



Coon Memorial Hospital, part of Dallam Hartley Counties Hospital District, is a 21-bed critical access hospital that serves Dalhart, Texas, as well as parts of New Mexico and Oklahoma. The hospital serves the community in all areas of life, from birth of a newborn throughout the lifespan to hospice care and end of life.

PROVIDER STORY

This small hospital had a big CPR training class attendance problem. The American Heart Association's Resuscitation Quality Improvement Program® (RQI®) resolved that issue, and is leading to higher-quality CPR at this facility that fortunately, doesn't have a lot of real-life codes.

"For us, the biggest things with RQI are the skills consistency and improvement, and the automatic feedback that staff receive with each skill. You don't receive that kind of feedback in real-life situations."

*— Jamie Martin, RN, BSN
Trauma Coordinator, Emergency Room and Assistant Director of Nurses
Coon Memorial Hospital*



CHALLENGE

Recruitment and retention for a small, critical access hospital in the Texas panhandle is always a challenge, as Coon Memorial Hospital administrators can attest. That issue translated into employees who didn't feel pressured to show up for CPR training classes, including Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)—even though they had previously signed up.

"Attendance and getting people to be compliant by going to class when it was time or before their certification expired was a big problem," said Jamie Martin, RN, BSN, trauma coordinator, emergency room and assistant director of nurses. "I think a lot of people felt like they were here to work and that's what they were doing. There were no repercussions for not showing up."

But there were financial repercussions for the hospital, which outsourced most of its CPR training. And it was time-consuming to arrange the classes and staff coverage for employees while they trained—particularly when they didn't attend class.

Attendance issues further compounded a problem that small, rural hospitals often face. "Fortunately, we don't have many codes in our hospital," said Martin. "But that also means that employees weren't practicing their skills regularly."



RQI Cart

AHA's subscription-based RQI program:

- Is a cloud-based turnkey resuscitation quality service from the AHA, with learning technology from Laerdal Medical Corporation.
- Delivers on-going resuscitation education and skills improvement, online and via simulation stations at the point-of-care.
- Includes an adult and infant manikin and a laptop at each station, providing real-time audio and visual feedback on skills performance.
- Delivers cognitive learning modules which include educational videos, eSimulation patient cases and exam questions. As cognitive modules are successfully completed over the course of the two year period, students participate in self-directed, quarterly skills practice averaging 10 minutes each to sustain skills competency.
- Renews AHA course completion cards, allowing staff to obtain a perpetual card and continuously meet their credentialing requirements.



SOLUTION

The American Heart Association's Resuscitation Quality Improvement Program® (RQI®) was about to change all of that. RQI addresses one of Coon Memorial Hospital's primary issues — that CPR is not a part of many health care providers' regular practices. In fact, some rarely perform CPR other than during their bi-annual training. With a lack of use and practice, CPR compression and ventilation skills degrade and overall CPR effectiveness is reduced. This can have a negative effect on patient outcomes. RQI's groundbreaking premise says that brief and regular practice — “low-dose/high-frequency” training — leads to higher-quality CPR skills.

Coon Memorial administrators were impressed with RQI's continuous learning and the immediate feedback provided by its real-time audio-visual feedback. The hospital implemented RQI in January 2017, including two RQI carts with real-time voice and visual feedback via high fidelity manikins. One cart remains in the hospital, while the other rotates between the health system's family medicine clinic, home health and hospice, assisted living, and nursing home.



RESULTS

In less than one year, RQI's quarterly skills practice is already proving to be the motivation employees needed. Quarter by quarter, Martin continues seeing improvement in CPR skills quality.

“It makes each employee accountable instead of our trying to arrange classes and going through the frustration of people not showing up,” said Martin. “And employees like knowing that they can work on their CPR skills on their own time. Allowing them to be self-driven is proving to be a positive thing, and I've received a lot of great feedback. Staff like not having to sit through long classes.”

“For us, the biggest things with RQI are the skills consistency and improvement, and the automatic feedback that staff receive with each skill,” said Martin. “You don't receive that kind of feedback in real-life situations. I've probably had 90 percent of the staff say, ‘I thought I was pushing way deeper than that.’”

“We don't have a lot of codes so these skills aren't used a lot in our setting, so for our employees to practice these skills each quarter — they're definitely becoming more comfortable with what they're doing,” Martin continued. “Physicians have commented that codes are going more smoothly than they have in the past.”

RQI also eases the pressure for Martin. “Particularly in small hospitals like ours, many of us have multiple job titles and responsibilities. Thankfully I no longer worry so much about arranging classes because employees take care of that themselves,” she said. “I can also pull up very quickly who's in compliance and who isn't, and that brings me a lot of relief to know that they're responsible for maintaining this part of their education.”