

Compassionate Care and High Quality of Customer Service Advances Security Program

University of Colorado Hospital

Situation: The University of Colorado Hospital, part of the University of Colorado Health System, is located east of Denver in Aurora, CO. It is the largest health system in the state and a leading hospital in the nation. In 2011, UCH was ranked as the best hospital in the Denver metropolitan area and in the top 10 nationally for Best Medical Schools: Primary Care by US News and World Report.

The UCH health system includes primary care and specialty clinics around the state, as well as central facilities at the Anschutz Medical Campus and a facility in Wyoming. Built as state-of-the-art in 2006, the campus consists of three zones that promote collaboration and innovation: an education zone with remarkable facilities for training future physicians and health professionals; a research zone with groundbreaking, internationally renowned research; and a clinical care zone with the University of Colorado Hospital and The Children's Hospital.

Challenge: In Colorado, very few hospitals have an in-house security program and instead partner with an external security provider to deliver hospital security programs. Changing vendors is never an easy task, but in 2010 UCH was ready to make a switch to gain a higher quality of service, and to help reach one of its "2020 visions": exceed the expectations of patients, families, staff and faculty.

The quality of security officers and their compassion and sensitivity to the hospital's culture are important for maintaining the highest possible level of patient and staff security, safety and care. UCH needed to remain focused on its 2020 vision when it decided to look for a new security provider, and had to make sure the provider understood its goals.

UCH was also anticipating starting a new program for de-escalating problems with suicidal and behavioral outreach patients. The de-escalation training is a nationally recognized certification program developed by the Crisis Prevention Institute. Tom Davis, Director, Facilities & Security for UCH explains, "Certified nursing assistants were not only being physically hurt but being pulled away from their patient care duties to respond to violent or aggressive patients. We needed to find a solution to reduce the violence and make sure staff was kept safe."

In support of an additional security effort, the hospital also needed to enhance its relationship with security, employees, patients and visitors. "The hospital had expressed its concern for professionalism at the front door," said Davis. "Whoever was there gave the first impression and the last impression to those entering and exiting. We needed to find the right type of person for this position, and ensure he or she was making an impact for our visitors and staff."

Solution: Allied Universal Security Services understood the truly unique qualities of UCH and their multiple needs and was able to tailor the delivery of security and customer service to meet the hospital's needs.

Allied Universal's proposed program for UCH was developed based on the best practices gained from its extensive healthcare experiences. Because of that, the

Location:

Aurora, Colorado

Statistics:

- > UCH's system includes primary care and specialty clinics in Colorado
- > UCH needed a higher quality of security service
- > Starting a new program for de-escalating problems with suicidal and behavioral outreach patients



contract was awarded to Allied Universal in September of 2010.

“UCH completed three tours with other Allied Universal hospital clients to gain an understanding of the kind of customer service and security program they could have with us,” said Jonathan Stanley, Director, Key Accounts for Allied Universal. “It was apparent to UCH that we would be able to execute a customized healthcare security program and include the care and customer service the hospital was looking for.”

Allied Universal took the time necessary to understand the hospital’s need for customer service and compassionate care. In addition to creating a security program specific to the needs of UCH, Allied Universal also customized its service for each unique hospital environment. This included the specialized Allied Universal ambassador program.

“The Allied Universal Ambassador program really caught the hospital’s attention because it fit into its culture and truly solved a need. It showed that we understood the customer service aspect of a security program,” said Rob Muren, District Manager for Allied Universal. “The Allied Universal ambassadors are trained to provide a higher level of customer service for our client and the program has proved to be an effective part of UCH’s security program.”

“The Allied Universal Ambassador program was very unique and exactly what we needed,” said Davis. “Not only have we used it as intended at the front door for first and last impressions, but we are also using it in the Emergency Department to help calm and control patients and visitors.”

Allied Universal Ambassadors are highly adaptable and are trained to adjust to the changing needs of any situation, whether those needs fall into the customer service or security realm – or some combination of the two. With the hospital’s emphasis on customer service, the program was the right fit.

In addition to the customer service initiative, the hospital’s new platform for de-escalating challenging situations with suicide and behavioral outreach patients was also tied into Allied Universal’s ability to customize its services for UCH. The transitional Allied Universal account manager and program director for UCH, played a vital role in the development and execution of the program.

“Allied Universal was able to bring in security officers trained specifically for de-escalation during these types of scenarios,” said Davis. “They then monitor the at-risk patients for UCH certified nursing assistants. The relationship between the staff and the security officers has now grown, and trust has been built.”

Results: Due to teamwork with the new de-escalation program and specialized services of the Allied Universal Ambassador program, the hospital has noticed a positive difference. Additionally, UCH appreciates Allied Universal’s understanding of the need for compassion and sensitivity when interacting with patients. Staff have positively commented on the new security officers’ professional appearance and the response they have received when calling for assistance.

“Changing security providers, especially at a location with such a large and complex program as our hospital, can be very stressful,” said Davis. “The key to our success was communication at all levels of both organizations throughout the entire transition period.”

The de-escalation program has shown that the levels of tension for the nurses have been lowered and employees are no longer being harmed. “Since Allied Universal has taken the lead on this program, the hospital’s workers’ compensation claims have been reduced,” explained Davis.

The Allied Universal Ambassador program and Allied Universal’s understanding of the hospital’s culture has also made a difference. “Patients and visitors are now familiar with our security officers and the officers have been able to get to know them,” said Davis. “In the ED, Allied Universal Ambassadors are able to calm loud or upset individuals, allowing us to build relationships with visitors and patients.”

The security program has helped UCH to reach some of its goals due to Allied Universal’s healthcare security expertise commitment to quality service and ability to implement multiple solutions to meet the hospital’s many needs. “The Allied Universal team at UCH does much more than create a secure environment,” said Stanley.

“We are an integral part of the hospital’s culture and provide the enhanced level of customer service and highly specialized services that help the hospital meet its goals.”