CHALLENGES

- Challenging to manage and track continuing education
- Struggling to easily launch and roll out new professional development program

RESULTS

- Enhanced employee performance management
- Streamlined class development and learning process
- Improved creation and tracking of continuing education
- Gained robust reporting system
- Enabled smooth rollout of new professional development pathway

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Crouse Hospital Uses Performance Manager and NetLearning to Enhance Professional Development

When your organization's mission is to provide the best in patient care and promote community health, professional development is essential to delivering on that promise. Crouse Hospital in upstate New York took its professional development program to new levels by using HealthcareSource Performance Manager® and HealthcareSource NetLearning® to manage employee professional growth and to launch its Professional Nursing Pathway.

Using Talent and Learning Management Systems to Great Effect

Crouse Hospital in Syracuse, New York runs the first and largest outpatient surgery program in Central New York, and is the first hospital in New York State to be designated a chest pain and heart failure center by the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care. Crouse was already using NetLearning and recently also started using Performance Manager. According to Sarah Peterman, Talent and Learning Management Systems Administrator for Crouse Hospital, the hospital has realized tremendous benefits using these solutions alone and in their integrated state.

Taking Employee Performance to New Heights

In the event the hospital is asked to retrieve files for review by state regulators, rather than pull information and transcripts from various locations (such as the file room and departmental file cabinets), it can simply display all scanned files and documents online via Performance Manager. At the same time, it can easily run a custom-built report showing employee competencies by organization, department and title. Plus, within Performance Manager, HR and managers can drill down into departments to view average scores by competency and pinpoint where it needs to target education resources. NetLearning also makes it possible to assign computer-based learning (CBL) or a live class to just those employees that need to attend, ensuring that an entire department is not out attending training unnecessarily. It also saves the costs and time associated with continually adjusting schedules.

Automating employee performance appraisals with Performance Manager ensures managers no longer have to track appraisal dates. Performance Manager automatically sends self-appraisals to the right employees at the right time. In addition, Crouse can quickly report on certifications when applying for grants or reimbursements. The hospital also scans in all CE credits earned and uploads them into Performance Manager so employees, managers and HR can easily determine compliance with state laws.

Streamlining On-The-Job Learning

Numerous people throughout Crouse also see NetLearning as a tremendous asset. The hospital's educators can quickly and easily add classes, and record and report on attendance and final results. Administrators find the dashboard easy to use, and enjoy streamlined access to all needed information and features. "We especially appreciate that NetLearning is tailored to the healthcare industry and our employee population," explains Peterman. "Rather than create new courses, our education department can simply access existing courses geared toward healthcare. Moreover, they

can integrate records from other systems so employees have a single transcript. We can automate and integrate so much using NetLearning that it alleviates us of a significant number of tasks," continues Peterman.

According to Peterman, NetLearning's flexibility is a game changer for the hospital. Before using NetLearning, administrators processed and kept track of lots of paper related to employee professional development. The process was paper-intensive—involving paper transcripts and hand-written class rosters—and time-intensive when it came to filing papers. Plus, because the previous learning management system lacked pre-built content and did not make reporting easy, it was a challenge to track and manage professional development. That's all changed with NetLearning in place: the hospital can easily record classes that employees complete, create and track education-related records, and generate reports. If someone is supposed to complete a CBL by a certain date, HR can inform department managers so they can follow up with their employees.

Integration between Performance Manager and NetLearning allows Crouse to easily see courses taken and scheduled while looking at an employee's performance appraisal. It also makes it possible for managers to easily add or remove employees from classes as they are discussing the employee's annual performance plan.

Many classes that were previously delivered in person are now done via the computer, freeing up classrooms for other uses and minimizing the need to print handouts. Crouse can even minimize in-service training, such as around Ebola and personal protective equipment by recording a video and assigning it as a CBL for employees to complete on their own time. All of this translates to a huge time savings, allowing staff time to focus on other responsibilities.

Serving the Needs of Those Outside of the Hospital

Via the hospital's HRIS feed, Crouse's employees can also access NetLearning to track their continuing education credits—even from home. As Peterman explains, offsite access enabled Crouse's contracted employees and home-based employees such as transcriptionists to take care of learning tasks. It also provided employees without an office to complete important education in quiet, comfortable surroundings. Even college students taking classes via Crouse can track their progress via NetLearning. "We hire quite a few nurses once they graduate from local colleges and it's terrific when they don't have to retake a course and are already familiar with our learning management system," says Peterman.

Gaining a Solid Foundation for Professional Development

When Crouse Hospital recently introduced a clinical ladder for registered nurses (RNs) called the Professional Nursing Pathway (PNP), the integration between Performance Manager and NetLearning turned out to be a huge bonus. While an internal committee had developed the mission and objectives for the program—comprising about 100 pieces of paper—it had struggled with how to execute and track it. The committee had proposed publicizing the program via emails, publications and departmental meetings, and planned to print application and verification forms for each department and HR. However, it had not considered reporting or how to deal with outdated printed copies.

When the hospital's HR department was approached to bring structure to the rollout and program, Peterman realized they could use Performance Manager and NetLearning to make the process easy for both RNs, their managers, and HR. Using the integrated solutions along with Single Sign-on made it possible to address what would have otherwise been an onerous, manual process.

With Performance Manager and NetLearning, Crouse can easily offer and manage CBLs and provide electronic versions of PDF forms like the program handbook. It can also incorporate the PNP process into the performance appraisal process, and run reports to see program enrollment and participant status. RNs can accrue some points toward the PNP by teaching classes, and through NetLearning, Crouse can track this and easily calculate points earned toward the PNP credential.

Moreover, Crouse can automatically send out reminders to managers and nurses about upcoming due dates. It can also send out congratulation letters once an RN completes the program, which signifies that the nurse has earned a new designation for his or her work badge.

Tapping into Integration and a True Partner for Measurable Benefits

According to Peterman, Crouse's department managers often mention how the integrated nature of the HealthcareSource solutions simplifies their daily lives. "Through Performance Manager and NetLearning, we've been able to easily create our professional nurse pathway. The solutions make building blocks for development plans, like job descriptions and competency plans, easily accessible. Plus, once we define a career pathway, we can assign it to many employees. And we can validate course completion all in one system," says Peterman.

Moreover, Peterman and the hospital's managers appreciate that HealthcareSource takes their feedback into account as new solution features and updates are being development. "Providing tools to help our managers to work smarter rather than harder is my aim, and HealthcareSource makes that possible. We see HealthcareSource as a partner not a vendor because they truly enhance their solutions to help us address our needs," concludes Peterman.

ABOUT CROUSE HOSPITAL

Location: Syracuse, New York

Overview: Since 1887, Crouse Hospital has been caring for generations of Central New Yorkers. A private, not-for-profit hospital, Crouse is licensed for 506 acute-care beds and 57 bassinets. Each year it serves more than 23,000 inpatients, 66,000 emergency services patients and more than 250,000 outpatients from a 15-county area in Central and Northern New York. In Central New York, Crouse serves as a Regional Level 4 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and the only hospital-based substance-abuse treatment facility.

Employees: 2,700

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