



Patient and Employee Safety
Practitioner Management
Organizational Compliance

CASE STUDY

RWJBarnabas Health

CHALLENGE:

After the merger of Barnabas and RWJ in 2016, the combined organization faced the daunting task of combining staffs, facilities, and policies. No small feat. Acknowledging the common goal of becoming a high reliability organization, RWJBarnabas saw the need for standardization and the removal of siloed processes and technology in order to develop a cohesive, systemwide strategy for healthcare governance, risk, and compliance (GRCH).

SOLUTION:

RWJBarnabas was determined to achieve a mature GRCH status leveraging the entire Converge platform over an aggressive twelve-month schedule, one step at a time. Kicking off with the Converge Patient and Employee Safety Application, RWJBarnabas moved rapidly, and in just three months, launched a systemwide event management strategy including technology, processes, and communication.

According to Chief Medical Officer Dr. John Bonamo, "The brains, drive, and discipline behind the successful launch was Deborah Larkin Carney, the system's Vice President for Quality."

Carney acknowledged, "We had multiple systems and no one was happy with them. The goal was to collapse four systems and spreadsheets into a single, integrated solution."



Client Information

- 32K employees, 9K physicians, 1K residents and interns
- New Jersey's second largest private employer
- The system includes 11 acute-care hospitals, 3 acute-care children's hospitals and a leading pediatric rehabilitation hospital, a freestanding 100-bed behavioral health center, ambulatory care centers, geriatric centers, the state's largest behavioral health network, comprehensive home care and hospice programs, fitness and wellness centers, retail pharmacy services, a medical group, multi-site imaging centers, and an accountable care organization.



The key to the successful launch was adhering to the Verge Health "best practices" approach rather than trying to customize before the install. "We were able to gain agreement to make changes once the entire team was comfortable with the software, reporting, and processes," Carney said. With strong senior leadership and team leads, they quickly landed on the items that were "have to" versus "want to."

"We were holding our breath about going live in 14 facilities in one day, but a pilot with two of the facilities went well and offered the opportunity to make adjustments prior to the full launch," Carney said.

To date, VP Carney and Dr. Bonamo have had no staff complaints—in fact, they report that the risk managers love it! They have better reporting than ever before, and the burden of reporting is so much less. "Everything is fast and intuitive now, and we are ready for our next launch—the Patient Relations module—coming in just a few weeks," said Carney.

After a recent trip to a National Patient Safety Event Congress, Dr. Bonamo noted that much of the discussion was still centered around manual tools. "And I'm thinking, how much better will this be when it's all automated?"

A seamless system to gather critical data, stay current on all state, federal, and facility regulations, and event information in real time—compliance goes up, more medical errors and near misses are reported, and patients are safer. He said, "Now I know that we absolutely can do something about getting there and staying there."

