



Conway Regional Health System includes a 154-bed acute care medical center that provides patients with a variety of services, including heart health, cancer care, women’s health, surgery and rehabilitation. The health system has more than 200 physicians on staff, more than 1,200 employees and approximately 100 volunteers.

PROVIDER STORY

New guidelines drove a change in CPR training methods at Conway Regional Health System. Just one year into the American Heart Association’s new training program, the system is seeing higher-quality CPR and saving 33 percent in training costs.

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— **C.J. Newton, MSN, RN**
*Director of Education and Magnet Program Director
Conway Regional Health System*



CHALLENGE

Conway Regional Health System had used both traditional and online learning for training, including Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).

But when C.J. Newton, MSN, RN, director of education and Magnet program director, viewed the changes contained in the 2015 AHA courses, she knew her organization would need to alter its methods. “The amount of time mandated for us to do the ACLS and PALS in the same manner we had been doing them with the blended learning option was no longer going to be feasible for our organization,” she said. “And schedule-wise, many employees — particularly night staff — were going to have to make more than one visit to our training center, and that would be a big dissatisfier.”



SOLUTION

The American Heart Association’s (AHA) Resuscitation Quality Improvement (RQI)® program would prove to be the ideal solution. RQI addresses that CPR is not a part of many health care providers’ regular practice. With a lack of use and practice, CPR compression and ventilation skills degrade and overall CPR effectiveness is reduced.

RQI’s groundbreaking premise says that brief and regular practice — “low-dose/high-frequency” training — leads to higher-quality CPR skills.

Sarah Luyet, BS, Conway Regional’s education program coordinator and American Heart Association training center coordinator, learned of RQI at an industry conference and brought the idea back to Conway Regional for consideration.

Newton was impressed when she witnessed RQI’s capabilities. “I caught the bug, if you will,” she said. “**I remember thinking it would be great if we could make it happen.**”



RQI Cart

AHA's subscription-based RQI program:

- Is a cloud-based turnkey resuscitation quality improvement service from the AHA, with learning technology from Laerdal Medical Corporation.
- Delivers on-going resuscitation education and skills improvement, online and via simulation stations at the point-of-care.
- Includes an adult and infant manikin and a laptop at each station, providing real-time, high-fidelity audio and visual feedback on skills performance.
- Delivers cognitive learning modules which include educational videos, eSimulation patient cases and exam questions. As cognitive modules are successfully completed over the course of a two year period, students participate in self-directed, quarterly skills practice averaging 10 minutes each to sustain skills competency.
- Renews AHA course completion cards, allowing staff to obtain a perpetual card and continuously meet their credentialing requirements.
- Analytics for RQI track and measure CPR performance.

RQI's initial cost was a brief stumbling block for Newton, but not for long. "I did a quick estimate of what we were spending, then compared that to what we would be spending under the new guidelines, and that was probably the biggest selling factor for us," she said. **"The improved quality of CPR was certainly important to us, but in a very practical sense, the financial improvement that RQI offered sealed the deal."**



RESULTS

Conway Regional began using RQI in October 2016. "Our employees were so excited," said Luyet. "They knew RQI was coming and they couldn't wait for us to roll it out. We had no pain points during implementation and we had all the help and services we needed."

Approximately 755 employees improve their CPR skills with RQI. Employees who do not complete their quarterly RQI assignments cannot work, but only about 10 employees quarterly show up on that list. Conway Regional also requires all employees who need CPR certification to participate in RQI. "It's easier for us to track that way, and it reinforces quality, because we know all of our employees are practicing their skills quarterly," said Newton.

Employee feedback has been positive. One labor and delivery nurse with more than 30 years of experience reported "that she had always been afraid that people in the community would expect her to know exactly what to do when it comes to CPR because she is a nurse, and yet she only does CPR once every two years in a classroom," said Newton. "She said that for once, **she feels confident in her skills.**"

Some of the more experienced emergency department and critical care staff members have complimented RQI's immediate visual and verbal feedback. "They've said things to me like, 'I didn't realize how fast I was doing compressions,'" said Newton.

RQI's real-time audio/visual feedback is "critical to the success of the program," said Luyet. "They feel more confident in their skills and what they're doing because they're receiving immediate feedback."

The health system is now spending approximately 33 percent less than it would have on its previous blended learning option. "Financially, we feel like RQI did exactly what we anticipated, which has been **extremely positive for our organization,**" said Newton.

Newton encourages health care organizations that may be trying to justify purchasing RQI to see the bigger picture. "To see RQI's financial impact in a positive way, **you need to look at it from the entire organization's perspective** — not just the education department's perspective," she said. "I couldn't just compare the education staff's salary dollars to the amount that we would spend on RQI. The real savings is in front-line employees' salary dollars for the time they're sitting in a classroom doing skills checks, plus their computer time."

Luyet wants her peers to know that RQI can become a reality. "It's not out of reach, financially or otherwise" she said. "I encourage everyone to consider the program in-depth before you say it can't be done."

For more information, contact us at
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