Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center CASE STUDY

Conventional CPR education methods still have their place in the healthcare sector, but many classes only briefly reinforce important CPR concepts, often leading to skill degradation. Like other healthcare centers, the **Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center** recognized room for improvement in the way it delivered CPR training. Modern times call for modern solutions. The American Heart Association® (AHA), **Resuscitation Quality Improvement® (RQI®) Program** offered the medical center a new approach that has enhanced CPR quality and improved employee workflow, all while keeping staff excited about delivering high-quality CPR.

Challenge

Medical professionals often look to continuing education to keep their skills sharp and expand their understanding of new concepts. CPR education is a fundamental component of this ongoing training. Traditionally, these courses occur once every two years; between sessions, healthcare providers are expected to rely on their expertise to perform the highest-quality CPR possible.

Before 2014, the **OSU Wexner Medical Center** relied on traditional, instructor-led CPR classes to maintain course certification cards. While the approach was mostly effective in keeping everyone up to date, it had limitations.

For instance, some employees weren't able to attend training sessions as scheduled, causing their certifications to lapse. Team members whose cards lapsed had to then be placed on administrative leave. This created staffing and cost issues, as administrators had to quickly fill unexpected absences with overtime coverage.

> "Greg Norton, the RQI Program coordinator at the medical center, saw an opportunity for improvement. He asked, "Why settle for good when great is within reach?"

Solution

The RQI Program addresses a crucial issue in healthcare: CPR isn't a regular part of many healthcare providers' practices. For some medical professionals, CPR involving actual patients is only an occasional occurrence. For others, their only exposure to CPR is during biennial training.

Unfortunately, this lack of practice can degrade CPR skills, impacting overall effectiveness and potentially patient outcomes. In partnership the AHA and Laderal Medical introduced the RQI Program to help healthcare professionals retain their CPR knowledge and skills.

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RQI is based around a groundbreaking premise of low-dose, high-frequency training, which involves brief and regular practice sessions using **dedicated CPR simulation stations**. During sessions, trainees perform CPR on practice infant or adult manikins (depending on their area of practice), receiving feedback in real time for a variety of metrics. This helps trainees immediately identify areas for improvement. Typically, sessions last less than 30 minutes, making this approach the most convenient method of teaching and assessing CPR skills.

Studies suggest this approach to training leads to higher-quality CPR skills. Norton, a 20-year certified paramedic, shared that his experience was revelatory. "I thought the first time I put my hands on that manikin that it would be easy because I know how to do CPR. But it was a real eye-opener," he said. "I knew that if I could find room for improvement, others could as well."

The **OSU Wexner Medical Center** implemented RQI in phases. Over the course of two years, more than 800 staff members actively used RQI Simulation Stations. Norton emphasized that it was essential to communicate the program's benefits to employees, gradually introducing this positive culture change.

Results

Implementing RQI led to impressive results. Initially, program compliance rates were at 97.1% and 97.2% in back-to-back quarters; noncompliance was associated with medical leave exemptions. The hospital has maintained high compliance rates since then. Thanks to the low-dose, high-frequency format of the RQI training, employees can stay in their work unit and complete their tasks during work hours.

"Providing high-quality patient care isn't just about keeping your card current — it's about making sure you can do the best quality CPR, and RQI really lends itself to that improvement," Norton said.

Ultimately, RQI has helped staff feel more confident in their skills, as it addresses the competence-based requirements for accreditation as established by The Joint Commission. "Employees feel like they're doing a better job with actual patients because what they're learning on the manikin is becoming muscle memory and habit for them," Norton explained.

Boost in Employee Confidence Impacts Patient Care

Beyond the compliance rates, the real success of RQI lies in its impact on patient care. Employees have reported that the skills they learned during RQI training have become instinctual.

> "Employees are aware of RQI, and folks from management are constantly asking, 'When are we getting that?'" Norton noted. "People are eager and excited and taking to RQI very quickly. It's a program that will continue to grow and be appreciated here."