

HeartCaring Case Study 2010 On-line Education and Promotion



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Indiana Regional Medical Center of Indiana, PA utilized HeartCaring®, a national cardiovascular health education and resource program administered by the Spirit of Women Hospital Network, to develop a convenient computer based learning program to improve clinical integration across all service lines.

What is HeartCaring®?

The national HeartCaring program, developed in partnership with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) *The Heart Truth*, is powered by Spirit Health Group® and activated by US hospitals that ascribe to the highest standards of excellence in women's health, education, and community outreach. HeartCaring is sponsored in part by The Bristol-Myers Squibb/Sanofi Pharmaceuticals Partnership and Philips Healthcare, with educational support from the Vascular Disease Foundation, the Peripheral Arterial Disease (P.A.D.) Coalition, and the Venous Disease Coalition.

Problem/Challenge:

At Indiana Regional Medical Center (IRMC), our mission is to serve the healthcare needs of every life we touch with compassion, respect, and dignity. Being named a *Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For in 2010* is a prime example of our commitment to the staff and the communities that we proudly serve. Our partnership with *Spirit of Women* and *HeartCaring* has enhanced our service lines, improved physician relations and elevated us as a regional healthcare leader.

Participation in the *HeartCaring* Program, a cardiovascular extension of the *Spirit of Women*, easily allows IRMC to provide evidenced-based cardiovascular education to our community members through many consumer events. Since initiating the program in 2008, IRMC has designated 12 *HeartCaring* clinicians and their office staffs. Because of successful community outreach events and positive feedback from physicians, we now have a waiting list of physicians to be educated. To increase our capacity to reach more primary care physicians and hospital staff with the curriculum, and to assist us in efficiently updating care providers, we needed a strategy to maximize educational outreach. Disrupting busy physician practices for

designations and finding time to educate direct care staff at convenient times has been found to be a great challenge.

Objectives:

- Make the *HeartCaring* Program more “user friendly.”
- Create the most accessible way to educate and reach a large number of people at their convenience.
- Extend *HeartCaring* educational efforts.
- Accurately record, recognize, and reward those clinicians and staff completing the *HeartCaring* education.

Solution:

IRMC designed a comprehensive strategy to incorporate an accessible computer based training model that allows physicians, clinicians, and hospital staff to complete the educational modules on their own time without disruption of their busy working schedules, and allow staff to have accessibility to learning, regardless of shift. We strove to maximize the Learning Management System employees are already familiar with, to increase awareness of gender-sensitive cardiovascular disease risks for both clinical and non-clinical staff.

Approach:

- Inquire (from hospital education department) if any partnerships exist with any educational consortiums (most hospitals pay a fee to be involved in a consortium for educational purposes)
- Submit HeartCaring modules to consortiums for CEU/CME, based on guidelines.
- Find out what electronic systems are being used in the hospital for educational purposes
- Gain administrative permission and implement HeartCaring into current Learning Management System
- Electronically record and track all modules being accessed
- Continue to promote with instructions, ongoing in-house education sessions, screenings, hospital events, and employee communication mechanisms

The *HeartCaring* program curriculum was submitted for CEU/CME approval through a non-profit educational consortium. IRMC partners with *The Cambria-Somerset Council for Education of Health Professionals, Inc.* (www.cscouncil.com/).

All of the modules were customized to IRMC’s *HeartCaring* initiative and then submitted as “enduring material,” which is approved yearly. The consortium requires all activity be reported to them, including pre and post tests, and program evaluations. Educational certificates for the completed CEU/CME are distributed monthly after they are reported to the council.

IRMC currently uses MC Strategies Learning Management System (www.mcstrategies.com) for our educational needs. Department Managers have control over what in-services they want their employees to complete on a yearly basis for unit specific competencies. There is also a self-enroll option within the program. This is where the *HeartCaring* CEU modules (for clinical staff) and the consumer modules (for non-clinical staff) are housed. The *HeartCaring* modules are not mandatory or required, but available to those who are interested in the education. The availability of these cardiovascular awareness messages underscores both IRMC's commitment to a healthier community and our commitment to our employee's health.

The *HeartCaring* education modules were offered on a self-enroll basis because there was concern that the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing would not accept the CEUs if they were job required. Recently, PA mandated RNs to complete 30 CEUs in a two- year period for nursing licensure renewal. Therefore, it was perfect timing to offer 15 FREE CEUs toward their license renewal.

This program is also extended to hospital-owned physician practices via the hospital learning system. Not only can the physicians and hospital staff complete the *HeartCaring* modules, but the physician's office staff has access as well. An introduction letter was sent to office managers along with instructions on how to access the learning modules.

For those physician offices that do not have access to the hospital computer system, a manual version has been created to extend the program efforts. This kit includes a CD with all modules, printed pre and post tests with evaluations, and specific instructions.

Results:

In order to track and record those completing the modules, administrative privileges were obtained from the People Development Department at IRMC. Access to the Report Manager Program of the system enables tracking of names of employees, the number of modules completed, as well as the dates completed. Completion summary reports are also available and provide additional information on pre and post test answers.

Since the initial offering six months ago of the on-line modules in November, 2009, 85 employees have completed the clinical modules and 20 completed the non-clinical modules, representing 35 different departments throughout the hospital.

The program has been communicated within the hospital by email, flyers, and the hospital newsletter. Meetings with the education department were held to discuss ways of letting staff know that the CME/CEUs are available. This led to an invitation to present Module 9, "*Evidence-based Guidelines for the Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease in Women*", to a group of "unit-based" educators. This is a core group of clinical representatives from all patient care areas in the hospital who will communicate this information back to their respective departments. One presentation educated a group of nurses and designated them as *HeartCaring* Clinicians who spread the word to other employees in the hospital -- priceless.

Evaluation:

- Successfully educated hospital staff. In 6 months, on-line *HeartCaring* program educated , over 100 additional people, at their leisure, in addition to regularly offered continuing education events
- Enhanced physician and staff relationships by assisting them with their efforts to obtain free CMEs/CEUs
- Extended educational reach to those physician offices without access to hospital computer system, by creating a manual version of the on-line program
- Increased hospital departments' interest in becoming designated clinicians
- Through awareness of cardiovascular diseases and the objectives of the *HeartCaring* program
- Provided advertising exposure for *HeartCaring* involved departments and physicians. Customization of material can be sculpted and used as a communication/advertising tool for involved parties.
- Created an education platform in which other departments are considering adding additional modules to educate staff, for example, our Sleep Disorders Center, and stroke awareness for our Emergency Room.

The online *HeartCaring* enhancement has proven to be an effective way to extend and complement IRMC's initiatives and cardiovascular services. Increased clinician and staff awareness of the *HeartCaring* resources across service lines results in shared implementation and ownership of the program for maximum benefit.