HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

CASE STUDIES IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT

UL

Case Studies in Workforce Occupational Health and Safety Management

In healthcare settings, it's helpful to approach regulatory compliance, vaccination campaigns, case management and return to work, training, quality control and record keeping in a dynamic way – not just as processes but as due diligence.

Introduction

When healthcare organizations practice due diligence, they are taking all reasonable precautions to prevent work-related injuries and illnesses, enhance safety, and advance the health of employees and patients. When incidents and accidents occur, they record and follow up on them.

Healthcare employers who strive to identify workplace hazards and develop plans for corresponding preventive and corrective actions report positive outcomes. Studies show that injuries and incidents decline while workforce productivity and morale, compliance and cost containment/revenue generation improve when there is a culture of health and safety infused throughout an organization.

Many healthcare institutions rely on automated occupational health management systems to support their employee health and safety efforts on a daily basis. The case studies contained in this booklet describe how four hospitals and health systems use UL Workplace Health and Safety's Occupational Health Manager (OHM®) solution to achieve their goals.

In this booklet, you will learn how:

- **Baptist Health** in Arkansas selected OHM to replace another system and turned a mandatory flu vaccination program that was a "nightmare to administer" into a well-coordinated effort with positive results.

- **Carolinas Health System** serving populations in North and South Carolina uses OHM's robust capabilities to automate medical surveillance tracking, simplify reporting and ultimately give its staff the best possible tools to manage employee health.

- **Essentia Health** in Minnesota provided its staff with refresher training to further leverage the power of OHM and dramatically improve efficiency, produce performance dashboards for senior executives, and expedite root-cause analysis and preventive measures.

- **Vidant Health** in North Carolina is replacing manual, labor-intensive processes with UL's new mobile vaccine app to save significant amounts of staff time and eliminate the risk of keyboarding errors while enforcing its mandatory flu vaccination policy.

These stories illustrate how an investment in an occupational health and safety management system doesn't cost – it pays.

For more information, visit ULworkplace.com/OHM >

Baptist Health

A health system's flu vaccination program makes a quick recovery with a transition to UL Workplace Health and Safety's OHM software solution.

Baptist Health in Arkansas seeks to unite clinicians, employees and patients via the use of technology to deliver total healthcare services throughout the state, including rural areas. The health system includes seven hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, family clinics and wellness centers.

Challenge

The Baptist Employee Health Department is responsible for the safety and health of more than 7,700 employees. Given the magnitude of this task and the dispersed nature of the workplace, the department needs a comprehensive software program to support training, manage work-related accidents and injuries, track medical surveillance and immunization activities, and monitor regulatory compliance.

When its employee health software vendor announced it would no longer support its product, Baptist was seriously concerned about how this change would impact operations, the well-being of its workforce and the quality of patient care.

Solution

Upon evaluating the options, Baptist Health selected UL Workplace Health and Safety's Occupational Health Manager (OHM®) software solution to replace the system that its current vendor was phasing out.
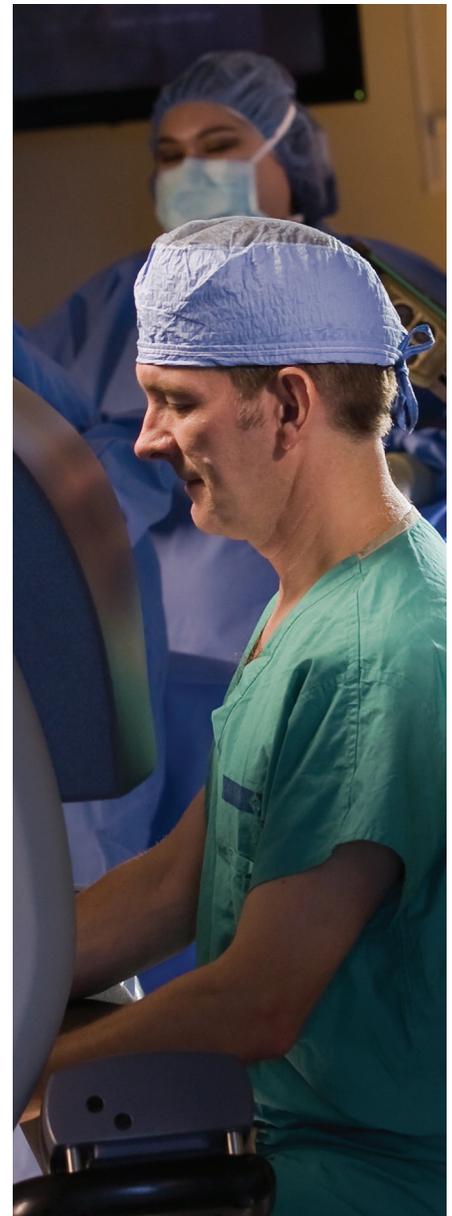
> "Getting accurate numbers of the active employees who were vaccinated was the biggest benefit we saw from our ability to track information in OHM."

-John Landry
Safety Director,
Baptist Health

Results

Following a smooth conversion in spring 2012, the benefits of OHM's tracking and reporting mechanisms became immediately apparent. For example, management of Baptist's mandatory flu vaccination program, once "quite a nightmare," is now a well-coordinated effort, according to John Landry, safety coordinator.

Numbers help tell the story:

• In 2011, 6,691 employees received flu immunizations over a five-month period, for a compliance rate of 90 percent.

• In 2012, 7,637 flu immunizations were given between August and December, with a 99 percent compliance rate. (There were 7,711 employees in the Baptist Health System during that period.)

• An additional 849 flu shots were given in 2012 to independent healthcare professionals, students, volunteers and other contract personnel.

"Getting accurate numbers of active employees who were vaccinated was the biggest benefit we saw from our ability to track information in OHM," Landry said. "Previously, our database would not allow us to pull information only on active employees, which made it difficult to exclude terminations, employees on family and medical leave, and retirees who might have been vaccinated prior to a change in work status."

Other OHM benefits cited by Landry include the ability to:

• easily track employees who are vaccinated while in a Baptist Health facility and those who receive the vaccination elsewhere – a quality improvement metric.

• verify the accuracy of the list of those vaccinated by identifying duplicate entries or names, or flagging missing information in the vaccination record.

"This was extremely helpful when tracking so many people in various locations," he said. "We are already reviewing our 2012-2013 flu campaign and looking for improvements for the 2013-2014 flu season. Thankfully, most of our evaluation leads us back to processes, not tracking, with the help of OHM."

Beyond the scope of the flu vaccination program, Landry said employee health personnel use OHM to help them more effectively support Baptist Health's mission, which emphasizes the values of service, honesty, respect, stewardship and performance, combined with a commitment to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement.

In September 2012, Baptist Health was recognized as a Customer Achievement Award winner at UL Workplace Health and Safety's User Summit.

Carolinas HealthCare System

UL's OHM software drives greater efficiency, lowers costs and enhances care quality.

Carolinas HealthCare System (CHS) is the largest healthcare system in the Carolinas, and the third largest non-profit public healthcare system in the nation. CHS owns, leases or manages 29 hospitals in North and South Carolina and employs more than 1,400 physicians practicing in more than 500 locations. CHS also operates rehabilitation hospitals, nursing homes, ambulatory surgery centers, home health agencies, radiation therapy centers and physical therapy facilities. Together, these operations comprise more than 6,000 licensed beds and employ more than 44,000 full-time or part-time employees.

Challenge

The health system's Employee Health Department used a manual system for tracking, recordkeeping and reporting. The size of the organization and the number of separate locations and departments required stacks of forms for many critical programs. Beyond consuming significant resources, the manual approach also meant slow turnaround times and potential for human error throughout the process.

CHS wanted to automate medical surveillance tracking, simplify reporting and ultimately give Employee Health Department staff the best possible tools to do their jobs efficiently and effectively. But other variables had to be considered as well, including cost and the inevitable challenges of implementation, training and upgrades when dealing with large organizations.
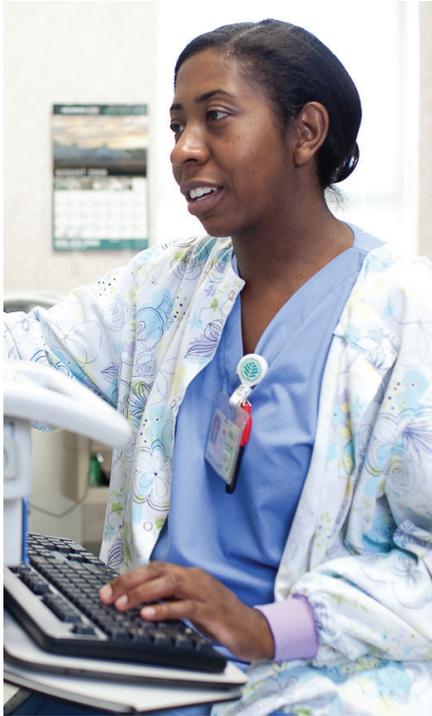
Solution

UL's Workplace Health and Safety Occupational Health Manager (OHM) software solution had all the capabilities CHS was looking for — and more. OHM has been used by the CHS Employee Health Department since 1998, primarily by nurses, HR assistants and clerks, as well as IS administrators. CHS Director of Employee Health Lydia Crutchfield, RN, BSN, says the transition to an electronic medical record has led to greater efficiency and organization, reduced workplace stress, and better information for the managers served by her department.

Employee Health Department staff report the power of OHM is experienced most directly in its impact on specific programs:

- Vaccination Marathon — Batch entry combined with electronic forms helped drive the phenomenal success of a flu vaccination campaign. Instead of stacks of paper forms that had to be entered into the system later, all data was entered electronically in real time. Estimated time saved? Three months of work!
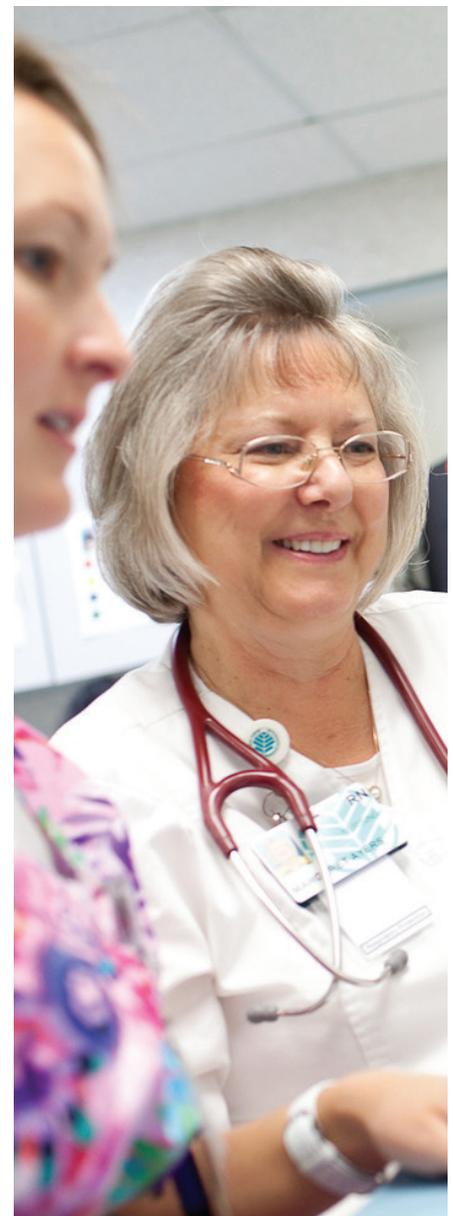
Solution (Continued)

- TB Skin Test Surveillance — With the automation of this process, staff now prints forms any time they're needed, and can easily track and create a list of employees who are due or overdue for tests.

- Health Assessment — OHM has enhanced the department's ability to ensure that CHS doesn't hire anyone who lacks the required vaccinations/immunizations or is otherwise unsuited for a job.

Results

Bottom-Line Benefits — OHM has helped drive cost savings and improved business performance in key areas:

- Efficiency — OHM has greatly reduced the time required for tasks such as tracking, recordkeeping and reporting.

- Risk Management — Timely distribution of information to managers and employees via OHM has helped improve efforts to limit exposure and maintain employee health. As a result, CHS has fewer lost work days and related expenses.

- Compliance — By helping the company maintain and document compliance, OHM helps CHS avoid potential fines from OSHA and other regulatory agencies.

Reporting and Communication Benefits — OHM's automated reporting has been a big time-saver for staff, but other communication improvements have been noted as well:

- Accountability and Visibility — The ability to easily pull and distribute vaccination and similar information for a specific area has enabled managers to be proactive, while also improving individual and organization-wide awareness of key health issues.

- Decision-Making — OHM's tracking and information-sharing features help staff deliver the timely, accurate data senior managers need for planning and strategic decision-making.

- Seamless Integration — OHM interfaces with other internal databases and systems at CHS, including PeopleSoft, simplifying data transfer between different job functions and facilities.

Data Integrity and Maintenance Benefits — Automating and electronically storing data has reduced the potential for human error or data loss.

"Upgrades and enhancements are available to help us keep up with the ever-changing world of technology."

-Rebecca Jones
Certified Nursing Assistant,
Carolinas HealthCare System

Essentia Health

OHM software refresher training dramatically improves staff efficiency and user satisfaction while supporting a health system's long-range workforce protection goals.

On the shores of Lake Superior in Duluth, Minn. and surrounding communities, Essentia Health-East Region operates St. Mary's Medical Center, six critical access hospitals, and 24 affiliated primary care and multi-specialty facilities. The regional health system has approximately 7,300 employees.

Challenge

Richard Fisher, manager of workers' compensation, employee health and loss prevention, and his colleagues must satisfy a host of workplace health and safety requirements. Internal human resource policies, Joint Commission standards, Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) regulations, and federal mandates such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act are all on the radar.

In addition, the employee health team is responsible for ensuring compliance with a Minnesota law requiring every licensed healthcare facility, including satellite clinics, to implement a safe patient handling program.

While low-back strain and other injuries often occur when caregivers lift and transfer patients, other risks also demand the attention of employee health staff. Slips, trips and falls, needlestick and sharps injuries, assaults by combative patients and visitors, and potential exposure to contagious diseases, infections and toxic medications are part of daily life.

Meanwhile, the department's primary objectives – injury/illness prevention and management – have been encumbered for years by a paper-based recordkeeping system.

"It's not just the challenge of documentation and complying with standards and regulations," Fisher said. "That's the easy part compared to trying to change the culture and get healthcare professionals to have more concern for their own personal well-being."

Solution

Essentia-St. Mary's installed UL's Workplace Health and Safety Occupational Health Manager (OHM) software in 2000, originally as an internal mainframe application and later transitioning to an online hosted solution.

OHM is a helpful tool because it automates data collection, statistical analysis and reporting. At Essentia, the employee health department also depends on OHM to support its transition from paper to electronic records – a major undertaking.

When Fisher joined the team in 2011, he quickly realized staff could further streamline operations and better align its prevention and management objectives if they received refresher training on the software.

He invited an OHM specialist from UL Workplace Health and Safety to spend two days on site to provide intensive training. Preparation for the site visit included joint development of an action plan designed to address staff questions and Essentia's specific needs.

"It was a wonderful experience," Fisher said. "Everyone loved the approach and the trainer's attentiveness. It could not have gone better."

Results

Using OHM to produce performance dashboards for senior executives, he is able to tie injury-related cost data he obtains from Essentia's third party administrator (TPA) with medical and indemnity costs by injury type, frequency and job category. Rather than wait for an annual report from the TPA, the monthly reports he generates help expedite root-cause analysis and preventive measures.

"For instance, now I can go to the chief nursing officer of the region and say, 'Here are how many lost time and restricted time days we have had and here is the monthly cost.' That really gets her attention.," Fisher said.

Prior to refresher training, he estimates staff used about 60 percent of OHM's capacity in the modules with which they were familiar and vastly underutilized the remainder. With training, all of the users report they feel much more comfortable with and knowledgeable about the entire system. "With annual refresher training, I believe we would nearly maximize the capabilities of each module," he said.

With respect to the return on investment in refresher training, Fisher estimates it has more than paid for itself in terms of performance improvement. Staff members have noted dramatic decreases in manual tasks, sub-directory searches and page reformatting and corresponding increases in efficiency and user satisfaction.

"UL Workplace Health and Safety has the understanding of all that the software can do, and our partnership with them has tremendous value," he said. "You can always update the software. But when you do, you need to update the people, too."

> "OHM gives us a distinct advantage by selling prevention, which is my goal in life, and it has simplified our lives."
>
> -Richard Fisher
> Manager, Essentia Health

Vidant Health

A major health system uses OHM and UL's mobile vaccine app to streamline its mandatory flu vaccination program and open doors for other employee health and safety management initiatives.

Vidant Health in eastern North Carolina is comprised of 10 hospitals. The system includes a flagship medical center in Greenville with 909 licensed and CON-approved beds, physician practices, home health, hospice and wellness centers. Its workforce is 12,000 strong, plus a fleet of volunteers and suppliers.

Formerly University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina, Vidant Health's goal is to "enhance services that are available locally and eliminate barriers involving time, distance and lack of awareness that sometimes prevent patients from receiving the care they need."

Challenge

At Vidant, all staff - caregivers, administrators, vendors and volunteers - are required to comply with a mandatory flu vaccination policy that was adopted in 2012. Patient safety is the driving force. Corresponding benefits include protecting employees and demonstrating the system's commitment to providing high-quality care in the safest manner possible.

Solution

Vidant installed UL Workplace Health and Safety's Occupational Health Manager® (OHM) solution in October 2011. Vidant Corporate Health Services uses OHM's robust monitoring and reporting capabilities to help manage all of its employee health functions including its flu ambassador campaign, flu shot clinics and roving carts, and a "FlexWork" staffing plan for nurses who administer the vaccine.

With onsite support from UL customer support, Vidant successfully pilot-tested UL's new mobile vaccine app during a mock flu clinic at Vidant Medical Center using an iPad connected to a handheld scanner. The system plans to use the mobile app extensively this flu season.

> "During our mock flu clinic we were able to manage and process four employees via the mobile vaccine app to every one employee processed manually. Talk about an increase in productivity!"

> - Angie Carter, Corporate Health System Analyst, Vidant Health

Results

During the mock flu clinic, Angie Carter, corporate health system analyst in Occupational Health Services at Vidant, and her colleagues set up two lines: one using the mobile app and scanner, the other using the traditional manual process, which involves collecting consent forms, keying in the vaccine record and uploading the consent form to the system.

The improvement was dramatic: a 4-to-1 ratio in terms of staff time savings and elimination of the chance for human error in the line where keyboards were replaced with employee badge scanners.

"Wow, what a difference," Carter said. "During our mock flu clinic we were able to manage and process four employees via the mobile vaccine app to every one employee processed manually. Talk about an increase in productivity! The mobile app line rolled so efficiently, it was literally the fast track."

"The online consent form contained all the required questions and we were able to capture the consent with signature, sending it directly to OHM. The vaccine record was recorded in real time, so we could literally go straight into the OHM vaccine module and view the record immediately. Compliance satisfied!"

"UL has been an awesome partner throughout this whole process."

Notably, 99.9 percent of Vidant Health employees and volunteers complied with the mandatory vaccination policy in 2012, compared to 74 percent compliance in 2011 when compliance was voluntary. A total of 15,000 employees, vendors and volunteers were vaccinated. The vast majority of vaccines were tracked and verified through OHM.

"From my perspective, one of the biggest advantages of OHM is that we can manage the program system-wide, produce reports for various management groups, run labels, send letters…it's very functional," said Amy Pearson, R.N., M.P.H., C.O.H.N.-S, administrator, Corporate Health Services.

Beyond mandatory flu shots, Pearson said OHM is instrumental in helping her team develop "a structure within our structure" for employee health operations. For example, working with UL, one critical goal is the creation of a custom capability for online event reporting, starting encounters with supervisors' input on required examinations.

"The flu campaign really opened our eyes to how we can use OHM more effectively in other areas," Pearson said. "Our experience with that helped build the confidence level of our staff. They are very comfortable with the information OHM procures."

BUILDING A SAFE AND HEALTHY CULTURE - FROM THE PEOPLE UP

As part of UL, a trusted name in safety for more than a century, UL Workplace Health and Safety helps employers optimize their occupational health and safety results. We provide the management, analytical, learning and reporting tools they need to succeed, along with the product guidance and industry expertise required to create an enduring culture of health and safety.

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