

# Main Line Health Faces Growth Challenges Head-On With CPR Blended-Learning Format



American  
Heart  
Association.



Founded in 1985, **Main Line Health**® is a not-for-profit health system serving portions of Philadelphia and its western suburbs. The system includes four acute care hospitals – Lankenau Medical Center, Bryn Mawr Hospital, Paoli Hospital and Riddle Hospital – as well as Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital, Mirmont Treatment Center, HomeCare & Hospice, Main Line Health Centers, Lankenau Institute for Medical Research, and Main Line HealthCare. Main Line Health is one of only 22 health systems in the U.S. to receive System Magnet® designation, the nation’s highest distinction for nursing excellence, from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

## PROVIDER STORY

Managers and educators at this rapidly growing health system faced a confluence of challenges around delivering continuous CPR training and keeping employees current. The system turned to the American Heart Association’s HeartCode® blended learning program—a combination of online and hands-on learning—for its versatility and convenience that both employees and managers appreciate.

“This new training modality has definitely increased people’s confidence and their skill sets.”

— **Kristen Woodruff, MPH, CHES**  
**Program Manager: Critical Incident  
Response Team/HeartCode  
Main Line Health**



## CHALLENGE

In early 2014, **Main Line Health** decided to streamline its CPR training. Previously, staff members could gain or retain their Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) credentials using a variety of training methods. The majority attended on-site classes provided by an outside agency. Some trained at other area AHA – accredited training sites, while others started to complete their cognitive training online.

Although a variety of options were available for the employees, the opportunity for consistency in evaluation of competency and a streamlined process for documentation made sense. Prior to HeartCode, managers and educators would juggle scheduling conflicts to adhere to unit and census demands and pre-scheduled classes. External, instructor-led classes could require employees to be off-site for either a portion of, or the full day – requiring the health system to back-fill their roles.

In addition, monitoring and maintaining course completion cards and holding employees accountable also proved challenging. “If you have a large department with 100 people like the emergency room, for example, it’s difficult to get everyone to bring in their cards, get copies of those cards and keep track of everyone’s credentials,” said Kristen Woodruff, MPH, CHES, Program Manager, Critical Incident Response Team and HeartCode.

Those issues are often compounded by employees who do not complete the required course until shortly before their deadline. The HeartCode process provided Main Line Health the ability to have documentation of credentials immediately within the organization’s learning management system.

“We were looking for standardization of competency and a standardized yet streamlined process. We wanted to ensure that all of our staff members were confident and able to provide high-quality CPR for our patients,” said Woodruff.

For more information on HeartCode courses, visit **OnlineAHA.org**

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### AHA's HeartCode blended learning courses:

- Standardize content and delivery of high-quality resuscitation training for consistency
- Enable training of large numbers of students across different care settings and varied locations
- Allow students to complete the cognitive portion of the courses online anywhere, anytime at their own pace
- Are designed for sequential learning to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills
- Use eSimulation technology that allows students to treat patients in virtual, life-like situations and receive immediate feedback
- Include hands-on CPR skills practice and testing to ensure students are performing high-quality CPR



## SOLUTION

In June 2014, Main Line Health transitioned to AHA's HeartCode blended learning program for its BLS, ACLS and PALS courses. The self-directed, comprehensive blended learning program includes cognitive learning online, followed by a hands-on skills session with an instructor or voice-assisted manikin (VAM) to ensure skills competency. To demonstrate support for the change in training methods, Main Line Health's Chief Nursing Officer served as an executive sponsor for the program. The Director of Nursing Education led the transition from traditional, instructor-led classes to HeartCode, which began with nursing then ultimately expanded to additional departments system wide.

"As with any change in process, employees expressed some hesitation. There was a learning curve in the beginning but everyone who has experienced the new training says they like it better," said Woodruff.



## RESULTS

HeartCode and its use of blended learning has helped Main Line Health keep up with increased training demands. From 2015 to 2017, the percentage of employees taking BLS increased by 36 percent, ACLS increased by 16 percent and PALS increased by 18 percent.

The organization has also experienced cost and efficiency benefits by conducting CPR training internally. HeartCode has helped managers streamline the time they spend managing employee renewals. Managers receive reports containing the names of employees whose course completion cards will expire in 90 days and then again at regular intervals as the expiration date nears. The system also notifies the employees via email when their credential is 45 days from expiration and then follows up with routine reminders as the expiration date approaches.

Staff satisfaction rates are high, and employees appreciate the flexibility of the blended learning approach. Evaluation feedback has been very positive, according to Woodruff. "We have a greater than 90 percent confidence rate on both course completion questions, 'Am I confident I can use the skills I was taught?' and 'Will I respond to an emergency because of the skills I learned during the course?' This new training modality has definitely increased people's confidence and their skill sets."

The VAMs help employees strengthen their skills. "Employees comment frequently that they appreciate the feedback about their compressions and ventilations," said Woodruff. "Especially with ventilations, it's easy to ventilate too fast. And with compressions, the VAM really helps ensure the correct rate and depth."

"Every organization is unique and should explore what type of resuscitation and CPR training option works best for their organization," said Woodruff. "Main Line Health has been very satisfied with the HeartCode program."