

New Staffing Model and Responder® 5 Technology

Launch Move to New Patient Tower at North Carolina Hospital

“Our intent is to treat our patients exactly as we would treat our own family,” said Tara Anderson, Director of Medical, Surgical and Orthopedics units at Carteret Health Care in North Carolina.

That was the hospital’s goal as it prepared for a move into a new patient tower in 2015. Concurrent with that move, nursing leadership set benchmarks for a new staff model and prepared for the use of advanced technologies to improve staff efficiencies and coverage. Most importantly, these solutions helped drive improvement in patient satisfaction.

A year into use of the new tower and related staff processes, Carteret Health Care has reaped the benefits of this managed change, with Responder® 5 driving improvements in the direction the hospital desired – to elevate satisfaction between departments, among staff, and with their patients.

“Responder® has helped us to dramatically improve our patient satisfaction while giving nursing a bigger voice in delivering that improved care,” Anderson states.

TOP BOX OUTCOMES

Following implementation and use of Responder 5 solutions, Carteret Health Care’s “Top Box” results from Press Ganey surveys were soon trending upward.

On the question “Did you get call button help as soon as you needed it?” for example, response ratings jumped dramatically from 42% to 77.1% during the quarter that the move to the new tower and staffing changes occurred.

“This was a huge improvement in an area that we can attribute directly to the use of Responder 5 and our move into the new patient tower,” Anderson pointed out.



EFFICIENT STAFF MODELING

Carteret’s blueprint for change included multiple dynamics. First, Carteret Health Care leadership knew that greater productivity was needed. Staffing models were adjusted by nursing leadership several months prior to moving into the new patient tower. This allowed the hospital to minimize overtime and address productivity by filling vacancies and shifting staff where most needed.

“This model improved satisfaction levels to a certain degree,” Anderson noted, “but nursing leadership knew that the technology identified for the new patient tower could further support and enhance the staffing model enacted prior to the move.” Carteret Health Care placed Rauland Responder 5 at the heart of the new technologies and systems being introduced for managing patient needs and critical communications.

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Eric LaRoque, RN, Med/PCU, Carteret Health Care



Responder® 5 Benefits

Improvements at Carteret Health Care following use of Responder 5 include:

- Increased staff satisfaction
- Improved RN/CNA communication
- Increased patient satisfaction
- Increased ability to adjust to constant staffing changes
- Increased staff safety
- Reduced alarm fatigue
- Reduced steps, calls, wasted effort
- Reduced noise
- Reduced/ bridged the gaps in communication

Responder® 5 Solutions at Carteret Health Care

- ADT Interface
- PC Console
- Staff Assignment
- Reports Manager
- Staff Terminal
- Audio Bath Stations
- Telephony Interface with Cisco phones

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

Clinical teams worked closely with Jane Schmidt, Senior Clinical Applications Specialist of Systems Electronics, Rauland’s distributor and systems integrator for Responder 5. Meeting with each unit individually and with nursing leadership for overall guidance, Schmidt assisted teams to define all of the supporting workflows that were needed. The flexibility of Responder 5 software allowed programming of workflows to address the unique needs of individual units, while still maintaining continuity across the entire new building.

“Having the same workflow across units using Responder 5 has really helped improve our team dynamics,” said Eric LaRoque, an RN in 2nd Med/PCU.

During the construction phase, the hospital was able to capture an opportunity to address existing workflow issues when they realized that patients in need of injections and infusions were being placed in inpatient beds for after-hour care when clinics were closed which negatively impacted their throughput.

Working with Systems Electronics, they quickly converted a planned in-patient room to an outpatient overflow room for infusion patients.

“These rapid changes helped us to improve inpatient flow and minimize the impact of outpatient needs during weekends/holidays when the outpatient clinic was not open,” said Anderson.

FLEXIBLE IMPLEMENTATION

Anderson added, “Responder was a hot topic when we first began using this technology in the new tower because we knew our original programming might not be quite accurate on go-live. Staff wanted Responder 5 to help drive improvements.”

Changes were easily programmed within the solution based on staff feedback at “Navigating to Excellence” meetings. These forums were used to work all the kinks out and fine-tune the Responder system to truly support performance goals.

“Responder 5 is great,” Anderson continued, “because the system is flexible and really can

be tailored to meet every need. Our process tweaks were accomplished quickly and with minimal disruption.”

STAFF PERSPECTIVE

Staff quickly took to Responder workflows and tools because they could see the improvements it delivered to their processes, team communication and patient safety.

Responder helped bridged communications gaps among the RN and CNA, who are always paired together for team delivery of patient care. Responder 5 enabled staff to more efficiently communicate among one another so that patient needs are not overlooked or miscommunicated.

“Improving communication has decreased the steps that staff members make to complete tasks, decreased phone calls and streamlined the delivery of patient care,” Anderson said.

Using Responder, staff realized a marked improvement in their efficiency as it makes many of the workflow processes leaner. A simple button press on the Responder 5 Staff Terminal brings resources to them rather than staff having to leave the patient to seek them out. From a lean standpoint, staff members know that they can complete what they need to do with the patient and they have gained back significant time.

Excess steps and non-productive time is being eliminated because Responder 5 provides point-to-point communication. This streamlined communication allows patients to speak directly to their care team members, be more specific about their need with their caregiver, and allows more efficient collaboration among care team members.

Staff members truly see a strong benefit in Responder 5 from a safety standpoint. “A button push on the workflow station inside the patient room can quickly bring the resources and help that I need so I don’t have to leave the room,” Jessica Wortham, a CNA in 2nd Med/PCU said. Patient safety is greatly enhanced because staff don’t have to leave the patient to get what they need.

The de-centralized nurse stations used in the new tower are fully supported by Responder 5 staff assignment and on duty/off duty workflows within PC Console at shift change because it eliminates instances of non-covered patient calls. According to Rebecca Bailey, a nurse in 2nd Med/PCU unit, the new technology has meant no lag time between night and day shift. “As soon as I log in and assign my patients, they are covered,” Bailey said. “No call light ever goes on without staff to cover it.”

Consistent workflow processes driven by Responder staff terminal programming and use by staff have solved multiple flow issues between departments that used to be problematic, according to Anderson. Therapy staff have designed and incorporated elements of their processes into Responder 5 workflows that have improved the dynamics between themselves and other care teams. EVS and Transport have seen payback from incorporating their processes, too.

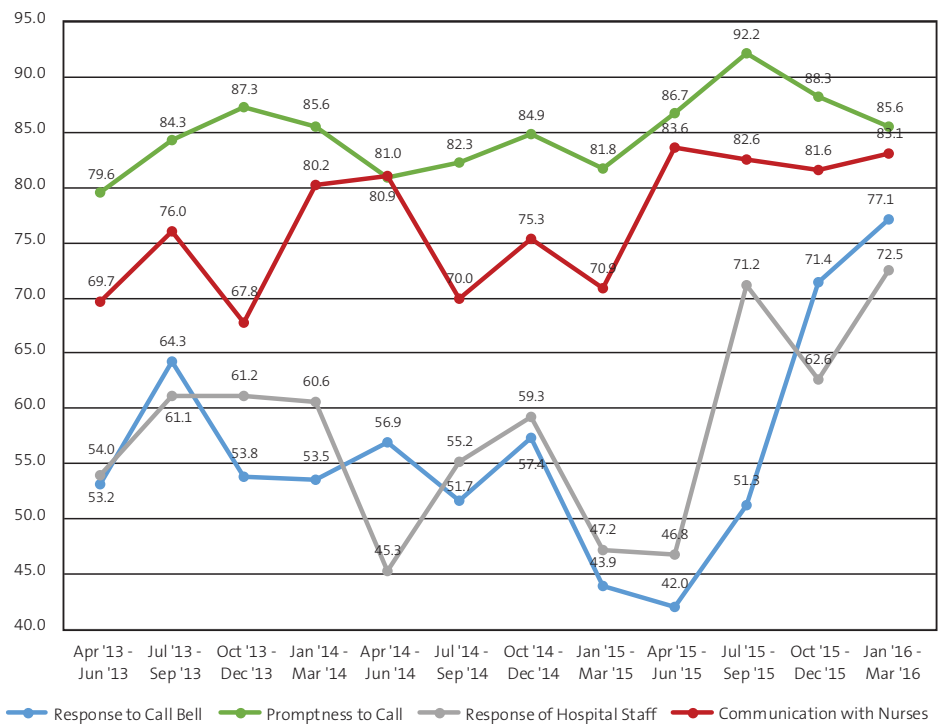
Carteret color-coded Responder 5 workflow processes for easy recognition and use. Every button programmed on Responder 5 Staff Terminals for an RN function is presented in green, with CNA function presented in orange.

PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

“Patients, of course, were a major consideration in the decision to implement Responder 5 solutions,” Anderson said, “due to the hospital’s desire to give patients a greater voice in their care.”

“With the introduction of Responder’s audio bath station, for example, we could give the patient a voice, and add a different level of call at the same time. That helps staff identify the difference between ‘I am finished in the bathroom and I need some help,’ versus a true bathroom emergency,” Anderson said. These different levels of alerts, along with direct voice communication using mobile phones, have helped Carteret reduce alarm fatigue caused by non-emergent alarms. Moderate to low-risk fall patients have gained greater patient privacy and autonomy because of the technology.

Press Ganey Mean Trends: HCAHPS Scores of Inpatient 2nd Med Unit



LEADERSHIP AND TRACKING

For the future, nursing leaders look forward to increasing their use of Responder’s Reports Manager. Having one reporting database for all units will support the hospital’s shared governance goals. “This will quickly give us the ability to routinely review aggregate and individual response times among units, investigate patient complaints, and monitor achievements toward goals,” Anderson said.

Improvement is a continual process in a high performing organization. Having the right tools to maintain this course of action has allowed Carteret Health Care to manage many changes in their journey of improvements. “Carteret Health Care will continue to rely on Responder 5 as an important tool to aid in ongoing change management,” Anderson said.

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About Carteret Health Care

Carteret Health Care is an independent, 135-bed hospital serving Eastern North Carolina. As a not-for-profit Medical Center, the hospital offers a full range of acute care, diagnostic and outpatient services at a level only expected from a larger facility. While providing quality health care with compassion and respect, Carteret Health Care achievements and awards include being ranked as a Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital in the US.
www.CarteretHealth.org.



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 Systems Electronics

Systems Electronics, a full-service, certified distributor of Rauland, has been providing communications and security/safety systems for more than 40 years. The firm works with clients to discover the best solution and then implement that solution, with follow-up service and support.



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