



Powering Performance Improvement in the Hospital Laboratory

Across the OSF Healthcare system, hospital leaders have established clear goals for their organizations and aligned daily practices with those priorities. Leadership teams employ widely used quality improvement strategies such as monitoring and measuring quality indicators against benchmarks to motivate providers and focus improvement resources. The collection and review of performance data features prominently at OSF's top performing hospitals. These facilities benchmark performances against both internal goals and external benchmarks, and use **iVantage Performance Manager™** dashboards to report the data in a meaningful way.

At OSF Saint Anthony's Medical Center laboratory, these strategies have produced some impressive results over the course of the last few years, including a **reduction in the cost per lab test of 12 percent or \$174,000 below their target.**

In attributing this success, the leader of the laboratory team, Chuck Brackett, MBA, MT (ASCP) SH, Director, Clinical Laboratory Services, first credits the management team at OSF Saint Anthony.

The hospital's management structure has remained stable for several years and offers experience and a deep commitment to the organization's mission and goals. Both are well understood throughout the organization and influence decisions made by department managers and staff every day.

"Benchmarking and performance improvement have become part of the day-in and day-out mindset. We see comparative analytics as an integral part of the OSF culture, and department managers have embraced the new sense of ownership possessing this type of data creates. They truly manage their departments like their own money is on the line."

- Chuck Brackett, Director,
Clinical Laboratory Services,
OSF Saint Anthony

The Proof is in the Results

At the OSF Saint Anthony laboratory, Brackett utilizes a structured approach to drive process efficiency, measure and monitor results, and then drive continued process improvement. With a lab built to handle volume, Brackett and his team have introduced new instrumentation and processes which enable them to take on added volume without the need to increase the size of the lab staff. Among the department's most notable achievements are:

- Accelerated chemistry test turn-around time and volume capacity
- Optimized Epic Beaker workflow, making processing and testing more efficient
- Negotiated aggressive contracts for standard instruments and reagent products:
 - **Reduced** blood product expenses **2.4%**
 - **Reduced** glucose monitor test strips prices **20%**
- Created **\$300,000 annual savings** by decreasing unnecessary use of blood products for inpatients
- **Reduced** point-of-care glucose tests by **2,000 tests per month**
- Implemented the Individualized Quality Control Plan (IQCP), which **saves** an estimated **\$30,000 to \$50,000 per month** in point-of-care (depending on volume)
- Decreased unnecessary laboratory testing and introducing protocols for expensive genetic tests.
- Laboratory compliance group has reviewed the computer-billing system to be sure all tests are billed and charged appropriately

With the demands of an increasingly complex healthcare environment, there have been significant changes in technology and performance requirements. As a result, hospital laboratories can – and should – leverage benchmarking to manage and measure complex tests, equipment and inventory as well as the skill mix of the laboratory. To make it all work, a savvy laboratory director can use benchmarking to improve the performance of the laboratory and – as evidenced by the many improvements made at OSF Saint Anthony – make significant contributions to the organization's overall mission to continuously strive for top performance, identify areas for efficiency and serve their patient population.

The iVantage Difference

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