



Canonsburg General Hospital

Location

Canonsburg, Pennsylvania

Emergency Department

22,000 APV

Solution

- EV physician documentation
- EV nurse documentation
- EV patient tracking

Results

- Decreased patient length of stay by 21%
- Decreased door-to-doctor time by 34%
- Saved more than \$150,000 in five months
- Received maximum reimbursement (more than \$250,000) from the QualityBLUE pay-for-performance program

The Challenge

Pay-for-performance programs have become an increasingly popular (and lucrative) way for hospitals to demonstrate their commitment to improving patient care through proven results. The Canonsburg General Hospital emergency department (ED) set a goal to participate in Highmark BlueCross BlueShield's QualityBLUE Hospital Pay-for-Performance Program, but it first needed to significantly improve patient throughput. The ED sought an accurate, reliable tool to support improved processes and measure effectiveness. The ED needed a solution that would:

- Provide time-stamp reporting to measure effectiveness of processes
- Decrease patient waiting times
- Maximize efficiency while maintaining regulatory compliance
- Improve patient safety and satisfaction

The Solution

After a thorough evaluation process, Canonsburg selected T-System's EV™. Canonsburg Medical Director Jonathan Landis, M.D., was a strong proponent because it was developed specifically for EDs rather than simply being adapted from an enterprise system. He was confident EV would serve as a critical tool in helping Canonsburg improve throughput and allowing Canonsburg to participate in the QualityBLUE program.

Canonsburg implemented the following modules of EV:

- Patient tracking
- Physician documentation
- Nurse documentation

The Results

Not only could clinicians document more quickly and thoroughly in EV, Canonsburg used the EDIS to collect relevant data and make processes more efficient. EV time stamps were used as a performance indicator; staff ran daily reports on admissions, observations and discharges for data verification; the EV “patients arriving by hour” report was used to evaluate staffing needs; and length-of-stay and milestone reports were analyzed.

Upon reviewing this information, Canonsburg was able to:

- Streamline the procedure of calling for an admission bed
- Reduce downtime between shift changes – it decreased downtime by 66% from 90 minutes to only 30 minutes
- Partner with housekeeping to keep the discharged beds clean and available
- Improve communication with the laboratory to ensure notification if a specimen is not received within 30 minutes of order entry
- Coordinate lunch break schedules so that one radiologist is always available to read special studies

As a result of these improved processes, Canonsburg ED staff began seeing impressive results. Among them:

- Patient length of stay decreased by 21% from 280 minutes to 220 minutes, saving visitors an hour of their time and increasing patient satisfaction.
- Door-to-doctor time decreased by 34% from 26 minutes to 17 minutes, allowing patients to be seen faster.

- Revenue increased by 12% as a result of optimized coding and more accurate charge capture through standardized documentation.
- The hospital saved more than \$150,000 in a five-month period as a result of increased throughput.

Not surprisingly, these impressive outcomes allowed Canonsburg to receive maximum reimbursement (more than \$250,000) the first year it entered Highmark’s QualityBLUE Pay-for-Performance Program in the Emergency Department Throughput category. As an added accomplishment, Dr. Landis was invited to present the Canonsburg ED throughput results at the Highmark Best Practices forum.

“We were able to decrease the overall time our patients spent in the ED, whether they were admitted or sent home,” said Dr. Landis. “And less time in the ED results in a much more satisfying experience for those patients.”

