



## Case Study: Lodi Memorial Hospital, Lodi California

### The Challenge

Lodi Memorial Hospital (LMH) was looking for a way to improve the quality of care throughout the entire patient care continuum. The hospital's leadership team believed their best chance for success was to identify a single provider to manage both the emergency medicine and hospital medicine programs. Because of TeamHealth's successful track record developing and managing LMH's hospital medicine program, administration asked TeamHealth to take over management services for the emergency medicine program. LMH has 5,500 annual admissions and a 23,000 annual emergency department patient volume.

### Our Solutions

By moving both programs under the same management group, each physician team was held accountable for the same quality and clinical standards, and they soon realized they had a vested interest in working together to coordinate patient care. Under the leadership of two strong medical directors, open dialogue was fostered between the emergency physicians and hospitalists, which was prompted by each group asking and answering the question, "What can we do for you?" For example, the emergency physicians requested that the hospitalists respond to admission calls within 30 minutes, and the emergency physicians were empowered to initiate transition orders if the 30-minute hospitalist response time wasn't possible. The two groups worked collaboratively to identify appropriate response times for both programs, implement a rapid admit protocol agreement for eligible diagnoses, outline the criteria that constitute a complete workup, and establish a means to communicate and agree upon appropriate tests to be ordered in the ED prior to admission. Because of the synergies established between the two groups, the hospital is optimistic about the transition to its newly constructed 90 inpatient bed wing.

### The Results

The synergies derived by partnering with TeamHealth for both services resulted in:

- Improved communication channels to address issues and a stronger rapport between the physicians in both camps
- Collaborative development and implementation of care enhancement tools, such as rapid admit protocols that identified clinical scenarios that lent themselves to expedited patient throughput
- Alignment of emergency medicine and hospital medicine goals for core measures, throughput indicators and patient satisfaction

Outcomes realized thus far include enhanced productivity in the emergency department, with the number of patients seen increasing from 1.63 to 2.19 per physician hour. Additionally, within the first 9 months of the program, medical staff and hospital employee complaints of the hospital medicine program decreased from 8 per month to 0.

Open communication and shared accountability between the two physician groups provided a forum for the physicians to address the needs of patients in both programs. These synergies improved operational performance and the patient experience for Lodi Memorial Hospital.

*“By partnering with TeamHealth for both our emergency medicine and hospital medicine programs, the communication and synergy between the two groups has been greatly enhanced. Collaboration and aligned incentives have led to new initiatives that allow us to realize significant improvements in patient care.”*

—Chief Executive Officer