

CASE STUDY: Leadership



Hospital Information

Grays Harbor Community Hospital
Aberdeen, Washington
Annual ED Volume: 37,000+

TeamHealth Services

Emergency Medicine

Results

82% decrease in time to bed after
decision to admit
(from 193 minutes to 33 minutes)

71% decrease in percentage of patients
who left without being seen
(from 7% to 2%)

\$740,000
increased revenue

*Based on the decrease in percentage of
patients who left without treatment multiplied by
industry average revenue per ED patient*

Challenge

With 37,000 annual patient visits in its emergency department (ED), Grays Harbor Community Hospital was seeking an outstanding ED medical director with the leadership skills to drive improvements in patient satisfaction and throughput.

Solution

The hospital selected TeamHealth because of its reputation for providing locally based emergency physician teams with the right leadership, resources and infrastructure to align the practice's performance with the hospital's strategic goals.

Our first step was to recruit a seasoned medical director and then complement his already strong skills with additional leadership training through TeamHealth's Leadership Academy. The entire physician and nursing staff then participated in teamwork and communications training. The staff was divided into performance improvement teams, each assigned to a different ED process that had been identified as needing improvement. These groups recommended and implemented a number of solutions, including:

- A patient tracking board and regular staff "huddles" to maintain situational awareness and proactively address patient safety and comfort concerns
- A streamlined admissions process
- Scripting tools to guide the staff in communication with patients
- A rapid assessment triage process to improve overall wait times and reduce the percentage of patients who left without being seen
- A new protocol for managing volume surges
- An upgrade to the patient documentation system

Results

The results of these combined initiatives were swift and impressive in the areas of time to bed after decision to admit and the percentage of patients who left without treatment. Additionally, an unintended but welcomed benefit was that the physicians and staff were re-energized by a new sense of teamwork within the ED, resulting in more stability within the department itself as well as throughout the entire medical staff.