



CASE STUDIES

**Indiana
Orthopaedic Hospital**

Background

On March 1, 2005, a group of orthopaedic surgeons and physicians opened the Indiana Orthopaedic Hospital (IOH) to provide central Indiana residents with complete orthopaedic care in a patient-focused, homelike environment. Since then, IOH has received national recognition from HealthGrades, the nation's leading independent healthcare ratings company, as well as CareChex, a division of The Delta Group, and the nation's largest privately-held healthcare information service company.

For the second consecutive year, IOH has received the Press Ganey Summit Award for maintaining patient satisfaction at the 95th percentile or higher for three consecutive years. Receiving recognition of this magnitude demonstrates that IOH physicians continue to excel in the orthopaedic care they provide to the community, the state, and the Midwest.

Challenge

Kathleen McSchooler was tasked with the management of policies for IOH. She recognized the opportunity cost of maintaining a manual system where policies were stored on a shared drive and in binders. Staff members could not find information quickly, and it was time-consuming to do policy reviews. Since information was stored in multiple locations and maintained manually, policies also lacked consistent formatting.

Policies were difficult to locate

"Official copies of policies were stored in binders in my office, but they also lived in a shared directory. You really had to know what you were looking for and where they were located to find a particular policy," says Kathleen. "Furthermore, IOH was using a numbered system to identify policies. Often times, staff would end up just asking the manager or team lead."

Inefficient reviews, expirations, and approvals

"I maintained a spreadsheet and had to tell managers when policies needed to be reviewed or approved," says Kathleen. "I used to make copies of each policy up for review, and Policy Committee members would have their hard copies of each policy in front of them. We would review each policy as a group, and I made notes on any needed revisions, completed the edits, and then printed off copies to go to the medical executive committee and board."

The old system had duplicate policies

"We had two 'Records Retention' policies: One in administration, and one in medical records. We had a lot of identical policies that would live in two different areas, because we had to try to cover where the staff member would look for that policy," says Kathleen. "So although the policy belonged in the administration section, we also had to put it in medical records section since that's where the majority of staff would look for it."

Policies had an inconsistent look and feel

Since policies had been manually maintained for years, formatting was different depending on the author or department. Since they were individual documents, even a small change was a big project. “With over 850 policies, it was a huge task to try to incorporate a consistent format to all the policies. It was really frustrating to struggle with formatting each time a policy was revised,” says Kathleen.

Solution

In choosing the right system for IOH, one of the main concerns was the time and resources required to implement the system. After initial talks with PolicyStat, however, they were convinced. “It wasn’t going to be a lot of work on our end to get our policies loaded. When they (PolicyStat) said, ‘Well you just need to send them to us and we’ll get them in there,’ it was like, ‘What? We don’t have to hand-key in all that stuff?’ It was just a value for us,” says Kathleen. “We had a training session for anyone who would be tasked with creating policies or making edits, but it wasn’t until I sat down with a couple of them that it was like, ‘Oh, that’s all I need to do?’ Yeah, it’s that easy.”

Total implementation time was one month from when Kathleen sent the policies until they became active.

Faster searching

Instead of using Microsoft Word’s limited “search” function, staff members could now find policies through a simple, powerful keyword search. The function also made it possible to locate and retire duplicates. Since the software searched full-text, it was no longer necessary to have multiple names for policies, and any unintended duplicates were easy to spot in search results.

No more spreadsheets

PolicyStat’s automatic workflows and notifications eliminated the need to create and maintain spreadsheets to keep track of upcoming reviews, expirations, and approvals. As soon as an author or editor “pends for approval,” PolicyStat’s automatic workflow feature routes it accordingly, so that each person in the workflow sees each other’s changes.

Easier revisions

The revision process was easy with PolicyStat – no more printing copies or dealing with “track changes” in Word, and no more downloading documents and emailing them as attachments.

“We just went through our first policy committee meeting, and I have found that people have really embraced the editing features. Once they start working in PolicyStat, our managers really respond positively to the technology,” says Kathleen. “The more the staff goes in PolicyStat, the more they will want to use it, instead of immediately going to their team lead for the information.”

Consistent-looking policies

"Headers are already there, so I don't have to worry about that anymore," Kathleen continued. "Before, I spent a lot of time formatting all those crazy policies to make sure they looked the same, but not anymore."

Unexpected features

"I like the permissions feature because I can control who edits policies," says Kathleen. "It's just nice to know there is that layer of protection and through it all, the PolicyStat team made the implementation process virtually painless. The implementation team is awesome to work with and is always there to answer any question or to recommend alternatives."

About PolicyStat

PolicyStat is an Indiana-based corporation providing an industry-leading policy lifecycle management solution for healthcare organizations. The PolicyStat solution increases productivity while simultaneously enhancing quality and compliance management. PolicyStat's Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) offering enables short customer deployment timelines by both minimizing IT staff involvement and providing vital implementation services. For more information, visit www.policystat.com.