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Natalie Phoenix, Director of Emergency Services, Blanchard Valley



About Blanchard Valley

Blanchard Valley Health System is a non-profit, integrated regional health system based in Findlay, a unique micropolitan community in Northwest Ohio. Governed by a community board of trustees representing large and small business, education, law, medicine and finance, BVHS oversees all operations. BVHS is one of the largest employers in the area with more than 2,500 associates and serves an eight-county area. The Blanchard Valley Health System mission is to provide “Caring for a lifetime.”



About Rauland

Rauland-Borg is a respected global leader in the design and delivery of advanced communications, workflow and life-safety solutions for hospitals worldwide, with installations in more than 4,000 hospitals in 40 countries.



About Responder®

Responder® communication and nurse call systems help staff deliver the best possible patient care, with fast, direct patient-to-staff and staff-to-staff communication, flexible integrations, intelligent call routing and real-time reporting.



About Torrence Sound

Torrence is a provider of critical communication solutions for hospitals including sound, video and security. Torrence exclusively designs, installs, and supports the Rauland Responder brand of nurse call. With more than 85 years of experience Torrence understands the unique needs and challenges of healthcare facilities and has the expertise to meet them.



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Using Data to Drive Initiatives

Tracking metrics to help improve staff efficiencies, patient care

Faced with an aging ‘nurse call’ system that lacked the ability to gather and track data to drive initiatives, Blanchard Valley Hospital in northwestern Ohio selected Responder 5 as the best solution to help it gain visibility on staff performance, enhance the patient experience and improve operations.

A rural, 150-bed acute care hospital in Ohio, Blanchard Valley wanted better visibility on care delivery to further enhance the patient experience, and to improve connectivity with support departments to drive better response and communication.

“Our old ‘call bell’ system was totally staff-focused,” said Natalie Phoenix, former Director of Inpatient Nursing and now Director of Emergency Services at Blanchard Valley, “and because it was not patient focused, we couldn’t effectively drive our goals of improved response times, regular rounding and better patient satisfaction. We simply had no data that we could analyze relative to our patient care and how it was being delivered.”

“With the old system, we weren’t reducing patient fear, we were creating fear,” Natalie adds, as the outdated nurse call system offered no direct staff to patient communication or even adequate visual indicators.

She further explained that the older system provided no accountable way to track implementation and results for hourly rounding -- an important hospital initiative.

In addition, Natalie commented that “Our fall rates were just not improving. We were posting ‘falling stars’ at patient rooms to indicate those at risks of falls. We needed a more effective way to identify those patients – and to capture the related data that could help reduce risks and drive improved patient satisfaction.”



TECHNOLOGY CRITERIA

In selecting a better solution to replace the older nurse call system, the hospital’s technology review focused on the patient and the patient needs, with considerations given to communication integrations, potential EMR integrations, staff ease of use, functionality, and robust data collection.

“Responder was the hands-down choice,” Phoenix said, with an initial technology roll-out in two 30-bed med/surg units and integrations with EVS and Dietary. Half of the units remain on the older system for now, she said, with plans to install Responder across the hospital.

“Responder was the hands-down choice.”

Natalie Phoenix, Director of Emergency Services, Blanchard Valley

Responder 5 Solutions include:

- Staff Terminals
- Corridor Lights
- PC Console
- Patient Stations
- Pillow Speakers
- Staff/Patient Communication
- ADT Interface
- RTLS Integration

“Responder has been amazing in helping us reduce noise, and in improving patient safety with automated responses. I can’t imagine not having it.”

Chris Hoover, Clinical Manager ICU, Blanchard Valley

FLEXIBLE SYSTEM DESIGN

Hospital staff worked closely with Rauland’s local distributor, Torrence Sound, to customize the Responder solution with unique workflows and multiple Staff Terminal screens, creating:

- ‘Rounding’ button that integrates with corridor lights and staff RTLS badges to send reminders at timed intervals and create automated time stamps based on staff presence
- Buttons to support unique workflows with Environmental Services (EVS), Maintenance, Transport, Dietary and Security
- Special ‘family’ screens on the Staff Terminal for use by the patient’s family as a quick way to communicate needs without searching for the right staff
- Unique corridor light patterns so staff could see needs visually and quickly respond to required processes, alerts and patient needs
- A design that will support anticipated workflows from future integration with the EMR system using the Responder All Touch interface.

“As a team, we worked with Torrence Sound to whiteboard our workflows and design a system

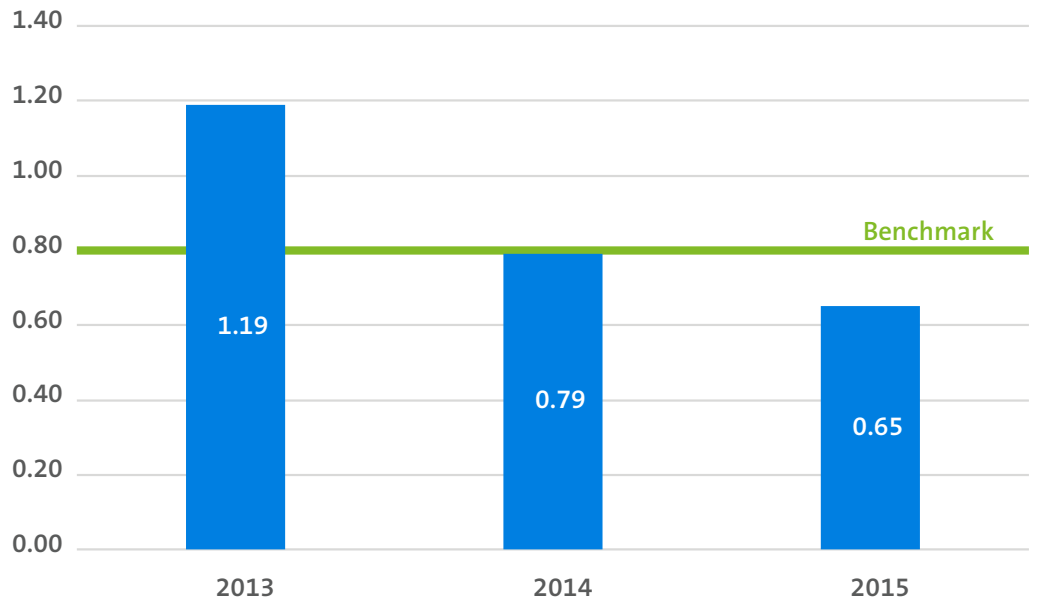
that would meet our needs and initiatives. We worked through what data we wanted to capture, what device connectivity we needed and the system functionality we wanted for improving not only patient satisfaction, but staff satisfaction,” Phoenix said.

STAFF SATISFACTION AND USE

As soon as the solution was implemented in med/surg, the Responder solution gained immediate staff acceptance and use, Phoenix reported. The system’s high integration of Responder Staff Terminals and corridor lights delivered a constant visual indication of needs and status, she said, aiding the hospitals desire to reduce noise and alarm fatigue and create a better healing environment. And, she added, staff now only get calls that relate directly to them and their patients.

“The older system sent all calls to the nursing station for dispatch, delaying our response times. There was no nurse call integration to our Vocera badges for direct communication, either.” Phoenix said. “With Responder 5, nursing is getting their calls immediately, directly, and they know right away where the call is coming from.”

**Falls with Injury Rate
NDNQI/NFQ Guidelines**



* Responder 5 Installed in 2014

After the successful rollout of Responder 5 in the med/surgical units, Blanchard Valley chose their 16- bed ICU unit as the next area to upgrade. Chris Hoover, Clinical Manager ICU, noted that there were initially some misgivings about all of the workflow buttons and using the new technology in the ICU for automated workflows. But, after only one week of use, she and her staff were fully on board and embracing the improvements achieved with the technology.

“Responder has been amazing in helping us reduce noise, and in improving patient safety with automated responses,” she said. “Now, I can’t imagine not having it.”

ANCILLARY WORKFLOWS

The technology is also helping achieve much more efficient workflows between med/surg and ancillary areas, Phoenix pointed out. Room turns, for example, are being achieved much faster than under the older system, with direct calls from the workflow terminals to EVS when rooms need to be cleaned following a patient discharge.

According to Ryan Shoemaker, Director of Facility and Support Services, before implementing Responder 5, staff dialed “7676” to speak with a dispatcher in Service Response for room cleaning requests and repairs. With Responder 5, when a room needs to be cleaned, staff can place a call immediately with a quick button press. “Rather than go to a room phone or to hunt for another phone to make the notification, clinicians can simply touch the button on the Staff Terminal and communicate directly with Service Response about a specific need. The room location is automatically logged, along with the specific type of cleaning that is needed,” Ryan said.

ROBUST REPORTING

The high staff acceptance of the new technology is shared across all units using the technology – with one unit now posting performance data on hourly rounding within the unit every day and for every shift. As a result, staff have become more invested in their own performance and improvements.

“Now that we have the data and reporting to track our fall risks, for example, we’re seeing significant improvements,” Phoenix said. “In one of our units, we’ve seen falls reduced by 50 percent over the past year. That’s a direct result of our rounding initiative, and the Responder solution is helping us drive that.”

Meeting the hospital’s desire for more data on patient care and trending, Phoenix said Blanchard Valley Hospital is using Responder 5 Reports Manager to monitor for reduction in call volume in order to measure the effectiveness of its hourly rounding initiatives.

“We can easily see when a call is made, how long it takes staff to enter, and how much time was spent in the patient room,” she reports. “With that data, we can investigate any patient falls or questions more thoroughly, noting how often staff was in the room and who saw the patient last.”

Phoenix added that staff has never expressed a feeling of being tracked or monitored.

“Staff are fully invested in the new technology and reporting, because the information and data is routinely shared with them. They want to see the ways they’re improving, and areas where they can further improve,” she said.

TOWARD THE FUTURE

With the Responder 5 solution now in use for more than a year in half of the med/surgical area, areas without Responder are now clamoring to get the technology installed, said Val Johnson, Director Inpatient Nursing.

“Yes, we’re very happy with the outcomes Responder 5 has generated for us, particularly in support of our rounding initiatives, responsiveness of staff and nursing communication,” Natalie also added, “and units that don’t have Responder are asking when they are going to get it!”

Blanchard Valley’s short-term plans for technology improvement call for an expansion of Responder 5 into more departments, with the next install in CCU department.

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Natalie Phoenix, Director of Emergency Services, Blanchard Valley