

# Case Study



## Holy Cross Hospital

*Holy Cross Hospital Uses Allegiance to Improve Patient Satisfaction, Streamline its Feedback Management Processes, and Achieve Instant Regulatory Compliance*

Holy Cross Hospital is a full-service, nonprofit Catholic hospital located in the heart of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. It includes nearly 600 beds and provides services—including cancer care, vascular care, women’s health services, maternal and child services, and other services—to more than 15,000 inpatients each year. Holy Cross has been named a “best hospital” by *U.S. News & World Report* and has also been recognized as a “distinguished hospital for clinical excellence” by HealthGrades.

### Modernizing Outdated Systems and Processes

For years, Holy Cross Hospital, which encompasses 3,000 associates, 625 medical doctors, 90 departments and 33 medical offices, kept all of its patient complaints, concerns, grievances and suggestion logs in hand-written notebooks. As a result, over the years, the organization had amassed more than 50 notebooks’ worth of patient feedback and issues. This made it difficult for the hospital to fully and quickly understand patient needs and concerns without doing several hours of homework.

To streamline and organize its patient feedback and grievance processes, the hospital needed a way to efficiently gather this information from across its organization. Plus, like all hospitals, Holy Cross is required to keep a patient complaint log up-to-date and on file. If a government regulatory or state agency shows up to investigate a patient complaint, the hospital has to be able to provide the agency with that information on a moment’s notice or risk being fined and/or penalized.

“When any of our state regulatory agencies walk in to investigate a complaint, we have to have that information immediately. We can’t be looking through binders,” said Gina Seneca, Manager of Guest Relations at Holy Cross Hospital.

*“I’m a big believer in the Allegiance system because I use the system and I see the value that it brings not only to our department, but also to the organization as a whole. It saves a ton of time and a ton of paper work. And, it makes my job so much more efficient.”*

– Gina Seneca, Manager of Guest Relations, Holy Cross Hospital



### CHALLENGE

- Holy Cross had difficulty gathering and tracking patient feedback/grievances across 90 departments & 33 medical offices.
- Patient complaint and grievance logs were previously being kept in notebooks; Needed to streamline its patient feedback management efforts.
- Needed to be able to instantly generate reports for unannounced regulatory agency audits.

### ALLEGIANCE SOLUTION

#### PatientVoice™

### RESULTS

- Improved patient satisfaction scores (as measured by regular NRC Picker satisfaction surveys).
- Reduced time required to gather info on individual patient issues from several hours or days to less than a few minutes.
- Now able to generate reports for regulatory agencies at a moment’s notice.
- Holy Cross has been able to increase the amount of feedback that it gets by 50%.

Holy Cross Hospital has been using Allegiance solutions to immediately generate reports in the event of a regulatory audit, as well as using it along with NRC Picker to track and improve its patient satisfaction.

Holy Cross knew that traditional feedback management methods might make it difficult for its organization to gather and cross-reference the type of feedback that it needed from patients as well as its 90 departments. In addition, the organization needed to get reports to the appropriate people quickly to address patient concerns and needs in a timelier manner.

### Improving Patient Satisfaction by Resolving Issues Quickly

In January 2006, Holy Cross implemented Allegiance PatientVoice™, a Web-based feedback management system and a component of the Allegiance Engage platform, to help it streamline and organize its patient feedback management and complaint resolution processes across its organization. The hospital also used the Allegiance system to immediately generate reports in the event of a regulatory audit, and employed it along with NRC Picker (i.e. patient experience surveys) to track and improve its patient satisfaction.

Since implementing the Allegiance system, Holy Cross has been able to significantly reduce the amount of time that it takes the hospital to gather information and report on individual patient issues from several hours or days to less than a few minutes.

"Now, with the Allegiance system, I'm able to get all of the information that we need and give resolution to my VPs and senior administration team in a matter of minutes," Seneca says. "It has also made it easier for our patients to get their questions or comments directly to our hospital's decision makers."

The system has also enabled Holy Cross to track more and different types of patient feedback, as well as increase the amount of feedback that it gets by 50 percent. "Not only does the Allegiance PatientVoice system track, trend and organize my complaints, but it can do that for compliments, suggestions and questions as well," Seneca says. "It's really got us organized as far as dates, times, places, patient names, etc. It's nice to be able to go to the customer page, create a filter and look for a patient either by date, by name or by the account. That has really come in handy for us."

Seneca recalls how in 2007, one of the governing regulatory agencies showed up to do an unannounced patient audit and wanted to see all of Holy Cross' patient logs. Because of this experience, Seneca says, "I learned real quick what the Allegiance system meant and how important it is to us."

Thus, in addition to needing this information to make ongoing process improvements in order to comply with government mandates and improve its patient care, the ever-looming fear of an unannounced regulatory agency audit has also driven Holy Cross to be better organized. This ensures that the hospital always has all of the

information that it needs to have in its database, which is especially important since some patient issues are more complicated and can take longer to resolve.

"Some patient issues might take several weeks to resolve because of the investigations involved, and they may have to go to multiple people for authority and resolution. I keep all of those details—who had it, who's working on it, what various people's input has been, etc.—so, the documentation can get very detailed," Seneca says. "It is nice to be able to go 'paperless' and have all of the issues in all of the categories organized."

Seneca says the Allegiance system has also helped her and Holy Cross Hospital as a whole to be more productive. And it has also helped the hospital improve its patient satisfaction scores.

"Previously, we had triplicate tracking sheets with basically the same information, which had to be manually compiled, sorted and analyzed. Now, I can go online from wherever I am, review the feedback, route it to the appropriate department or individual, produce reports on aggregated feedback data, and close resolved cases," Seneca said. "My productivity has definitely improved because I'm not sitting here hand-writing reports and then faxing and e-mailing those reports to the director for resolution. All of the information is in the system. With a couple of quick clicks of a button, I'm sending them to a manager for resolution."

As for the feedback she's getting internally about the Allegiance system Seneca says, "The feedback that I'm getting is phenomenal. The entire organization—the management and the leadership team—feels confident that we have this system in place. We've already seen the value of it when there have been investigations."

Seneca adds: "I'm a big believer in the Allegiance system because I use the system and I see the value that it brings not only to our department, but also to the organization as a whole. It saves a ton of time and a ton of paper work, and it makes my job so much more efficient."

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