PointClickCare®

Case Study

Rural Hospital Reduces Avoidable ED Utilization by 75%

This 25-bed critical-access rural hospital serving the Pacific Northwest houses a Level IV Trauma Center, four operating rooms, emergency services, and an intensive care unit.

The Challenge

Utilization rates by superusers of hospital emergency services— which included many patients suspected to have an opioid use disorder — had reached a tipping point for this rural hospital. An analysis by their emergency department (ED) manager suggested that up to 50% of the department's average daily patient load was more appropriate for a lower-acuity setting. To reduce staff strain and clear the system for more acute needs, the ED needed to efficiently identify and support patients better suited for primary care and those at risk for opioid addiction.

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The Solution

A foundation of real-time risk analytics and intelligent alerts proved a critical enabler of process improvement that would change the ED utilization dynamic. As a result of its own information technology constraints, the hospital identified a low-cost, easy-entry system to better coordinate patient care through PointClickCare — a leading care collaboration network — which is the technical backbone of Washington State's "ER is for Emergencies" program.

The organization started using PointClickCare's Emergency Department (ED) Optimization solution, a lightweight, risk-adjusted event notification and care collaboration platform that helps staff identify and manage complex patients with a history of high utilization, known social determinants of health (SDOH), and other risk factors. As patients present to the ED, the system automatically generates a real-time report for at-risk patients, detailing frequency of their ED visits, medication histories, and care guidelines— sourced by a broader, collaborative care team — as well as other details including security and safety risks.

The ED manager noted that the system allows the hospital to not only identify the root causes of high ED utilization, but also increases collaboration with other hospitals, clinics, and primary care providers across the communities served.

Outcomes

The ED team took a practical approach to addressing high utilization by first targeting patients who had visited the ED more than 10 times in 12 months, and then those with more than five visits in 12 months.

The hospital's measurable outcomes include:

The hospital was able to reduce its ED Left Without Being Seen (LWBS) rate from 6% to 2%.

Within one year, the hospital reduced narcotic prescriptions coming out of the ED by 60% and realized a hospital cost savings of $200,000.

After the 18 months of using ED Optimization, the hospital reduced unnecessary ED visits by 75% for identified frequent users.

> Our team now has the insights needed to identify and educate some of the most vulnerable patient populations on their best care options, ultimately improving the quality of patient care and lowering costs.

Vice President of Patient Care

About PointClickCare

PointClickCare is a leading healthcare technology platform enabling meaningful collaboration and access to real-time insights at every stage of the patient healthcare journey. More than 27,000 long-term and post-acute care providers, over 3,100 hospitals and health systems, 2,200 ambulatory clinics, every major U.S. health plan across the U.S, and over 70 state and Government agencies use PointClickCare, enabling care collaboration and value-based care delivery for millions across North America.

North America's Most Comprehensive Care Collaboration Network

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