

STRONG ED LEADERSHIP HELPS IN HANDLING SIGNIFICANT VOLUME INCREASES

Los Alamitos Medical Center Los Alamitos, California
Annual ED Visits: 20,000

Challenge. The patient volume at Los Alamitos Medical Center in California was growing – and to keep pace, the emergency department would need to grow as well. Several neighboring EDs had closed their doors, impelling Los Alamitos to care for an increasing number of patients.

Los Alamitos needed a strong medical director to work with the administration and nursing leadership on reducing wait times, improving patient throughput processes and staying on top of staffing needs and patient satisfaction indicators. Los Alamitos senior leaders turned to EmCare, a leader in physician services with a reputation for providing innovative solutions and strong physician leadership.

Solution. EmCare[®] first conducted an intricate assessment of the ED's needs by evaluating patient flow operations, interviewing key staff and surveying the patient population. EmCare also combed through its extensive national database of clinicians to recruit a core group of emergency providers.

A new medical director was brought on board and immediately began collaborating with the ED's nursing leadership on patient rounding and implementation of client service measures from the Studer Group, EmCare's long-time partner in boosting patient satisfaction. EmCare also worked with the hospital's leadership to accelerate throughput by identifying equipment needs and improving communication between emergency physicians and the cardiology department, radiologists and patients' primary care physicians. Additionally, the hospital implemented an electronic medical record program and became EmCare's first partnering facility on the West Coast to implement a medical scribe program.

Results. Since joining forces with EmCare, Los Alamitos Medical Center has been able to decrease its LWOT rate by 58 percent, and maintain its discharge length of stay under the national average at 2.9 hours. The hospital implemented an online program which allows low-acuity patients to view ED wait times and register online to see a physician while waiting at home before coming to the hospital. Client service initiatives, such as 100 percent physician rounding, have boosted patient satisfaction, leading the hospital to exceed state HCAHPS averages for "doctor communication." The hospital was recognized with a Certificate of Distinction by the Joint Commission for coronary artery disease services and was the first hospital in California to receive the Joint Commission's Advanced Heart Failure Certificate.



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