

MeritCare

Impact Report



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CLIENT SITUATION

This project was initiated primarily because MeritCare wanted to grow its “Electronic Patient Record” capabilities. The project idea was expanded to include two other focuses “Phone Nurse” and “Customer Service” as a result of some survey work done with cancer patients. The graphic attached to the end of this report depicts the project concept that was submitted in the grant proposal. Ultimately, the following project goal and objectives have focused all efforts.

GOAL

Build a patient care model that allows flexibility and accessibility to providers and health information

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- 1) Increase new employee knowledge, skills and abilities to use all the functionality of EPR
- 2) Provide EPR training to new hires
- 3) Increase “telephone triage” assessment skills
- 4) Develop a cancer orientation program for employees based on the responses from canvassed patients

It is important to note that a multi-year project will inevitably see changes to the business that result in minor shifts in project activities to mold the products and services delivered to MeritCare’s needs. In this case, the best way to meet objectives 1 & 2 were to provide foundational computer skills, medical terminology and some anatomy and physiology coursework to improve fluency in the medical language. Objective 3 was met by bringing in a Phone Nurse consultant who not only conducted a presentation to a large group of medical professionals (including staff from Fargo and other MeritCare locations) but she also consulted one on one with Bemidji MeritCare’s Phone Nurse staff. Finally, objective 4 was met through activities to grow Leadership, Management and Customer Service skills. Not only did we further MeritCare’s efforts with the Gallup Program, but we also helped create two videos for Same Day Surgery and Oncology patients. A more detailed list of services provided is described later in this report.

It is also important to note that it was an “unwritten objective” of this project to strengthen the relationship between the Bemidji campus and the Bemidji MeritCare site. MeritCare was looking for opportunities to have college students interacting with their staff members at the clinic more often. Likewise, the college desired to improve learning experiences for their students. Thus, the “Nurse Interface” aspect of the project was developed. Nurses and instructors alike have commented many times that this part of the project has reaped more rewards than any of us guessed it would three years ago.

DESIRED PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES & MEASUREMENTS

The Desired Performance Outcomes (bulleted items below) are the large impacts MeritCare would like to see for its business as a result of the project. Measurements (bolded) pinpoint some specific places where we could measure whether the intended impact has taken place.

Formal evaluation of this nature has never taken place in a grant project before so this was a pilot, as is this report format. Follow-up on these outcomes and measurement progress used the methodology described below in “Data Collection.”

The Desired Performance Outcomes for this project were identified at the beginning of the project approximately three years ago and have served as a “guide” for determining project activities, designing curriculum and defining priorities. MeritCare stated this work would be successful if this project could:

- Improve clinic work flow – *Logician* is designed to cut the **time and expense** associated with managing a patients medical record.
- Ease use of EPR – *Logician* is intuitive and **user friendly**, mirroring the way physicians and clinicians work.
- Improve clinical documentation – Logically structured clinical data is available to support ongoing patient care as well as retrospective outcomes **analysis**.
- Growing tools to provide superior patient care – not only provide clinicians with easily **accessible patient information**, but **support** the care process with a host of decision support tools.

SERVICE PROVIDED

Services provided describes what products and services were delivered over the course of this project. The list is quite extensive and can be provided in detail if requested. There were in excess of 3,000 instructional hours. A typical class will have 12-15 participants.

Conservatively, an average of 10 participants in each class would mean that there were over 30,000 employee hours dedicated to training. In this project there were classes that ranged from having only 4 employees attend (some computer classes) to over 100 employees (Phone Nurse).

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected through three primary methods.

1. Participant Satisfaction Surveys were conducted at all training sessions.
2. A Client Satisfaction Survey was conducted periodically throughout the project in the form of a “Contributing Business Report.”
3. Project Team Meetings were held periodically throughout the project with minutes detailing those discussions.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The impact analysis portion of this report summarizes what was found using the methods described above. Because this is a partnership, positive impacts were sought for Northwest Technical College, MeritCare and at times MeritCare’s employees at sites other than Bemidji. This is only a summary of some of the many benefits, talking to the project team itself would give you a clearer picture of what worked, what didn’t, and what value this project has brought to all partners involved.

- Over 800 MeritCare employees were surveyed over the course of this project. Some more than once because they participated in more than one class. All participant survey responses averaged 90% or better satisfaction indicating trainees were satisfied with

course content being relevant to their jobs and presented in a manner in which they could learn. Sample written comments from participants included....

“This course will make me even more aware of how I treat patients and coworkers.”

“I’m more aware of some wonderful tools to work with.”

- All Contributing Business reports filed by MeritCare indicated satisfaction with the project and involvement in decision-making and project activities. One comment noted from MeritCare staff was... *“The needs assessment and diagnosis were really done well.”*
- Project Team accomplishments noted by personnel from both MeritCare and the Colleges are as follows.

ELECTRONIC PATIENT RECORD

- ❖ Foundational computer skills were delivered in Microsoft Office products
- ❖ Access to a portable, state of the art LCD projector was provided
- ❖ A laptop fleet was provided for training
- ❖ Logician software was purchased and installed at Northwest Technical College to facilitate students learning about EPR before they graduate.
- ❖ Medical Terminology and Anatomy and Physiology courses were taught to increase the fluency and understanding of the medical language for employees.

PHONE NURSE & NURSE INTERFACE

- ❖ A nationally known Phone Nurse expert/consultant was retained to improve the Bemidji site program and to provide professional development to medical staff throughout the region.
- ❖ A video is being developed for Same Day Surgery to assist patients needing these services. Video participants were offered a gift certificate to purchase a book as a token for their assistance.
- ❖ The Nursing Interface program put nurses and Northwest Technical College instructors together to design better learning experiences for students. Students were exposed to EPR system in the classroom lab at the college and MeritCare Bemidji Clinic during a clinical rotation recently established this summer.
- ❖ A cancer care workshop was conducted.
- ❖ Nursing Documentation & Receptions Practical Management curriculum were delivered.

CUSTOMER SERVICE/LEADERSHIP

- ❖ A customer service training program was delivered to dovetail to the Fargo customer service program and offered to Bemidji as well as its counterparts in smaller towns.
- ❖ Enabled all MeritCare employees access to the StrengthsFinder assessment instrument providing a consistent format for development as well as creating impact plans for the organization. It will further provide information for them as employees being managed by “Great Managers.”
- ❖ Enabled 15 MeritCare managers to participate in Gallup Great Managers program. This program will enhance their abilities as managers in a format consistent with the Gallup Strength Finder and Q12 initiatives.

- ❖ Enabled Bobbi Akerlund Kotas to become a Level 2 StrengthsFinder coach. This will provide an “onsite” coach to not only provide initial coaching, but will be very valuable in sustaining the Gallup concept inside MeritCare.
- ❖ Provided funding to “pilot” the Gallup concept in the Bemidji location. Although this initiative originated from MeritCare corporate, the Bemidji site will be a “trend setter” within the MeritCare system. It will enable this site to advance the corporate initiative and hopefully expand it throughout the entire MeritCare system.
- ❖ Provided a unique opportunity for a win-win partnership between MeritCare and Custom Training Services, as well as Northwest Technical College as a whole.
- ❖ Will enable MeritCare employees to participate in Covey Leadership training which is very complimentary to the Gallup concept. This will provide the “character” element of a Leadership role.
- ❖ Provided an opportunity for top management to participate, experience and support a consistent format for management at MeritCare, Bemidji.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

This project began with a goal of building a patient care model that allows flexibility and accessibility to providers and health information. The impact analysis supports that improvements have been made in all of these arenas, but MeritCare has to also answer the questions for themselves.

- Are you better today as an organization than you were three years ago?
- Have you reduced time and expense in managing patient medical records?
- Do your employees feel more comfortable using Logician?
- Has clinical documentation grown to support ongoing patient care as well as retrospective outcomes analysis?
- Do you have the interface that you need with the college and students who may potentially become your employees?
- And, are you more equipped to provide better patient care?

The answer usually is yes, but we could do more. We now have had a chance to become intimately familiar with your organization and we would be happy to work with you on defining the next “horizons” for your organization.

MERITCARE ELECTRONIC PATIENT RECORD SYSTEM

