

Technology adoption in healthcare has never been greater, as hospitals adhere to meaningful use criteria to make data more transparent in supporting patient care initiatives. But technology alone is not enough. Positioning for long-term operational success requires a strategic approach to change management that includes people, process, and technology. Supply chain teams that adequately align people and process before layering in technology are more likely to succeed.

This was the experience at INTEGRIS Health, where a supply chain initiative to address inventory management challenges benefited from a comprehensive approach and working closely with the Cardinal Health™ WaveMark™ supply management and workflow solutions team. This whitepaper outlines the alignment strategies employed by INTEGRIS, leverages from the experienced WaveMark team, and describes the results.

I. INTEGRIS Health Supply Chain Initiative Overview

In 2016, when INTEGRIS Health was creating its 3-year strategic plan, a primary focus for Matthew D. Ziehme, Administrative Director, and the supply chain leadership team was to gain better control over their inventory. Historically, clinicians within various procedural departments were spending a significant portion of their time on inventory management, which cut into the time spent on direct patient care. “We wanted to get our clinicians back to being clinicians and to let supply chain do what they do best, which is to ensure that our clinical caregivers have the right supplies at the right time at the best possible value,” says Ziehme. “This challenge triggered leadership to start a vision within that to say, ‘How can we do this better?’ and ‘What are the processes and technology that we can bring to bear?’”

II. Pathway to Alignment

To successfully execute the vision, INTEGRIS knew it needed more than just a technology implementation plan. “Technology solutions will only be as effective and efficient as the processes they are built around and the people who use them,” says Ziehme. Building organization-wide alignment around the vision and strategy for improved inventory management required INTEGRIS to identify, map, and understand their current processes and gain alignment from key stakeholders (including clinicians) *before* implementing the technology. “I absolutely agree with the focus on people, process, and technology—in that order,” says Ziehme. “At the end of the day, it’s people who execute the process, or not, and people who use the technology, or not.”

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Selecting the Right Supply Chain Technology

A critical first step for INTEGRIS was finding the right solution and the right industry partner. A market survey identified WaveMark supply management and workflow solutions early on in the vendor selection process. The INTEGRIS supply chain team collaborated with the system’s clinicians to vet prospective vendors on “demo days,” during which clinicians from across the INTEGRIS system used scripted questions to interview vendors and listed their pros and cons for each.

Ultimately, it was the clinicians who decided unanimously that WaveMark was the best option.

“The workflow built around WaveMark’s supply management solution was compelling to the clinicians, who saw where it could streamline their work,” says Ziehme.

Learn more about the WaveMark supply management solution.



Using Lean to Unlock Engagement

Both INTEGRIS and WaveMark are Lean-based organizations. According to Ziehme, this is not by accident: “Sharing business-culture values with WaveMark enabled us to think about people and process first, and then technology. Lean values the input and ideas of experienced caregivers and recent college graduates equally. When everyone is focused on the patient and the process, any generational gaps melt away.”

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INTEGRIS held a Lean event facilitated by WaveMark to benchmark its processes and map future workflows. “This event gave a forum to the processes by which INTEGRIS could standardize and improve on,” says Ziehme. “We had representation, perspectives, and collaboration from across the system and at all staff levels. Together, we did a value stream to map how data was going to flow, how people were going to change, and how the process was going to transform, with the ultimate goal of facilitating higher-quality, cost-effective care.”

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