



West Park Hospital of Cody, Wyoming needed an extensive continuing education program to help cut costs and increase their staff's educational compliance.

KEY ISSUES

- Reducing the budget for outside education
- Decrease their internal costs of educating staff
- Increase compliance without interrupting patient care or stressing staffing issues

Situation/Challenge

West Park Hospital needed a comprehensive program to educate their staff in-house. “Most nurses and staff members who required continuing education for re-licensure had to pay on their own to physically go somewhere or pay for online continuing education” stated Anne Wilson, West Park Hospital’s Education Coordinator. As a result, during a year’s time, their travel-associated expenses exceeded \$250,000, with 69% spent on transportation, lodging and meals. Limited individuals were receiving the education they needed, and the facility was left short-staffed. The employees were also tired of the overall inconvenience and stress that comes with travel.

In addition to reducing the budget for outside education, West Park wanted to decrease their internal costs of educating staff and increase compliance without interrupting patient care or stressing staffing issues. They needed an online resource to make their facility-specific courses more convenient since the in-services were not well attended. Anne Wilson shared, “Prior to January 2008, we were fortunate to get 66% of our new staff through new employee orientation within the first six months of hire and were not meeting compliance in this area.”

Solution

West Park Hospital looked for an online education program that served many disciplines with accredited programs, was user friendly and easy to access. After researching five vendors, West Park chose Swank HealthCare.

The Swank website was easy for all staff to use, and the programs could be accessed 24/7 at work or home. The Swank program also offered the widest variety of disciplines with CE. “Many online learning tools focus only on Nursing – we like how Swank has something for everyone,” Anne noted.

Through online demonstrations, Anne quickly learned that making changes in program content online did not require extensive time. She also liked how Swank HealthCare maintained the website which meant fewer obstacles and problems for her to handle as well as reduce internal costs.

"It's wonderful to be able to track who has/has not taken prescribed courses."

TRACKING AND REPORTING FEATURES

- Immediate grading allows instant access to test results and evaluations
- Easy-to-run test statistics help tabulate results and staff save time
- Monitor training by creating groups by department or location

"We are extremely pleased with the Swank HealthCare program and are very impressed with the service we receive. We are confident that we made the right choice."



Results

Excellent customer service was imperative to West Park. Knowing that customers always receive a live person added to the user-friendly characteristics of the Swank program.

While expenditures decreased, compliance for orientation and annual education increased significantly. Last year, Anne implemented their New Employee Orientation course on the Swank Learning Management System (LMS). "Because of the online convenience, we are now 100% compliant with our 10-day timeframe and are 99% compliant with completing the orientation on the first day of employment." Anne also added all of their annual education content to the LMS and was very pleased to see the completion rate increase to over 90% since its implementation, with 98% compliance achieved this year - success they didn't achieve with classroom events.

The Swank program has also saved Anne considerable time as an educator thereby reducing West Park's in-house training expenses. With the LMS tracking features and detailed reports available online, Anne states, "It's wonderful to be able to track who has/has not taken prescribed courses, print duplicate certificates quickly and easily and generate detailed statistics which decreases time spent tracking activities. I have immensely more time to develop our own programs and have significantly reduced my overtime."

Conclusion

Swank HealthCare has proven to be the solution West Park Hospital needed to reduce their continuing education costs while increasing compliance and availability. Today West Park Hospital educates their entire staff for a fraction of the cost, providing them with a hassle-free way to meet their education needs. Swank HealthCare's technology also gave them the opportunity to increase their efficiency with in-house training, allowing all employees to benefit from the program. Anne concluded, "We are extremely pleased with the Swank HealthCare program and are very impressed with the service we receive. We are confident that we made the right choice."

