Care New England Health System
Clinical Engineering Solutions

To keep up with the rapid rate of change and get the most value from its healthcare technology, Care New England Health System evolved its clinic engineering to a holistic strategy that creates standardization and collaboration across the entire healthcare enterprise and saved them $250,000 in CE spend.

Care New England (CNE) Health System is an example of a progressive healthcare group who understands today's complex healthcare technology landscape and has embraced a holistic clinical engineering (CE) strategy with some amazing results.

Comprised of four hospitals and other affiliates located in and around Providence, Rhode Island, CNE is focused on providing high-quality, cost-effective health and wellness services to all its constituents. CNE relies heavily on its healthcare technology to help provide world-class patient care, and is committed to complete healthcare technology management services of its combined inventory of more than 14,000 medical devices and assets.

CHALLENGE

However, after CMS and TJC changed medical equipment maintenance and management requirements in 2013, CNE needed to revise its current policies and practices to align with the new standards. They enlisted the help of long-time partner ABM Healthcare who revamped the CE program and set them on the right path to timely and cost-effective compliance. ABM is one of the leading healthcare support service providers in the nation, specializing in clinical engineering and healthcare technologies.

At around the same time, CNE also added another hospital to its growing network. But, now each member hospital managed clinical engineering differently -- some outsourced while others handled it in-house.

With disparate CE departments, each hospital was in charge of its own staff, budgets, and contracts. Information was siloed, so they had no visibility into the true scope and spend of clinical engineering across the system.

SOLUTION

To better meet the growing needs of all its members, keep up with technology advances, and reduce costs, CNE wanted to unify CE operations and implement a single solution for clinical engineering enterprise-wide.

Once again, they turned to ABM. Working together, CNE and ABM developed a customized enterprise business solution to more strategically and efficiently manage healthcare technology across all CNE member hospitals.

The program included the implementation of:

- A system-wide labor infrastructure
- Professional technology leadership and management
- Automated, web-based enterprise technology management system
- Standardized operations and system delivery
- Quality, productivity, and cost performance metrics

ABM guided CNE to form a leadership task force that included representatives of all member hospitals. This collaborative process allowed them to establish
organization-wide best practices; initiate metrics and analytics; create auditable controls; and implement new policies, procedures, and protocols.

The enterprise management system centralized, streamlined, and automated clinical engineering operations, allowing CNE to better manage assets and contracts, schedule and track maintenance requests and work orders, access and share data, and automate reporting.

Web-based, the system also speeds maintenance activities, increases productivity, and reduces delays and downtime. Technicians receive alerts and other information on their phones, and the system also provides real-time client feedback, increasing user satisfaction.

To help complete its enterprise transformation, CNE increased collaboration and communication between its clinical engineering and information technology services. This has allowed them to work together more efficiently and more adequately meet the needs of its complex technology environment.

Because of the large scope of the project, the solution was deployed in phases. This minimized disruption and maximized savings opportunities while ensuring employees were successfully adopting and using the solution.

**BENEFIT**

CNE’s enterprise strategy provides more comprehensive service to member hospitals and helped drive standardization, quality, and best practices for clinical engineering and associated systems. The initiative has also provided CNE with transparency and accountability of all CE projects, inventory, and capital procurement.

Now that there is complete insight into total medical equipment maintenance operations, CNE has been able to reduce CE spend by more than $130,000 in 2015. And CNE is on track to save more than $250,000 in 2016.

Once dependent on outside labor, CNE has leveraged the efficiencies and economies of scale created by the enterprise system to simplify and convert most service contracts to self-performance. Now work for all hospitals is done in-house with a seasoned team of clinical and biomedical engineering technicians managed by ABM.

The new system has also allowed the CE team to be more proactive in identifying and solving healthcare technology management issues. An example of this was a temperature monitoring system that was not being used to its full potential. Because of integration, the CE and IT teams worked closely together to redefine how to support the system, streamline the troubleshooting process, and resolve the problem.
The CE team’s efforts were recognized by the Association for Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI), who praised the “collaborative, silo-breaking” approach and presented them with its 2016 Bright Ideas award. The national award recognizes organizations for tackling tough healthcare technology management challenges with innovative solutions.

CNE’s new enterprise approach is a perfect illustration of the evolution of healthcare technology in the industry. The journey has taken CNE from providing disparate and commoditized basic services to allowing them to offer comprehensive, integrated healthcare technology management that incorporates compliance, biomedical, and clinical engineering support for all member hospitals.

“Working with a professional consultant and trusted partner like ABM was critical to our success. Leveraging their experience and expertise, we were able to avoid costly and time-consuming pitfalls, minimize risks and disruptions, and speed implementation and time to benefit,” said Steve Silva, Vice President of Supply Chain for Care New England Health System.

About ABM

ABM Healthcare is part of ABM (NYSE: ABM), an integrated facility solutions leader, providing exceptional facility experiences for our clients’ employees and customers through ABM’s 100,000 employees. ABM services over 4 billion square feet of buildings and has revenues of $5.1 billion.

ABM Healthcare partners with over 300 hospitals, healthcare systems, and 700 medical facilities to improve their patient experience “from the car door to the patient room” through our environmental services, facilities management, food & nutrition, clinical engineering, laundry & linen, patient transportation, patient sitter/companion, and parking & guest services. ABM Healthcare is a multiple recipient of “Best Places to Work” by Modern Healthcare and “Great Places to Work” by Becker’s Healthcare Review. Our thousands of well-trained specialists are focused on delivering the highest standard of care, while reducing operational costs, improving HCAHPS scores, and maximizing resources. For more information, visit us at ABM.com/Healthcare.