



VNA of Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky

Angi Johnson, Executive VP, Clinical Services
2400 Reading Road
Cincinnati, OH 45202
Phone: 513.345.8024

"The information gathered by OCS has been invaluable to our organization. We will celebrate our 100th Anniversary in 2009. It is the goal of the management team to develop, nurture, and support a business-like culture, making sound decisions based on information and data, so that we will be here to meet the needs of our patients well into the 21st century."

Angi Johnson

Summary of Project

The VNA of Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky is a prime example of innovation, strategy, and leadership in the home health industry. They were recognized in 2004 as an OCS Vision Award winner for Marketing Success. Their winning application detailed the marketing challenges common to many agencies that the VNA overcame by relying on objective information and solid operational management.

In 2005, the VNA of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky is the recipient of the Overall Vision Award, in recognition of their broad use of information to drive decisions, success, stability, and growth. They have several current projects that are worthy of attention and accolades, but this year's award specifically acknowledges their use of business intelligence as the cornerstone of a large four-year project. This project is the foundation of the agency's strategic positioning and will provide the structure for the VNA to achieve both high quality care and increased financial stability, to support their long-term ability to provide care to their community.

Project Description

In four years the VNA of Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky will celebrate their 100th year of operation. As they look forward to that milestone, the agency's leadership is also looking forward to the changes that they expect will impact the home health industry in the coming years. Angi Johnson, the Executive Vice President of Clinical Services at the VNA, describes the core of the management team's perspective—"Our current challenge is to take all of the information we are able to gather, compare it to successful agencies across the country and use it to strategically position ourselves to be ready for Pay-for-Performance."

The VNA has been a data-driven organization for the past several years, broadly recognizing that an agency must have an objective perspective from which to evaluate performance, set goals, and track the results of performance improvement activities. Their approach to this current challenge of preparing for Pay-for-Performance was no different.

The first thing the agency did was to pull together a multi-disciplinary team to evaluate current performance and define expectations for future performance. The team created a tool to keep their attention and efforts focused throughout the project—an agency scorecard. This highly focused report contained not only the information of primary concern to the team as they moved forward, but it also provided the means to make data analysis and interpretation very efficient.

When considering how to reach their long-term goals, the management team at the VNA of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky identified the need to address two significant and broad issues, 1) culture change, and 2) productivity in all areas. The *business intelligence* available in their OCS-BBI Reporter benchmarks were the exact data needed to make decisions, set direction, and guide conversations addressing these issues.

The team then identified specific goals that were consistent with the values of the project:

1. Improve all professional productivity consistent with national and local benchmarks
2. Improve all 11 publicly reported quality indicators
3. Improve LUPA rates to at least equal the national rate
4. Maintain average visits per episode to equal national/local levels
5. Introduce and maintain a culture of using data for planning and monitoring purposes

Project Process and Key Elements of Success

The foundation of the VNA's management team's effort was the use of the balanced scorecard to frequently track, and quickly assess, performance on an ongoing basis. Beyond the scorecard, the leadership defined a multifaceted approach to each individual goal.

Each goal had a specific approach attached to it, with common elements:

- Select a set of benchmarks appropriate for each goal
- Identify performance thresholds by which to make decisions (The VNA determined that deviations of five percent above or below benchmarks would require investigation, explanation, and corrective action plans, as appropriate.)
- Continually review information at pre-determined time points appropriate for each goal—weekly, monthly, quarterly
- Dig into the data to analyze any problems
- Apply interventions/course corrections as appropriate
- Educate staff about data, current performance, performance goals
- Share ongoing information and progress updates with staff

OCS Tools Used to Support the Project

- Focused use of specialized OCS-BBI Reports
- Executive Summary Report
- Bubble Graph
- Heavy use of other, more detailed OCS-BBI Reports
- Select Clinical Indicators
- Quality Tracking
- Utilization Summary
- Drill-down analysis with OCS-BBI Elite
- OCS-eCat
- OCS-EPIC

Project Results:

The VNA of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky successfully improved in most of their goals with monthly tracking and trending of information. They have improved productivity, decreased LUPAs and improved quality outcomes.

1. Net Financial Gains:
1998 <\$1,428,748>
2004 \$498,425
2. Productivity—steady rise over the last three years
3. Improvement in all 11 publicly reported outcomes