Corporate Backgrounder

RES-Q® Healthcare Systems: The Scheduling Specialist for Hospitals

Hospitals Rely on RES-Q to Productively Manage their Most Valuable Resources

CALABASAS, Calif. – February 2008 – Hospitals face daunting challenges today: heightened demands to uphold patient safety and improve the quality of care, greater competition for patients, ever-increasing costs for labor and medical technology, rising average levels of patient acuity, reimbursement constraints, and narrowing operating margins. These problems are hitting hospitals right in the middle of an industry-wide shortage of nurses and other essential healthcare professionals. According to a report released by the American Hospital Association in April 2006, U.S. hospitals needed approximately 118,000 registered nurses (RNs) to fill vacant positions nationwide – translating into a national RN vacancy rate of 8.5 percent. The January/ February 2007 issue of *Health Affairs* featured an analysis estimating that the U.S. shortage of RNs will increase to 340,000 by the year 2020.

Thus, skilled professionals are every hospital's most valuable resource, and labor costs generally represent more than 50 or 60 percent of hospitals' total operating expenses. Ineffective management of labor intensifies all the fundamental problems that hospitals confront today. For example, given the nursing shortage, overtime for nurses is often a necessity. However, overtime is expensive. Excessive overtime can weaken morale and undermine job satisfaction, making it more difficult for hospitals to recruit and retain nurses. In addition, many nurses contend that the pressures of overtime, particularly during shifts that are short-staffed, constrain the capacity of hospitals to provide safe, high-quality care.

Staffing and Scheduling Software

A robust, reliable staffing and scheduling system is critical for hospitals to respond to the challenges they face. Such software must efficiently produce clinically sound, skill-matched and financially productive staffing in fair and equitable schedules that uphold employee morale.

RES-Q® Labor Resource Management is a proven staffing and scheduling software solution that delivers measurable benefits: faster scheduling (with less time required to set schedules and prepare reports), reduced overtime, decreased use of costly outside agency staff, greater consistency in the application of equitable scheduling rules, and improved employee satisfaction and retention. The software supports enterprise-wide staffing and scheduling by translating hospital-defined workload standards into specific staffing patterns by employee skill level. It automatically calculates optimal staffing for all units and departments by shift. It then creates complete employee schedules, based on optimal staffing patterns and employee preferences.

RES-Q Labor Resource Management also features comprehensive personnel management with complete personnel profiles for each employee. Certification and license renewal dates, continuing medical education classes and credits, performance evaluations, salary histories, and special skill sets are among the types of data maintained. Real-time integration with employee scheduling ensures that only properly credentialed and licensed employees are scheduled.

RES-Q® Perioperative Resource Management is a specialized application for managing operating room resources. Surgeons' needs and preferences, equipment and personnel requirements, room and resource availability, case length, block times, special conditions, and room utilization are all verified and checked when scheduling cases. The software shows the best and next-best time for each procedure, and automated conflict checking is performed for resources associated with each planned case. With RES-Q Perioperative Resource Management, hospitals maximize patient safety and resource productivity and realize the profit potential of their surgical departments.

Both RES-Q systems provide detailed, user-friendly reports that managers rely on to guide their departments. And executive-level summary formats help senior executives identify and capitalize upon strategic opportunities to improve hospital performance.

Innovative Features and Functions

RES-Q software is a Web-enabled, true 32 bit client/server design and supports ODBC-compliant relational databases while running under Windows XP. The software technology scales to meet the needs of growing hospital organizations today.

Recent advances in the RES-Q Labor Resource Management System include the Self-scheduling Module and Dynamic Staffing Control (DSC). Registered users sign on to the RES-Q Self-scheduling Module with their passwords and access a security-controlled console, designed to be as simple as a bank ATM interface. Employees can quickly view their department's schedules and click on the shifts they want to request. "Giving employees more control over the balance between the demands of work and home is essential to job satisfaction and ultimately contributes to better quality of care," said Barbara Dahlke, R.N., M.S.N., chief nursing officer, Saint Agnes Medical Center, Fresno, Calif. "Self-scheduling with RES-Q gives our staff much more flexibility to balance their professional and personal lives."

With Dynamic Staffing Control (DSC), hospitals monitor and manage staffing in real time. "DSC helps unit managers and hospital staffing offices assess and adjust staffing throughout the day," said Michael Meisel, president, RES-Q Healthcare Systems. DSC also forecasts necessary staffing levels for the upcoming 24-hour period based on the current patient population and historical admission and discharge patterns. Staffing variances for future shifts are communicated to the responsible managers, and RES-Q Labor Resource Management thus gives them the information and tools to plan and fine-tune required staffing in advance.

New, innovative features in RES-Q Perioperative Resource Management for surgical case scheduling include Paperless Case Documentation and Patient Status Monitoring. Paperless Case Documentation supports end-to-end documentation that is essential for measurement of performance against Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) standards. It provides information for continuous operational improvement and makes documentation more efficient, accurate and secure.

"With data captured in RES-Q Perioperative Resource Management, Patient Status Monitoring automatically generates, updates, and graphically displays the status of surgery cases in real time," said Meisel. "Hospital inpatient and same-day surgery departments can select and use different views designed for the waiting room, physician lounge and unit management." The Patient Waiting Room View is similar to airline flight displays at airports. It shows an abbreviated patient identifier (first two letters of the last name and first name initial), the surgeon's name, the procedure, surgery start and completion times, and current status (Patient in OR, Surgery in Process, Patient in Recovery). "By displaying the Patient Waiting Room View on a monitor in the waiting room, hospitals make it easier for families to stay informed," said Sharie Lieberg, R.N., manager of surgery systems, RES-Q Healthcare Systems. "This does alleviate family members' anxiety."

Why RES-Q Healthcare Systems?

RES-Q's technology is standard, stable and scaleable. And any hospital that compares the features and functions of alternative scheduling systems will conclude that RES-Q meets or exceeds the capabilities of other vendors' software. Why then do hospitals choose RES-Q?

Over the years, many healthcare software vendors have come and gone. RES-Q Healthcare Systems has stood the test of time. Since 1979, with a singular specialization, RES-Q has pursued one mission: advancing staffing and scheduling software for hospitals.

As a privately held company with zero debt, RES-Q does not have to worry about investors or shareholders. The company is not pressured to make short-term (and short-sighted) decisions to placate analysts on Wall Street. RES-Q is responsible and responsive to one, and only one, set of stakeholders: its hospital customers on Main Street.

With mergers and acquisitions among healthcare IT companies, management teams keep getting re-shuffled. At RES-Q Healthcare Systems, the senior managers responsible for developing, maintaining and installing its scheduling software and supporting its customers have been with the company for an average of 15 years. Hospital executives and managers can rely on RES-Q today, tomorrow and over the years ahead. Plus, while many software companies today outsource product development and customer support, RES-Q develops, maintains and supports its scheduling systems itself.

RES-Q is not among the biggest healthcare IT vendors. It is among the very best. Hospitals use its software to produce optimal schedules that balance their budgets and staff resources. And, even more, with decades of front-line experience in hospital management, RES-Q assists its customers in using the data from its software strategically as information to identify, analyze and solve productivity problems. RES-Q's senior management team helps hospitals set their schedules for today and set course for success tomorrow.

Who Says? RES-Q Customers

RES-Q Healthcare Systems believes in letting its customers speak for themselves. Here RES-Q users have the final word:

> *"One of the reasons we chose RES-Q is that we developed trust in RES-Q's experience in planning and managing large-scale implementations."*

Michelle Woodley, R.N.
Assistant Vice President, Clinical Integration
St. Joseph Health System
Orange, Calif.

> *"Self-scheduling with RES-Q Labor Resource Management software, including staff access to the system from home, enhances employee job satisfaction by enabling employees to view open shifts and then schedule or swap shifts."*

Susan Sayari, R.N.
Executive Director of Nursing
Covenant Health System
Lubbock, Texas

> *"RES-Q self-scheduling allows nurses to see the shifts which are not covered and pre-schedule to cover those needs. This creates a collaborative relationship with staff and managers to ensure adequate staffing."*

Barbara Dahlke, R.N., M.S.N.
Chief Nursing Officer
Saint Agnes Medical Center
Fresno, Calif.

> *"We have relied on RES-Q Perioperative Resource Management software since 1997 to establish surgery schedules that preclude staffing and equipment conflicts, ensure clinically appropriate staffing, save time, and boost productivity. Over the past decade, the software has been dependable, and RES-Q's support has been outstanding."*

Katherine Carr, R.N.
Director of Surgical Services
Whidbey General Hospital
Coupeville, Wash.

"RES-Q software was built with a true understanding of hospitals' staffing and scheduling needs and the complexity of managing the processes. It is user-friendly and offers useful reporting."

Karen Edmondson
Director, Patient Care Resource Services
Providence Alaska Medical Center
Anchorage, AK

"We wanted a software solution to improve efficiency and manage the complexity of ensuring that we schedule nurses with the correct skill sets, credentials and certifications. That way, we know we are providing the most appropriate, high-quality care. We took a year to evaluate various staffing and scheduling systems and chose RES-Q Labor Resource Management because of its full-featured functionality and ease of use."

Manny Amaez
Executive Director, Bon Secours Northeast Data Center
Bon Secours New York Health System
Riverdale, N.Y.

Additional information on RES-Q Healthcare Systems is available at www.res-q.com.

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