

ActiveTRACK Reduces Wait Times by 75% at an Acute Care Facility in the Chicago Suburbs



"Honestly, I really can't say enough about HealthWare Systems' customer service. They've done spectacular with us."

-Director of Patient Access of an Acute Care Facility in the Chicago Suburbs

The featured acute care facility is part of a large healthcare system that is a leading employer in the state of Illinois and one of the top healthcare systems in the country. This hospital recently met its need for a patient tracking solution with HealthWare Systems' ActiveTRACK.

The Challenge

Before ActiveTRACK, the hospital used basic, numbered tickets to direct patients from Registration to the next appropriate department. Patients received a ticket number upon arrival and, as the hospital's Director of Patient Access explains, they were known to compare the process to the ticketing system used at a deli counter.

The facility wanted to present a better first impression. Plus, its previous system did not track patients beyond Registration or offer any robust reporting. The hospital needed detailed data regarding registrar performance and wait times throughout the Continuum of Care. "We wanted to know how long it took from 'door to discharge,'" the Director recounts. So, they sought a solution that would be simple to use and could easily integrate with their existing EHR and information system.

The Result

The hospital promptly turned to HealthWare Systems. The two organizations had a strong business relationship thanks to the facility's deployment of other modules within HealthWare's workflow automation suite. The Director of Patient Access describes the choice below:

"Through the years, we were always really impressed with their customer service and programming and implementation team and had found the company to be very receptive to any operational needs or wish list items that we might have. They have a flexibility for customizing tools to meet our needs. So, it was really a very easy decision to choose ActiveTRACK."

That decision proved worthwhile. The Director believes the hospital has greatly enhanced the customer service experience since implementing ActiveTRACK. Lobby management is now much more sophisticated and very customizable. Patients are assigned tickets with alphanumeric identifiers (to ensure confidentiality in accordance with HIPAA) and are

Organization

An acute care facility

Problem

A simple ticketing system that failed to track patients beyond Registration or provide useful patient throughput data

Solution Delivered

ActiveTRACK, a patient tracking system that integrates with a facility's existing technologies to provide real-time patient status throughout the entire encounter

Key Metrics

- Located in the Chicago Suburbs
- Has served patients for over 35 years
- Nearly 200 beds
- Over 700 physicians on staff, covering 50 different medical specialties
- Discharges more than 10,000 patients a year

Benefits

- Reduced typical registration wait times from 12-15 minutes to 3-6 minutes
- Reduced typical clinical wait times from 15 minutes to 5 minutes
- Increase of \$1.9 to 3.7 million in potential revenue per year
- Potential increase of 2-4 more CT exams performed per day
- Better allocation of resources and FTEs, saving \$70,000 per year
- Increased staff efficiency & productivity
- Improved employee morale
- Easy-to-use technology
- Increased physician satisfaction
- Improved patient experience

directed by a lobby display screen and customized audio messages. The hospital can choose to use a full sheet of paper for the tickets so that they might provide a wayfinding map or marketing piece on the other side. For example, a mammogram advertisement may be featured during breast cancer awareness month in October. They've also selected a personalized backdrop for the lobby display screen that showcases a photo of the hospital's new addition. And if a patient's photo ID has been scanned into the system, staff can view his/her picture and greet the patient by name. This has shifted the organization's approach to welcoming patients from one that says "thanks for showing up" to "we've been expecting you," the Director of Patient Access observes.

ActiveTRACK further enhances the patient experience with features that reduce wait times. The Director of Patient Access finds the management status updates very helpful; managers receive an alert (which can be customized and sent to email, pager, or smartphone) if a patient has been waiting more than 15 minutes so that they can remedy the situation. ActiveTRACK also links the hospital's valet service to the discharge process. The valet receives an alert when a patient is discharged. So, by the time the patient arrives at the valet station, his/her car is already there. The Director of Patient Access says this is a huge patient satisfier: "It's probably [one of our biggest 'wows' for our patients . . . patients have been very, very happy about not having to wait.](#)"

Hospital employees are happier, too. They like the new technology the Director describes as "easy to navigate." Plus, ActiveTRACK monitors productivity, so workloads can be better balanced and staff members held more accountable. For example, before ActiveTRACK, the hospital's registration department received a lot of undue blame for patient delays, but the new system showed that patients were actually being held up in other areas.

The hospital also used data from ActiveTRACK to reevaluate the timing of patient visits. Take the facility's CT Department, for instance. ActiveTRACK showed that the average exam without contrast took 7.5 minutes and the average exam with contrast took 20 minutes. Yet, when scheduling these appointments, the hospital allotted 15-30 minutes per exam. Reducing the time allotted per exam has allowed for a potential of performing 2-4 more exams per day, which equates to [an increase of \\$1.9 to 3.7 million in potential revenue per year.](#)

[*The Benefits*](#)

The data ActiveTRACK provides has helped this acute care facility to adjust its scheduling, making room for the hospital to serve more patients. It's also facilitated the reallocation of workloads and resources; in fact, the hospital used data from ActiveTRACK to reallocate two FTE employees, leading to \$70,000/year in savings. But the outcome the Director of Patient Access is perhaps most proud of is the significant reduction in wait times that ActiveTRACK has generated. [The hospital's registration wait times are down from 12-15 minutes to 3-6 minutes, and clinical wait times are down from 15 minutes to 5 minutes,](#) thanks to the benefits of the solution.

[*About ActiveTRACK*](#)

ActiveTRACK is HealthWare Systems' patient tracking and lobby management solution. It integrates with a facility's existing patient information system to provide real-time patient status while monitoring registration, throughput, and wait times. ActiveTRACK enables management to better allocate staff and resources and measure and reach specific goals related to increased efficiency, shorter registration and patient wait times, and improved patient experiences/satisfaction scores. [Know where patients are at all times with ActiveTRACK.](#)

HealthWare Systems specializes in integrating proprietary and third party patient access technologies into a seamless solution that ensures every patient encounter is financially and clinically cleared prior to date of service. Our solutions enforce data and documentation standards throughout the patient encounter. These benefits are provided as extensions to existing hospital information systems and other solutions. We provide the platform to "tie it all together" without replacing your investment in your current products and solutions.

[*Contact Information*](#)
