

## Improving Readmission Rates with Innovative Patient Service



HOSPITAL  
TIDELANDS HEALTH

CIRCLES PROGRAM  
SERVICE RESPONSE  
CENTER



### THE PROBLEM

Like many hospitals across the country, Tidelands Health in South Carolina needed a solution that would help them lower readmission rates for recently-discharged patients. Stipulations of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) had them facing reduced reimbursements and hefty penalties if they could not meet the ACA metrics for reducing readmissions among Medicare heart failure, heart attack, pneumonia, elective knee or hip replacements and lung ailments patients.

### A DEEPER LEVEL OF PATIENT CARE

The 298-bed hospital system was already successfully using the Service Response Center (SRC), an innovative customer service program which allows hospitals to offer a deeper level of patient care. SRC serves patients by attending to their non-clinical needs, complementing the clinical care they receive and offering an outstanding patient experience. In today's healthcare landscape of increasingly important HCAHPS scores, SRC is an excellent solution for improving patient satisfaction and solidifying patient loyalty.

Because of the comprehensive service the SRC was already delivering to Tidelands Health patients, it was a natural fit for implementing a post-discharge pilot program for the hospital's recently-discharged patients.

In conjunction with the Tidelands Health Transition Care Team, SRC agents followed up via phone calls with these patients the day after discharge to ascertain that the patients understood and could meet their post-hospital orders for optimal recovery.

*"This service ... [provides] us with a real-time opportunity for ensuring excellence in customer service while supporting optimal patient outcomes."*

MONICA GREY, ASSOCIATE VP TRANSITIONAL CARE, TIDELANDS HEALTH

## EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE, OPTIMAL PATIENT OUTCOMES

By using the SRC to serve patients with a deeper level of care, Tideland Health lowered their readmission rates by a staggering **40% in less than six months**, reducing a previous rate of 14.9% to 9% after implementing the discharge program in the SRC.

Monica Grey, Associate VP Transitional Care at Tideland Health, said the SRC has become an integral part of the hospital's commitment to holistic patient care.

"[Tideland Health] has had the opportunity to partner with [the] Service Response Center in an innovative readmission prevention strategy of centralized post-discharge phone calls. Aligning

clinical and ancillary teams through a scripted and timely follow-up call, this service has enabled Tideland Health to identify and meet the needs of our patients post-discharge. This service aligns with our goal of continuing service to our patients beyond the hospital walls, providing us with a real-time opportunity for ensuring excellence in customer service while supporting optimal patient outcomes."

Lower readmission rates translate directly to dollars for the hospital, ensuring that their Medicare reimbursements remain intact and avoiding significant penalties. But lower readmission rates also translate to patients that are recovering and lives that are getting back on track after illness, an important indication of success in the hospital's population health management strategy. With SRC, Tideland Health is caring for the whole patient, better.

**83%**  
**OF PATIENTS**  
CONTACTED WITHIN 24  
HOURS OF DISCHARGE

HOSPITAL  
READMISSIONS  
**REDUCED BY 40%**  
FROM **14.9%** TO **9%**

## BENEFITS OF THE SERVICE RESPONSE CENTER

Exceptional patient care is at the heart of excellent hospitals. SRC complements hospitals' medical care and help them treat the whole patient.

- **Reduce readmissions** with a customized post-hospital patient care program
- **Improve the patient experience** by addressing patients' personal needs, from meals to transportation to family accommodation

- **Increase patient satisfaction** and watch your HCAHPS scores climb while increasing patient loyalty and referral revenue
- **Distinguish your hospital** by offering services that go beyond clinical care and foster a holistic approach to wellness

*For more information on partnering with Circles for Service Response Center in your hospital, contact your Account Manager.*

**Call toll free: 800.871.7778**