

Presbyterian Homes of Georgia (PHGA)

The Challenge

Presbyterian Homes of Georgia (PHGA) has a long history of providing high-quality living options for seniors in Georgia, whether they need around-the-clock care, independence or something in between. The organization was facing a challenge that is common to post-acute care and elder care facilities: they did not have a comprehensive technology solution to address both revenue cycle management (RCM) and electronic medical records needs. While acute care hospitals and physician practices have been eligible for financial incentives to adopt EMRs through programs like Meaningful Use, this has not been the case for nursing homes and other community providers that primarily serve the senior market.

Despite the absence of incentives, leaders at PHGA recognized that by taking their health IT solutions to the next level it could improve care outcomes and ensure their finances would continue to remain on solid footing. The organization was also looking for solutions to address the need for delivering quality resident care and satisfying ever-growing reporting requirements. Manual charting processes required too much nurse time and doctors often struggled to address resident care needs while off-campus—often needing to call a nurse to confirm a lab result or vital sign reading.

PHGA had an important decision to make. Their existing RCM program was scheduled to be sunset, which meant PHGA either had to implement a new RCM solution, or make the technology leap to a health IT solution that incorporated both electronic health records (EHR) and RCM. Leaders decided that now would be an ideal time to make the switch and provide them with the technology they'd need to accommodate future growth.

The organization brought in a cross-section of administrative and clinical teams to participate in the vendor selection process. Leaders asked clinicians and other staff to evaluate multiple solutions based on several key criteria, including the quality of customer service and support and the ability to customize the product based on PHGA's specific requirements. PHGA also wanted a robust solution that would eliminate much of the guesswork inherent in the charting process. For instance, PHGA wanted to streamline charting – which would also free clinicians to spend more time with residents by having the system offer dashboards and prompts to remind clinicians of all essential data that needed to be entered.

About Presbyterian Homes of Georgia

- Founded in 1949 with a 10-bed nursing home
- Five locations with a sixth in development
- Serves approximately 1,000 residents
- Range of accommodations including independent living, assisted living, memory support services and skilled

Solution

At the end of the vendor evaluation process, PHGA selected HCS and its Interactant solution. HCS stood out among competitors based on its solid reputation in the industry, especially in terms of delivering its clients a high level of customer support and service.

PHGA staff, including physicians, nurses and pharmacy, found the fully integrated system to be extremely user friendly. PHGA administrators appreciated the system's ability to produce quality and performance metrics without interrupting nursing workflows. Today, nurses chart at the resident's bedside, which has reduced documentation time and simplified the reporting process – and given nurses more time for direct resident care.

“One of the top reasons we chose HCS was because we wanted the ability to customize the system to address our specific needs based on our desire to continue our tradition of delivering excellent care to our residents,” said PHGA Chief Operating Officer, Gwen Hardy. For example, HCS worked with PHGA to design custom drop boxes with some of the most commonly-accessed data points in order to streamline nursing workflows during resident visits. In addition, HCS and PHGA worked together to design a body diagram that allows clinicians to speed up the documentation process, while also recording specific details about the location of injuries, wounds or other conditions. HCS has also provided pharmacy integration to make it easy for clinicians to enter and track medication orders and ultimately improve medication adherence and the medication reconciliation process.

Results

With the implementation of HCS Interactant, PHGA is not only able to deliver high quality care to seniors, it also has a comprehensive technology solution that enhances the organization's clinical and financial performance. Some specific improvements include:

- The ability to thoroughly document care in order to qualify for maximum reimbursements
- An increase of more than \$100,000 in revenues in one year at one PHGA facility, thanks to more complete charting that supports accurate coding for billing
- More accurate charting, thanks to the ability to document at the resident bedside at in-room terminals, versus later at centralized terminals
- Improved charting speed and efficiency, allowing more time for hands-on care and better outcomes
- Better nursing morale, due to streamlined workflows and reduced administrative burdens
- Enhanced visibility into the “Big Picture” to drive better resident care
- Deeper family trust and satisfaction with the quality of care being delivered to loved ones due to the easy and secure access to residents' comprehensive care records
- The ability to clearly demonstrate to prospective donors the value of PHGA's coordinated, high-quality care
- Expanded telemedicine capabilities, which allows doctors to access charts when off-campus and promotes the delivery of high-quality care between appointments

“HCS has definitely delivered quality software,” said Hardy. “However, we have found their customer service has been a tremendous differentiator. Our experience with HCS has been phenomenal, thanks to their willingness to meet us where we were.”

What's next

PHGA has seen an uptick in its Medicaid rate as a result of better documentation of services rendered. The organization is now better able to correctly assign the proper level of acuity to each resident. Automation with well-placed prompts has replaced manual processes to reduce human error and minimize administrative burdens for staff. PHGA is carefully monitoring the bottom line for all five of their facilities to see how HCS solutions can enhance revenue capture and reduce missed charges and leakage. The organization is in the process of implementing an additional module for materials management that is expected to deliver additional resource efficiencies.

PHGA is increasingly improving the speed with which they can respond to resident needs by having a single source of integrated resident data that is accessible by doctors, nurses, pharmacy, and other staff. Nurses can electronically notify doctors at the end of the visit with a resident, and physicians can review, diagnose and place orders, even while off-campus. Residents' families appreciate that clinicians have ready access to critical resident data and feel assured that providers are well-informed and actively engaged in the resident care process. PHGA believes that HCS and the Interactant platform have helped the organization build on its reputation as a highly-regarded care provider that is worthy of additional referrals.

About PHGA

Presbyterian Homes of Georgia, Quitman, GA, has been in operation since 1949. They offer gracious retirement living in four outstanding communities for those 62 and older. To learn more about Presbyterian Homes of Georgia, please visit www.phgainc.org.



HCS is a leading provider of an all-in-one healthcare information technology platform that spans electronic health records (EHR), revenue cycle management, financial management, mobility, and business intelligence. In use at over 5,000 LTACH, behavioral health and senior living facilities, the Interactant platform helps multi-site providers deliver better quality and safety in care while increasing efficiencies and financial performance.