The Challenge. In 2012, Community Hospital South (CHS) set about expanding services to meet the growing needs of the patients in the Indianapolis area. CHS administration also anticipated the significant impact of its EPIC EMR roll-out set for August 2012. In order to support this institutional change and the desired growth, CHS required significant operational assistance and expertise to drive patient care quality and improve overall emergency department (E.D.) efficiency and performance. CHS needed a proven solution and recognized EmCare as the right partner to provide expert execution and support. EmCare's recruiting and retention capabilities would ensure a strong local group practice backed by experienced divisional support and extensive national resources.

The Solution. Upon starting the emergency medicine partnership in June 2012, EmCare implemented a customized staffing model with effective physician leadership, mid-level providers and scribes. EmCare began by recruiting an E.D. Department Chair as well as retaining the existing Site Medical Director (SMD) and strong clinical providers. The Chair and SMD worked as a team in collaboration with nurse leaders and administration to improve the department. To establish a foundation for success, EmCare provided extensive leadership development support; the hospital CEO, E.D. Department Chair, SMD and E.D. Nurse Manager all attended EmCare's National Leadership Conference.

The EmCare clinical services team proposed operational best practices including bedside triage and a fast track program the hospital calls “Express Care.” The team implemented a more efficient provider staffing model which directly correlated patient arrivals and acuity with hours of coverage. A focus also was placed on appropriate utilization of mid-level providers to help drive down length of stay for patients who would be discharged. A foundation of continuous quality improvement and Lean methodologies was put in place to improve metrics and create a more satisfying experience for E.D. patients.

Specific initiatives included:

- Lean
- Continuous quality improvement
- Individual and team Studer Group® coaching (AIDET® and Rounding)
- Utilization of scribes
- Implementation of EPIC EMR

The Results. Strong leadership and operational expertise paid off with significant metric improvements in less than six months:

- **Left Without Being Seen Rates:**
  - Dropped from 3.8 percent to 0.24 percent.

- **Average E.D. Length of Stay:**
  - Improved from 351 minutes to 281 minutes.

- **E.D. Volume:**
  - Annual E.D. volume has increased from 34,625 visits to 41,425 visits.