

CASE STUDY

Patient Observers Provide Quality, Cost-Effective Care for At-Risk Patients

In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, BJC Healthcare recognized the need for an enhanced approach to patient sitter and observation services. In 2021, the healthcare provider chose Crothall Healthcare to oversee Patient Observation Services across its Belleville and Shiloh campuses in Illinois. Crothall’s approach allowed BJC to achieve three key goals:

- 1) Enhanced Training,
- 2) Staff Reallocation, and
- 3) Cost Management.



RESULTS



\$1M
in cost savings, annually



0 falls
reducing number of safety claims



86%
nursing department satisfaction from Oct '23 – Jan '24

BJC HealthCare strategically partnered with Crothall Healthcare to manage its Sitter/Patient Observation program in the emergency departments across both campuses. This move had an immediate impact: it allowed the hospital to discontinue using emergency technicians for this role, allowing them to focus on direct patient care. Due to its success, in March 2023, the hospital expanded Crothall’s responsibility to the inpatient sitter/patient observation programs at both locations. Furthermore, the services have markedly improved, allowing the hospital to achieve its objectives of enhanced patient care and reduced clinical staff involvement in this function.



The quality and dependability of the Patient Observation Attendants/Sitters from Crothall are excellent. The training and documentation the Patient Sitters put in their tablets is what we need to elevate this important service. We have been extremely pleased with the Crothall leadership team and the Patient Observation Attendants placed at Memorial. Crothall has been a valued partner.

**John C. Ziegler, MBA, FACHE, Vice President of Operations – Support
BJC HealthCare Memorial Hospital**



Enhancing Patient Care and Reducing Clinical Staff Involvement

RESULTS

Cost Savings

By strategically allocating staff and regulating resource utilization, Crothall Healthcare successfully eliminated the need for premium compensation by removing the necessity for additional overtime, which was commonplace when clinical staff managed these duties.

Transitioning to a Patient Observation model that emphasizes staff training and continuous patient activity documentation, the hospital is projected to cut down on costs, eliminating the need for premium compensation, eradicating unnecessary sitter shifts, and resulting in direct savings and cost avoidance.

\$1M

in cost savings,
annually

Ensuring Patients' Safety

Most of a Patient Observation Attendant's time is spent in the patient's room, allowing them to remain constantly present with the patient. They assist the patient in rising from bed, accompany them on walks, and join them during examinations or surgeries. In the event of surgery, the observer stays with the patient both before and after the procedure to ensure their well-being.

All observers undergo rigorous training, covering areas such as patient safety, infection prevention, fall prevention, IV-line protection, age-specific training, situational awareness, and many others. This training occurs over multiple days, including classroom instruction and live simulations in a mock setting.

0 falls
reducing number of
safety claims

Nursing Department Satisfaction

Crothall employees are adeptly trained to manage challenging patient scenarios, allowing nursing and their clinical support staff to focus on direct patient care without routine intervention. This training prevents nurses from being frequently called upon for incidents such as patients attempting to leave their beds unaided, displaying confusion or atypical behaviors.

Our Patient Observation Attendants utilize proprietary software, logging patient status at 15-minute intervals via tablets. This detailed record-keeping gives nurses a comprehensive view of patient behavior and the measures taken to manage problematic actions.

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Increase patient satisfaction and
improve patient outcomes at your hospital.

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