

## Trust Builds a Revolution: Communication, Resources, and Unique Services Cause Medical Staff Scores to Soar!

Overlook Hospital, Summit, New Jersey

Physicians, by definition, are *scientists*. They want precision, flexibility, and the right tool for the jobs they do with every patient. They seek to base their treatment decisions on the patient in front of them—not some one-size-fits-all template designed by someone else far away. So it comes as no surprise that one of the most frequent outcomes of heavily centralized health-system control is a drop in medical staff satisfaction and engagement. Part of the Atlantic Health System, Overlook Hospital is a not-for-profit medical facility in Summit, New Jersey. Overlook Hospital achieved something that many organizations fear: a cultural revolution. The results? Among many other accomplishments, Overlook Hospital's overall physician satisfaction jumped from 3.09 to 3.76!

Why the need for a revolution in the first place? Their medical staff had become disillusioned with the hospital's break-even financial performance, the centralized system-level control of day-to-day operations, and a lack of Overlook Hospital-specific marketing. To break this pattern, a solid path of decentralization and hospital-specific plans was created that gave physicians a voice at *every* table.

Linda Kosnik, Chief Nursing Officer for Overlook Hospital, knew that a real cultural revolution begins at home. "We had to listen to *our* doctors. All hospitals in the Atlantic Health System had things in common, but every hospital has unique issues. It was an important step for Atlantic Health System to decentralize operations, management teams, strategic planning, and marketing," said Kosnik. "Just as important was the fact that we didn't push the system away either—even though decentralization was the goal, we all sought to drive *with* the system, as opposed to being driven *by* the system. For example, each hospital in the system was given its own marketing budget, but we all used the same advertising agency."

Grant Knaggs, Director of Business Development and Physician Relations, was among the presenters at our 2005 Annual Client Conference. His presentation (which formed the basis for much of this Success Story) highlighted the path that Overlook Hospital took to achieve their amazing results, and the attendees rated his presentation as among the best of the conference.

### HealthStream Research

HealthStream Research is a national leader in the measurement of physician, employee, patient, and community satisfaction for healthcare organizations. We currently work with more than 1,100 facilities nationwide, including many of the nation's largest for-profit and not-for-profit health systems and specialty healthcare companies.

To set the stage for the revolution, significant changes were made—as revolutions that start with a whimper seldom end with the bang that Overlook Hospital accomplished. “To change the culture of the entire hospital, we knew that everybody had to be involved. By giving everyone a voice at the table, ownership and accountability spread like wildfire!” said Knaggs.

Overlook Hospital and Atlantic Health System crafted the following structural changes:

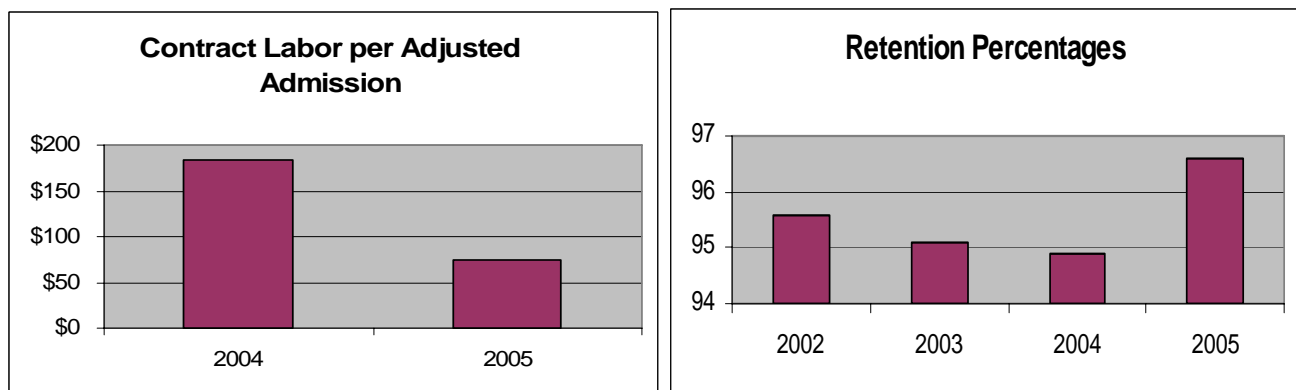
- Management decentralized back to the hospitals
- Local management team structured for each hospital
  - COO
  - Director of Operations
  - Director of Nursing
  - Chief Medical Officer
  - Director of Development and Physicians Relations
- Marketing decentralized; hospital-specific marketing plans
- Strategic plan developed by each hospital
- Business development also driven at the hospital level, *not* the system level

“To craft the plans for Overlook Hospital, we put together a team of more than 115 physicians, community members, and employees from around the hospital. With everyone involved, we were able to uncover powerful issues in very specific areas,” said Knaggs. Their game plan revolved around **Clinical Excellence, Patient Safety, Caring Environment, and Differentiated Services**.

### What Programs Did Overlook Hospital Implement?

For Clinical Excellence and Differentiated Services, look no further than Overlook Hospital’s CyberKnife program. While reclining comfortably on a couch, the CyberKnife robot moves, takes images, and treats the patient. The precise delivery of high dose radiation typically lasts 1 hour, and most patients require no sedation, allowing them to depart upon completion of their treatment

“Our commitment to Clinical Excellence really paid off,” said Knaggs. “Turnover decreased, Contract Labor per Adjusted Admission went down, and Patient Satisfaction scores went up!”



### Differentiated Service and Caring Environment

As a result of the focus on Differentiated Services and Caring Environment, Overlook Hospital launched the highly successful (and award-winning) “Closing the Loop Program.”

## Success Story: Overlook Hospital

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- Patients with negative screening results are immediately scheduled with their physicians for follow up visits
- Patients without physicians were given the a choice of 3 Primary Care Physicians (PCP) within the area, and appointment is made with selected PCP
- Patients with no insurance have appointments made at Overlook Clinics

The results? Something that the physicians *and* patients were happy about!

- 100% increase in number of people screened!
- Physicians *very* engaged in the screenings!

## Improved Communication

There are few drivers of satisfaction more important than communication. With communication, you can accomplish amazing feats; without it, virtually *everything* becomes difficult. “We launched a wide range of communication initiatives that focused on all components—physicians, employees, and patients,” said Kosnik. This was accomplished through a weekly physician newsletter, pre-printed scripts, improved community education and health promotion, and a variety of technological solutions to improve communication and education.”

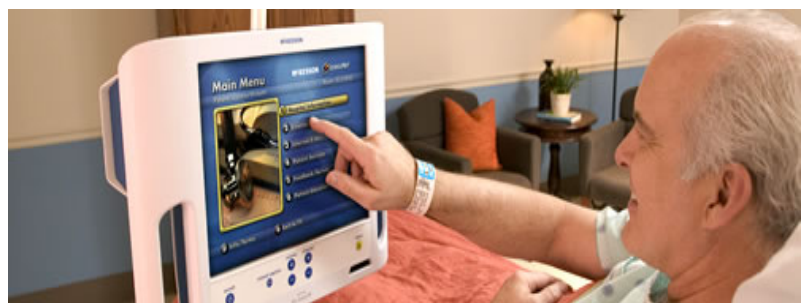
### **Physician Newsletter**

- Newsletter sent EVERY WEEK!
- Sent by fax, email and hard copy placed in the physician lounge
- Highlights current activities within hospital
- Publicizes office managers meeting

“We immediately began receiving great feedback from the physicians as a result of the weekly newsletter. By keeping them informed of the goings-on throughout the hospital, the physicians became more connected to everything. This created an environment where the physicians were able to make highly specific recommendations that were based on the realities of the front lines,” said Knaggs.

Communication initiatives cannot simply focus on one group. HealthStream Research has shown that all groups (physicians, employees, patients) have a tremendous impact on each other. “The more the patient knows and understands, the easier the job gets for the physician. We started several new avenues of communication for patients that have been wildly successful!” beamed Kosnik.

First, there is the unique ‘Virtual Tour’ that Overlook Hospital offers. “Hotels have been doing this for quite some time, and there is a lot that hospitals can learn from the hospitality industry. To maintain security, no exits are shown,” explained Knaggs. “Knowing exactly what to expect gives the patients an added sense of confidence and security.”



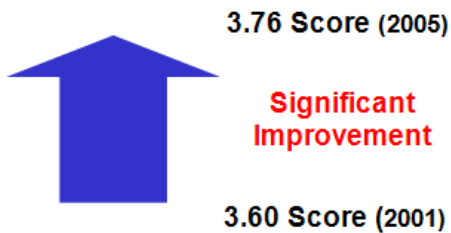
The “Patient Vision” program is a new service that provides patients, physicians, and employees with a touch-screen interface connecting them to a wide range of services and information.

- Patient Vision** provides the following functions:
- Internet access
  - Patient education
  - Movies on demand
  - Order entry point for clinical systems
  - Marketing hospital and services

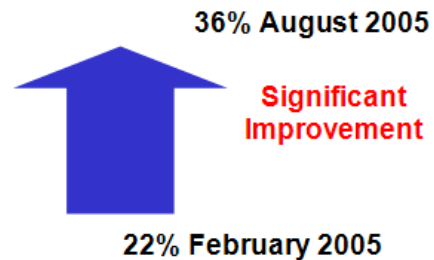
## The Results

“HealthStream Research’s research and recommendations helped put on an amazing path to success. We improved our scores in virtually every area!” exclaimed Kosnik.

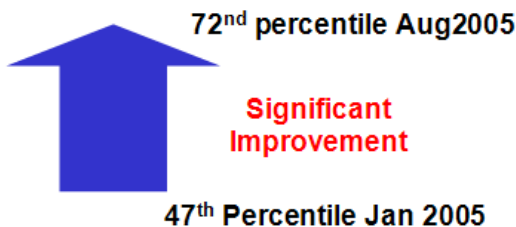
### Medical Staff Satisfaction



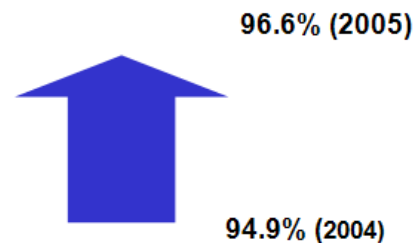
### Advertising Recall



### Patient Satisfaction



### Employee Retention



In their most recent Medical Staff Satisfaction & Engagement survey performed by HealthStream Research, Overlook Hospital’s physicians rated the following attributes at *incredibly* high levels:

93 <sup>rd</sup> percentile	Information systems and computer support
99 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Staffing levels
98 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Medical Executive Committee
96 <sup>th</sup> percentile	The overall quality of the nursing staff
93 <sup>rd</sup> percentile	The overall quality of the nurse managers
90 <sup>th</sup> percentile	The availability of the necessary equipment and supplies
99 <sup>th</sup> percentile	The overall quality of the operating room
99 <sup>th</sup> percentile	How quickly operating rooms are turned over between cases
99 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Operating room scheduling
97 <sup>th</sup> percentile	Anesthesiology services

**Adjusted Admissions**



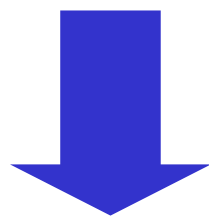
**5% Improvement**

**Total Operating Revenue**



**12% Improvement**

**Total Expense per  
AA/CM Adjusted Bed**



**2% Improvement**

**Operating Margin from Operations**



**3.3%  
Improvement**

### Communicating Success to the Community

Achieving excellence is a major accomplishment. It is not enough to succeed, though—you've got to get the word out to the community. "Patients won't receive the benefits of our excellent services unless they *know* about our excellent services. We had to make sure that we aggressively educated the community about screenings and awareness programs," explained Kosnik.



One of the successful vehicles for getting the word out was through their 'Overlook View' monthly magazine. "It became clear that there was a lot to teach the community. However, to educate them about *everything* they needed to know, we needed a constant communication model. So, we bought our own magazine!" said Knaggs.

- Published every month
- Averages about 52 pages
- 50,000 magazines mailed to residents of key services areas and 3,000 magazines placed in waiting rooms
- All content is designed to promote hospital services
- Revenue is generated through ad sales to cover expenses
- Production, sales and printing are all subcontracted

How well is the publication performing?

- Financially –Actually shows a small profit!
- Market research shows that awareness has gone from 23% to 62% in 11 months
- Physicians have begun to advertise using ads that have been created by this program!

### **Bringing it All Together**

Time and time again, the connections between physicians, employees, patients, and the community become clear. All have an impact on each other. Overlook Hospital's commitment to involving the physicians and increasing communication all around has resulted in improved scores for all groups—and with improved business outcomes as well!

“HealthStream Research’s ability to provide extremely detailed results broken down to the individual unit level dovetailed perfectly with Atlantic Healthcare’s move to decentralize operations. With the new focus on the individual hospitals, we needed to be able to see what was going on at the unit level. The data provided by HealthStream Research allowed us to tailor our initiatives to bring the maximum impact to each area of the hospital,” said Kosnik. “They really helped us measure, improve and thrive!”