



# Methodist Health System optimizes care across its system

Methodist Health System (Dallas, Texas) leaders worked together with Huron to conduct a comprehensive review of their operations in order to further the organization's vision of delivering compassionate, quality healthcare in their communities.

## Challenge

Market forces such as a changing payor mix, increasing costs and a shift to value-based payments spurred Methodist Health System ("Methodist Health") to make proactive changes that would strengthen the organization's financial future. The members of the leadership team understood that to continue providing excellent, affordable care and better position the organization for a shift to value-based care, they needed to optimize care delivery. Additionally, Methodist Health sought to minimize care variation across various clinical processes.

## Results

- **\$19M** in implemented annual benefit
- **27%** reduction in LOS at Methodist Charlton
- **19%** reduction in LOS at Methodist Dallas
- Communication with doctors increased from **38th** to **71st** percentile at Methodist Charlton
- Communication with nurses increased from **29th** to **70th** percentile at Methodist Charlton

“Huron brought in a diverse team with expertise in labor productivity, nursing, clinical documentation and revenue cycle functions to work alongside our team. They were organized, effective and efficient and we achieved the full savings we anticipated.”

— Pamela Stoyanoff,  
President and Chief Operating Officer,  
Methodist Health System

## Approach

To realize its vision of a more efficient and effective health system, Methodist Health worked with Huron on a sustainable and holistic approach that improved clinical throughput while optimizing productivity and maintaining quality of care.

For the team, the goal of effective care delivery meant getting patients home when medically ready with the best possible clinical outcomes; the goal of efficient care delivery was to make it easier for care teams to do their jobs.

Strategies with Huron focused on improving inpatient and observation length-of-stay management strategies, decreasing care variation across clinical processes, and improving emergency department operations and workforce productivity at Methodist Charlton Medical Center and Methodist Dallas Medical Center.

**Achieving transformative change through improved workforce management.** Huron and Methodist Health leaders collaborated to standardize and optimize workforce management practices

and processes, resulting in improved workforce productivity and financial viability.

The teams used enhanced daily staffing tools and techniques to increase productivity and sustain implemented changes. As part of the approach, Huron collaborated with Methodist Health leadership and staff to customize cost center staffing grids and productivity targets, allowing for better cost control. Customized implementation and training of web-based shift management tools supported productivity improvements and helped struggling departments develop action plans to meet defined productivity targets.

**Reducing the cost of patient care by focusing on coordination, consistency and excellence in delivery.** Methodist Health and Huron collaborated on several clinical operations initiatives to improve consistency and reduce the cost of patient care. The teams focused on inpatient and observation length-of-stay (LOS) reduction, patient status management and care variation management.

Interdisciplinary care coordination improved through more efficient and productive meetings and daily multidisciplinary care rounds that included the right stakeholders, standardized follow-up processes, and improved tools and dashboards. With the implementation of more efficient rounds, Methodist Charlton Medical Center achieved significant improvements in patient satisfaction as measured by the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS), including percentile rank increases in nurse communication, doctor communication and care transition domains.

To help resolve possible operational inefficiencies that were a barrier to reducing LOS, existing electronic health record (EHR) system resources and workflows were optimized to include LOS-specific data and action plans. Results included a 19% reduction in LOS at Methodist Dallas Medical Center and a 27% reduction in LOS at Methodist Charlton Medical Center.

The teams created processes and escalation protocols for emergency department (ED) status management and improved workflows to help prevent costly, unnecessary inpatient admissions and facilitate more effective ED discharge planning, providing a better consumer experience and further engaging patients in their health and wellness.

Working with the Methodist Health informatics team and physician executives, the teams helped improve care variation management processes. This included initiatives to help physicians adopt more efficient evidence-based standards of care, leading to more consistent and efficient care.

Methodist Health System has become one of the leading healthcare providers in North Texas, with 11 wholly owned and/or affiliated hospitals and more than 30 access points across the state. The system's network of acute care, teaching hospitals and medical centers includes Methodist Charlton Medical Center (MCMC) and Methodist Dallas Medical Center (MDMC), with over 600 beds and more than 250 highly skilled physicians on its medical staff.



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