

# Mohawk Valley Health System Transforms Clinical Operations and Culture

After internal attempts to turnaround St. Luke's acute care hospital fell short, Mohawk Valley Health System engaged Huron for help improving clinical operations and culture at the organization. Results included reversing the previously increasing LOS trend to record-level lows for St. Luke's. Decreasing reimbursement levels were replaced with financial benefits exceeding \$4.1 million with \$2 million in annual savings from clinical documentation improvements.

## Challenge

Economic challenges and changes in healthcare led to decreasing reimbursement levels at a time when length of stay was increasing at St. Luke's Hospital, an acute care facility operated by Mohawk Valley Health System. Leadership undertook several internal initiatives but determined they needed to do more to gain traction, remain competitive and prepare for the changing healthcare environment.

## Results

Total overall financial benefit exceeded **\$4.1 million**

Clinical documentation improvements resulted in annual savings of over **\$2 million**

**Record low** length of stay (LOS)

## Approach

Working collaboratively with hospital executives, physicians and department leaders, Huron addressed key areas of clinical operations improvement with proven processes and tools.

**Reducing length of stay (LOS).** Huron identified and addressed clinical services challenges that were leading to longer LOS. In doing so, St. Luke's LOS was reduced to its lowest level ever.

“Huron helped create a cultural transformation. The savings will go on for years, but it was more than just cost cutting, it was a way of improving our care that also helps us financially. That's a win for everyone.”

**PATRICIA ROACH, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT  
AND CHIEF NURSING OFFICER,  
MOHAWK VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM**

**Coordinating care management.** By instituting daily interdisciplinary rounds, Huron helped St. Luke's improve patient throughput, deliver the right care at the right time and decrease readmissions.

**Increasing case mix and reimbursement.** Huron provided extensive clinical documentation improvement (CDI) training, physician education and proprietary software to significantly improve the accuracy of coding which increased the case mix and reimbursement.

**Creating utilization dashboards.** Working with the chief medical officer, Huron developed dashboards for all physicians, showing how their individual metrics compared against internal and national benchmarks.

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Mohawk Valley Health System operates St. Luke's campus acute care hospital in Utica, NY. It has 300 beds and more than 15,00 discharges annually.

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