “housekeeping hold” until they are properly cleaned, and the staff can now more effectively prioritize housekeeping activities.

“STAR Patient Location Tracker has made meeting our responsibilities less stressful and has improved our department’s workflow,” says Leonard Barone, director, Environmental Services.

The improvements in bed management haven’t gone unnoticed. Patient satisfaction scores for “cleanliness of rooms” increased by 15.6 percent in just one year. Furthermore, Health Central administrators awarded the environmental services department the “Star Award for People Caring for People,” recognizing their great achievement in improving patient satisfaction. ■

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