

Case Study: Samaritan Health Services & Care Communications, Inc.

Remote Master Patient Index Design & Cleanup

About Samaritan Health Services:

“Building Healthier Communities Together” is the commitment of Samaritan Health Services (SHS), a network of Oregon hospitals, physicians and senior care facilities that serves the healthcare needs of people in the mid-Willamette Valley and the Central Oregon Coast. To learn more about Samaritan Health Services, visit samhealth.org.

Background:

SHS sought to enhance the quality and safety of patient care by standardizing software, ensuring that only one medical record exists for each patient at each of three hospitals, and making sure that information about the existence of additional medical records at other SHS hospitals is readily available and accurate.

Challenge:

Several challenges confronted SHS:

1. Turnaround: the entire MPI cleanup needed to be completed within 90 days to avoid a delay in software deployment
2. Staffing challenges: hospital health information management (HIM) staff were juggling multiple duties; they could not dedicate the time required to effectively complete this project on time
3. Budget: an MPI cleanup was not budgeted; so costs needed to be closely controlled
4. A lack of centralized project management: each of the three facilities had a medical record department head, but there was no central point person to manage the overall MPI cleanup

Solution:

SHS contracted with Care Communications, Inc., who addressed each of the challenges faced by SHS:

1. Care Communications visited the site, developed procedures, estimated the number of corrections and the size of the team required to correct the MPI duplicates within the allotted 90 days
2. Care Communications assigned a dedicated staff of twelve to perform the electronic portion of the MPI cleanup while SHS performed the manual record merges
3. Care Communications performed the electronic portion of the MPI cleanup from their offices in Chicago while SHS performed the manual merge of paper records at each respective hospital
4. Care Communications assigned a project manager to oversee the project

Results:

Upon completion of the remote MPI cleanup, SHS had achieved the following results:

1. Care Communications met the project deadline, completing the cleanup with days to spare
2. The dedicated Care Communications team provided the additional bandwidth needed to complete the cleanup, improving patient care delivery and safety
3. The MPI cleanup performed from Chicago, coupled with the work of SHS staff who merged paper records at each hospital minimized travel expenses and project costs
4. One centralized, accountable project manager ensured improvements in MPI accuracy

Client Commentary:

Care Communications clearly explained our options. Their remote cleanup technology and constant communication as to their progress put our IS department at ease. When project concerns were brought to the attention of Care Communications, they addressed them professionally and immediately. Best of all, this critical project was completed on time, enabling our other departments to continue moving their initiatives forward.

– Yvonne Stiller, Director of HIM at Samaritan Health Services