

Columbus Hospice Finds Perfect Remedy for Today's Challenges: ADP's Time and Labor Management Solution Delivers Improved Productivity and Patient Care, and Increased Revenue

Established in 1979 to provide compassionate care to people with life-limiting illnesses, Columbus Hospice is the only community-based, not-for-profit hospice program serving ten Georgia and two Alabama counties in and around the city of Columbus, Georgia. It provides hospice services 24 hours a day, seven days a week to patients in nursing homes, retirement communities, and to those who choose to spend their final days at home. Patients with special needs that cannot be met at their residence may be admitted to Hospice House, the program's 18-bed facility. Columbus Hospice has about 215 employees – including physicians, nurses, home health aides, counselors, social workers, chaplains, and other support staff. About 100 employees work directly in the field with patients.

ADP Simplifies Medicare and Compliance Reporting by Streamlining Administration and Enhancing Access to Data

"The hospice environment is unique," explains Jan Beckman, Accounting and Benefits Manager at Columbus Hospice. "Our mindset is far different from what you'd probably find in a typical for-profit organization. The focus isn't on discovering new ways to save money and developing a bigger bottom line. It is about providing great patient care and consistently finding new ways to serve our patients – and their families – better."

One area the hospice designated for improvement is the way it collects, calculates, and utilizes employee time and attendance data. It wanted a solution that would streamline administrative tasks, offer reporting flexibility, and easily interface with the hospice's in-house payroll system.

What makes employee time and attendance data a critical commodity for a hospice? "Because so many things, for us, begin with accurate time and attendance data," says Columbus Hospice Payroll Accountant, Joann

Moore. "Obviously, correct pay data is essential to creating accurate paychecks. That would apply to any employer. However, as a hospice, we also need that same data to help support other core operations." For example, she notes, Columbus Hospice has an obligation to report to Medicare – the primary source of hospice revenue – how much time workers spend on patient visits. Until recently, the source of that critical data was a manual, paper-based time sheet system with debatable data integrity.

"It was old and it was a nightmare," says Moore. "Employees would 'clock in' and 'clock out' by writing in their time on paper forms," she adds. "After the supervisors approved the time sheets for their direct reports, I would then manually input the data – one form at a time – into our on-site payroll system. If information was missing or questionable, I'd have to track down the supervisor for answers. On average, it would take me about half a day each pay period to input our payroll. Once you had the data to run payroll, there was no easy way to import that data for things like tracking vacation time and overtime, and for compliance reports."

Beckman and Moore agree that their paper-based system was not only antiquated, but also open to unintentional human error as well as the potential for time theft. "We needed a solution that replaced paper and a high degree of human intervention with automated tasks and convenient access to real-time data that is indisputably clean," says Beckman.

"We looked pretty hard at six different automated time and attendance solutions. Five out of six could only meet some of our requirements," she adds. "A few promised us strong automated tasking features. Some had exceptional reporting capabilities. Others had attractive accrual systems for tracking things like employee sick leave and vacation time. ADP's Enterprise eTIME® was the only one that touched all the bases for us."

"Some of the biggest savings from using ADP come from major costs you can avoid. For instance, we don't have to spend thousands of dollars to employ another person to help with timekeeping..."

"ADP's solution shows the marketplace that we are a leading-edge organization that knows how to benefit from technology. The same time and attendance data that helps to create accurate paychecks for our employees also helps us to operate more efficiently, creating more quality time to serve the people who need us most – our patients."

Jan Beckman
Accounting and Benefits Manager
Columbus Hospice

Objectives for Columbus Hospice:

- Automate and streamline time and attendance administration
- Improve recordkeeping processes to aid regulatory compliance
- Increase employee productivity so they can spend more time on patient care
- Attract and retain top talent

ADP's Solution:

- Enterprise eTIME®



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ADP's Time and Labor Management Solution Provides Tools to Make Better Decisions and Do More with Less

Beckman views the change to ADP as a strategic transformation. "Going from our paper environment to ADP's Enterprise eTIME enabled us go from a very basic time and attendance system to a very extensive time and labor management solution," Beckman emphasizes. "We're not just collecting employee time. We now have a tool to help control costs, save time, and better manage the time of our professionals who serve our patients."

ADP replaced the hospice's manual, one-size-fits-all time sheet system with flexible, automated data input methods. Employees working in the Columbus Hospice House facility and administrative support office now clock in via biometric finger punch time clocks. Field employees call in their time from patients' home phones.

Almost immediately, hospice management began to see major benefits.

ADP's Enterprise eTIME solution helps Columbus Hospice save time and money.

"We honestly haven't stopped to quantify specific savings, but all of us know we are saving time and money," notes Moore. "We're not printing paper time sheets anymore. We have a better handle on overtime. The electronic interface between Enterprise eTIME and payroll has really minimized data entry and the usual input-related mistakes that would result in preparing manual replacement checks."

Beckman adds, "Some of the biggest savings from using ADP come from major costs you can avoid," says Beckman. "For instance, we don't have to spend thousands of dollars to employ another person to help keep track of timekeeping issues. Enterprise eTIME automates many of the tasks, like updating records, which a new person would have had to perform."

ADP's Enterprise eTIME helps improve manager and employee productivity. "We chose biometric clocks because they help create the environment of high data integrity we wanted to put in place," says Moore. "There is no question about who is clocking in and out. Supervisors are approving employee time online. Approved pay data goes right to payroll. Inputting payroll, which used to take me at least a half day, now takes about five minutes per pay cycle. Then there's the 'telephone test' – our employees and managers are making fewer calls to payroll because they have access to information like vacation and sick time balances at the finger punch time clock," she adds.

ADP's Enterprise eTIME enables tighter cost control with flexible, on-demand reporting. "We can generate all the reports we need," says Beckman. "Automated accruals allow us to track vacation and sick leave, and put limits on how much vacation time an employee can accrue before they lose it. We can track perfect attendance, employee hours by job, total hours to balance back with payroll – you name it."

However, with most of its revenue flowing from Medicare, no reports are more important than those the hospice sends to that federal agency. "In 2008, Medicare began asking for patient visit times – a metric that supports the payments we expect to receive from the government for providing care to Medicare patients," says Beckman. "With ADP, the process is automated and easy. Enterprise eTIME allows us to capture patient visit times with high accuracy and then electronically input that data into our Medicare billing."

In addition, Enterprise eTIME's accurate clock history enables Columbus Hospice to quickly feed information that supports other administrative needs, such as disability claims and Family and Medical Leave Act absences.

ADP Helps Columbus Hospice Keep and Attract the Best Talent

The greatest asset of Columbus Hospice is its Interdisciplinary Teams – physicians, nurses, social workers, health aides, and others – who deliver vital services around the clock to patients in their waning days of life. Retaining qualified team members is important to the hospice because individual tenure and team continuity contribute to a high level of service to patients.

As much of the country slowly emerges from an economic downturn, the business environment around Columbus, Georgia, is marked by existing and anticipated growth, presenting a special challenge to Columbus Hospice – the need to successfully compete for skilled multidisciplinary talent. "Fort Benning is the main employer in our area and while other forts are closing around the country, Benning is expected to keep growing. As more people come here to work and retire, our hospice will need people to serve retirees who will be coming to us for our services," says Beckman.

She expects ADP's Enterprise eTIME solution to play a role in helping the hospice become an employer of choice for the area's healthcare professionals. "ADP's solution shows the marketplace we are a leading-edge organization that knows how to benefit from technology. The same time and attendance data that helps to create accurate paychecks for our employees also helps us to operate more efficiently, creating more quality time to serve the people who need us most – our patients."

Columbus Hospice is among the approximately 570,000 organizations of every size worldwide that use one or more solutions from ADP to increase their efficiency.



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