

CASE STUDY

Reconciling Relationships, Reputation, and Results Through Clinical Integration



BACKGROUND



~55,000
annual ED visits



Regional hospital
in South Carolina



Sound HM & EM
programs implemented
in December 2018



250+ acute
care beds

CHALLENGES

Underperforming emergency medicine and hospital medicine departments had damaged a South Carolina hospital's reputation in the community resulting in patients seeking care elsewhere. The negative impacts included:

- ▶ Length of stay (LOS) rates being too high
- ▶ 10% of patients leaving without being seen (LWBS)
- ▶ High costs driven by dependence on locums
- ▶ Performance inconsistencies
- ▶ Reduced medical staff confidence

AN INTEGRATED SOLUTION

The hospital reached out to Sound Physicians for an integrated solution, contracting for both emergency medicine and hospital medicine services. After an initial assessment, it was clear that new leadership was required. Sound's world-class recruiting team quickly found top talent that leveraged Sound's comprehensive leadership development program and management processes to build a strong team and drive necessary change. In addition to retaining 100% of existing clinicians across both programs, a stable team was established by replacing locums with FTEs.

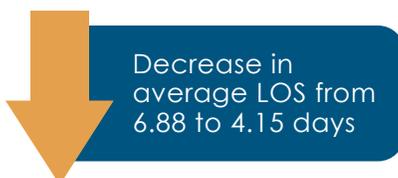
Using Sound Physicians proven processes, clinical leaders from both teams aligned to:

- ▶ Streamline inter-department handoffs
- ▶ Improve clinical performance
- ▶ Improve patient experience



Both programs have remained fully staffed with engaged providers since the programs went live in December 2018.

RESULTS



PROGRAM REDESIGN

To reduce emergency department (ED) wait times, Sound's clinical leaders implemented a rapid-triage system in which patients were immediately seen by an advanced practice provider (APP), facilitating better overall ED flow and improving patient experience. This new approach represented a monumental shift to a patient-centered culture, which was recognized by patients, staff, and hospital leadership.

DATA-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Sound's holistic process improvement methodology created opportunities for case mix index (CMI) improvement. The teams conducted a deep-dive into Medicare top Diagnosis Related Groups (DRGs), and CMI followed by rigorous compliance audits with focused training on documentation, CMI severity index, and care pathways. This work led to a 0.29 increase in CMI, with improved opportunities for reimbursement.

Additionally, Sound set rigorous standards and deployed lean methodology to drive down LOS. Using a proven performance management strategy, clinicians received feedback on their performance relative to the group, with monthly reviews to reinforce change. Since this model was implemented, the program has decreased average LOS by more than 2.5 days.

LEARN MORE

Interested in learning how partnering with Sound Physicians can benefit your hospital or health system?

Visit www.soundphysicians.com or email partnership@soundphysicians.com.