

Hometown Health Hotline Standardizes Care, Improves Disease Prevention with Call Center Software

“We’re improving care coordination and care quality within the health system while leading the way with healthcare prevention in our community.”

Jack Owens, RN
Manager
Hometown Health Hotline

Hometown Health Hotline, a division of Renown Health’s four-hospital integrated health network (IHN), provides the only call center for telehealth nursing in Reno, Nev. In 2002, the hotline implemented RelayHealth’s CareEnhance® Call Center software to manage three primary programs—nurse triage, disease management and its Baby Track immunization reminder campaign. Since the solution’s go-live, communication between the hospital and hotline has been streamlined and more reliable, and patient care has become safer with standardized protocols and guidelines. As a result, immunization rates have increased by 30%, exceeding national averages for the fifth consecutive year. Additionally, Hometown Health is meeting the Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measures and approaching The Healthy People 2010 national health objective.

Challenge

Renown Health and its health plan, Hometown Health, constantly seek innovative ways to lead the community in managing healthcare costs and promoting health. The Baby Track infant immunization program, which the IHN created to prevent communicable diseases in northern Nevada, is one example. But without a flexible software system for

At a Glance

Organization

Hometown Health Hotline, a division of Renown Health, Reno, Nev.

- Call center for array of community services

Solution Spotlight

- CareEnhance® Call Center
- Health Information Advisor

Critical Issues

- Manage healthcare costs
- Promote disease prevention programs
- Improve coordination of care
- Need for direct physician referrals and transfers

Results

- Exceeded HEDIS measures
- Increased infant immunization rate by 30%
- Streamlined communication
- Improved connectivity ensured reliability of information

its call center, Hometown Health could not seamlessly link its various preventive programs, and care coordination between the hospital and health hotline was compromised.

Answer

By rolling out RelayHealth’s CareEnhance Call Center system in 2002, Hometown Health found the answer to effectively managing

the nurse triage, disease management and Baby Track programs. Additionally, the hotline offers RelayHealth's Health Information Advisor Voice-response system, which has more than 1,000 topics (Influenza or Infertility, for example) for consumers to select and request more information via the telephone.

The Baby Track program uses the CareEnhance Call Center system to set up and institute a call to new parents within 24 hours from hospital discharge and at two months, four months, six months and 18 months. Additionally, a reminder postcard is sent if the original call is not completed or answered. Rather than requiring hospital staff to complete cards with new mother information, the hotline prints all discharged mothers and babies daily. New parents are contacted within 24 hours of discharge, and calls are attempted to 100% of the discharges.

For its disease management program, the call center monitors new patients with congestive heart failure, asthma and diabetes every 30 days for six months and then yearly through outbound calls, surveys and newsletters.

For triage, nurses follow the CareEnhance Call Center protocols. When a caller phones the hotline or the call is transferred from the ER or hospital, the nurse accesses the RelayHealth program and follows triage guidelines developed by RelayHealth and approved by the IHN's medical advisory board.

"By following the system's standardized guidelines, the nurse knows what the patient outcome should be," explains Jim Hengels, RN, lead nurse consultant at Hometown Health Hotline. "RelayHealth's call center software takes the guesswork out of

triage by providing a systematic format for directing a patient to proper care, including the option of upgrading to the next level of care, such as sending the patient to the ER."

The flexibility of RelayHealth's call center software also provides the ability to link to other programs. "When parents have questions about symptoms or treatment options, the Baby Track interviewer can seamlessly access RelayHealth's health information topic and triage guidelines or transfer to a disease management nurse using the CareEnhance Call Center system," Hengels adds.

Results

Fourteen staff nurses and two clerks handle the call center's high volume, including more than 1,600 patients in the disease management program and an average of 9,000 nurse triage calls per month. As part of its 2006 Baby Track program, the call center made 9,246 calls and sent 1,104 postcards to unavailable families. The percentage of babies receiving all immunizations between birth and 18 months increased from 60% to 90%, far surpassing national averages for five consecutive years, meeting HEDIS measures and rapidly approaching The Healthy People 2010 national objective for vaccine coverage among children 19–35 months.

"With RelayHealth's software, we're turning our call center into a center for excellence," submits Jack Owens, RN, manager of Hometown Health Hotline. "Our abandonment rates and our answer rates both consistently exceed the national average. We're improving care coordination and care quality within the health system while leading the way with healthcare prevention in our community."

About RelayHealth

- RelayHealth is part of McKesson Corporation, America's oldest and largest healthcare services company
- The industry leader in contact center solutions since 1986
- The most widely tested, clinically validated triage guidelines in the industry
- Innovator in the integration of a consumer health Web portal with healthcare contact center software
- Fortune 18 company dedicated to continuous research and development
- Leader in providing health education content to healthcare contact centers
- Considered best in class products and services

For more information about the CareEnhance Call Center, contact your client executive or call RelayHealth at 800.981.8601.



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