



CASE STUDY

Using Quality Outcomes as a Strategic Driver

Bon Secours St. Francis Health System makes quality the “tip of the spear” for value-based care—driving better outcomes while increasing satisfaction, volume, and market share

OVERVIEW

Based in Greenville, SC, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System is a private, not-for-profit health system with 341 beds, two acute care facilities and more than 3,400 employees serving Upstate South Carolina. The organization has received numerous awards for quality outcomes, and its programs have earned accreditations from national organizations performing in-depth audits to ensure patients receive the very best care. With payers, employers and consumers all demanding greater value, Bon Secours St. Francis has made quality and its impact on cost and the patient experience central to the way they operate. In support of this focus, the organization has partnered with Healthgrades to monitor and improve outcomes over time and to showcase quality in the context of their physicians, service lines and Centers of Excellence. By focusing on quality, Bon Secours St. Francis has driven lower mortality rates, fewer complications and readmissions, a lower cost per case, and higher satisfaction scores. In turn the organization has brought in more profitable volume and grown market share.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify variations in patient outcomes as compared to national and state benchmarks, and implement quality improvement strategies
- Use transparency to monitor and track key metrics by specialty and drive continuous improvement in performance
- Attract new patients by raising awareness of the fact that for specific service lines and Centers of Excellence, Bon Secours St. Francis provides superior quality outcomes
- Increase profitable volume on the basis of being a high-quality, low-cost provider
- Demonstrate to the community and community leaders that for specific procedures and conditions, the risk of negative outcomes is lower at Bon Secours St. Francis than at other facilities in the community

SOLUTION

Bon Secours St. Francis has partnered with Healthgrades on a long-standing basis throughout its journey toward value-based care. Joint activities include:

- Detailed analysis of quality performance including comparison of the hospital's performance with five-star and national benchmarks, as well as the outcomes of facilities in the region
- Analysis of trends and outliers to determine opportunities for quality improvement
- Review of best practices from clinical research and top-performing hospitals nationwide
- On-site collaboration to review data analysis and discuss quality improvement opportunities with clinicians and senior administration
- Education of stakeholders on the methodology for measuring outcomes, and the variability in performance among facilities in the area
- Assistance with implementation of best practices in targeted areas
- Use of quality and outcomes to differentiate Bon Secours St. Francis across a variety of marketing campaigns

KEY STRATEGIES

Under the leadership of the Vice President of Orthopedics and General Surgery, the team at Bon Secours St. Francis developed dashboards by specialty to track multiple dimensions of value – focusing on four “pillars”: **Quality & Outcomes, Service & Satisfaction, Volume/Market Share Growth, and Cost Containment.** The dashboards are reviewed regularly with the organization's councils, and have been instrumental in driving the level of transparency needed to understand trends and take action to improve performance in targeted areas – such as reducing complications and readmissions.

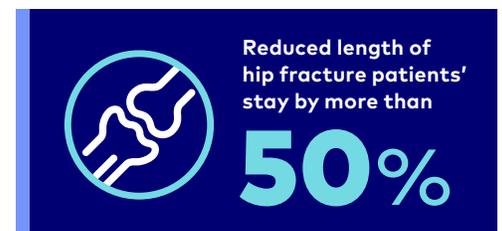
The organization has applied this discipline across numerous service lines. For example, through an intense focus on outcomes for hip fracture patients, Bon Secours St. Francis has achieved one of the lowest mortality rates in the country, has reduced length of stay by more than 50% and has dramatically increased the percentage of patients who return to their former living arrangements in the community. The Osteoporotic Fracture Center at Bon Secours St. Francis has been named a best practice in the country, and as a result of this type of recognition, has seen more than a 50% increase in market share.



“Quality drives your value equation – it is the tip of the spear for your overall value. Because of our quality, we’re seeing incremental business from organizations who want to partner with providers that deliver high-quality, cost-effective care.”

BILL MUNLEY

VP of Orthopedics and General Surgery
Bon Secours St. Francis Health System



Working with Healthgrades, Bon Secours St. Francis is also prepared to present regional comparative studies to educate their local community on how their organization ranks in terms of quality outcomes. The studies have allowed them to share data on the volume of cases, predicted and actual mortality and complication rates at Bon Secours St. Francis, as

compared to the state average, national average and regional competitors in South Carolina. This has helped to educate stakeholders and generate informed community discussions and decisions. The transparency of information supports choices that will help drive quality outcomes for the community.

REGIONAL COMPARATIVE STUDY EXAMPLE

 HIP FRACTURE TREATMENT Regional Provider Comparison				
Hospital	Complications			Star Performance
	Cases	Actual	Predicted	
YOUR HOSPITAL	596	9.23%	18.90%	★★★★★
Five-Star Requirement	596	N/A	18.90%	★★★★★
National Average	230	21.09%	21.05%	★★★
State Average	230	19.73%	20.73%	
Competitor #1	558	21.51%	21.63%	★★★
Competitor #2	133	33.08%	22.81%	★
Competitor #3	561	29.23%	23.52%	★
Competitor #4	235	16.17%	19.20%	★★★
Competitor #5	324	24.69%	18.22%	★↓
Competitor #6	554	22.38%	21.92%	★★★



“The consultants at Healthgrades have worked with us every step of the way and it has really helped us maximize quality across our programs.”

AMY MALCOMB

Orthopedic Program Manager,
Bon Secours St. Francis Health System

QUALITY AND THE BOTTOM LINE

As the organization has discovered, quality enhances the bottom line in multiple ways. When complications are reduced, cost per case goes down. This in turn helps the organization avoid Medicare penalties, as well as the negative impact of not being paid for readmissions. Add to this the fact that employers and payers are looking for high-quality, low-cost providers, and an opportunity is created to increase volume and market share with profitable business.

The focus on quality at Bon Secours St. Francis has won the organization numerous accolades. In addition to being named by Healthgrades as one of America’s 100 Best Hospitals for clinical outcomes in multiple specialties, the hospital has been one of Becker’s 100 Great Hospitals in America, one of Truven’s 100 Top

Hospitals, and named by Consumer Reports as having the 9th safest operating room in the country and for having top programs for knee and hip replacement.

Because of their outcomes performance, Bon Secours St. Francis has been approached by nationally recognized players in surgical tourism and is now treating patients from as far away as Alaska for certain procedures where the hospital has demonstrated higher quality at a lower cost than local alternatives. The organization is also proactively seeking new business by reaching out to corporations and business coalitions that are increasingly looking for ways to educate and incent their employees to select providers based on quality outcomes and lower out-of-pocket expenses.



RESULTS

Using quality and outcomes as the “tip of the spear” in all aspects of their business, Bon Secours St. Francis has achieved significant results in multiple areas:

- Established a culture of transparency, with a focus on “measuring what others measure”
- Driven superior outcomes for multiple procedures and conditions – stroke patients are three times more likely to survive at Bon Secours St. Francis than at a major competitor in the area
- Reduced readmission rates – achieving best decile in the country for key service lines
- Reduced cost per case – among the lowest costs in the country for certain procedures
- Improved reimbursement – avoiding CMS/VBP Medicare penalties and receiving higher rates of reimbursement from a major payer in the state
- Driven profitable incremental volume – including cases from all over the country
- Increased market share – by more than 50% in one case, as a result of demonstrating superior outcomes for hip fracture
- Achieved national recognition from Healthgrades and from numerous other independent agencies

CONCLUSION

By partnering with Healthgrades on a sustained and data-driven quality improvement journey, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System has driven to best practice levels for multiple service lines, reduced costs, improved reimbursement, increased market share, sharpened their overall value proposition, and positioned the Health System for success with value-based care initiatives.



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