



# 2008 Award Recipient

## Poudre Valley Health System

Poudre Valley Health System (PVHS) is a locally owned and private, not-for-profit health care organization serving residents of northern Colorado, Nebraska, and Wyoming. In two acute care hospitals and a network of other facilities, PVHS offers a full spectrum of health care services, including emergency/urgent, intensive, medical/surgical, maternal/child, oncology, and orthopedic care. Founded in 1925 as the Poudre Valley Hospital (PVH) in Fort Collins, Colo., the hospital expanded and diversified its services during its Baldrige journey. It has become PVHS—a regional medical hub with a service area covering 50,000 square miles. The focus areas of PVHS services include (1) Colorado's third largest cardiac center; (2) the only Level IIIa neonatal intensive care unit between Denver and Billings, Mont.; (3) Level II and III trauma centers; and (4) a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence.

## A Healthy Dose of Quality Care

The system's mission is to remain independent while providing innovative, comprehensive care of the highest quality, and exceeding customer expectations. Its vision is to provide world-class health care. PVHS has received external verification of progress toward achieving its vision and goal. For example:



## Highlights

- *Modern Healthcare* magazine named PVHS as one of "America's 100 Best Places to Work in Healthcare" in 2008.
- For the past five years, PVHS has been on the *Hospitals & Health Networks* list of the "100 Most Wired Hospitals and Health Systems" and the *Information Week* list of the "Top 500 Information Technology Innovators."
- After first establishing relationships with physicians, PVHS expanded its partner base to include entities such as home health agencies, a long-term care provider, community health organizations, and a health plan administrator—a partnership that saves local employers \$5 million each year.
- A free community case management program, which pairs advanced-practice nurses and social workers with high-risk, chronically ill patients, decreased emergency department visits for these patients by 50 percent annually and resulted in more than \$850,000 savings in each of the past three years.

- In 2007 and 2008, PVH was recognized as the nation's number one hospital for sustained nursing excellence by the American Nurses Association and the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI).

- In RN hours per patient day, PVH has exceeded the NDNQI best quartile since 2005 and outperformed the American Nurses Credentialing Center's "Magnet" hospitals' 90th percentile in 2008.

- For five consecutive years, PVH has been one of seven U.S. hospitals to be named a Thomson 100 Top Hospital (for superior outcomes, patient safety, and operational and financial performance).

- PVH and Medical Center of the Rockies (MCR) patient satisfaction scores surpass the national top 10 percent, according to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

- In 2008, PVHS received the Peak Performance Award—Colorado's highest award for performance excellence—making it the only organization to receive this honor twice.

## Prescription for Performance Excellence

The *Global Path to Success* (GPS) is the performance improvement system and framework by which senior managers and staff integrate key processes. Strategic objectives provide areas of attention by which PVHS works to achieve its vision. For example, PVHS is planning a new cancer center to "strengthen and expand the PVHS market position and service portfolio."

In an innovative electronic *Balanced Scorecard* system, users can gauge progress on key measures relative to strategic objectives. If key performance measures are blue or green, PVHS is on track to accomplish the corresponding objectives. If key measures are yellow or red, an action plan—monitored by the appropriate senior manager—is developed to remedy the situation.

PVHS designs new services using the *Voice-of-the-Customer* (VOC) approach. During the planning of the system's newest hospital, MCR, community VOC data led to improved emergency room layout, private patient rooms with spectacular mountain views and windows that open, healing gardens, and installation of family amenities such as showers and kitchens.

Addressing its strategic challenges, PVHS is focusing on four core competencies:

*Partnering* relationships help PVHS focus on the future and turn competitors into allies. After first establishing relationships with physicians, PVHS expanded its partner base to include entities such as home health agencies, a long-term care provider, community health organizations, and a health plan administrator—a partnership that saves local employers \$5 million each year. A partnership with a community hospital in Scottsbluff, Neb., led to the building of MCR, which opened in February 2007.

Senior leaders have built a culture that encourages high performance and satisfaction by *engaging the workforce* of 4,200 staff, 550 credentialed physicians, and 800 volunteers. Communication begins with new employee orientation and continues with an open-door policy, a variety of paths for development, and many sharing opportunities. From design of new services to bedside care, PVHS uses interdisciplinary teams to meet patient needs. For example, a trauma resuscitation team of physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, and radiology technologists is on call 24/7, and an interdisciplinary care team led by a trauma surgeon makes daily rounds to see trauma patients. These teams demonstrate “the best collaboration of nurses and doctors, relative to any trauma program in the United States,” according to a recent survey team by the American College of Surgeons. In 2008, the system's overall staff voluntary turnover rate decreased to 8 percent, well below that of competitors, and reached the Healthcare Human Resources Administration's top 10 percent performance level. The system's overall employee satisfaction ranks at the 97th percentile nationally, and *Modern Healthcare* magazine named PVHS as one of “America's 100 Best Places to Work in Healthcare” in 2008.

PVHS's partners are *driving innovation* by designing and testing innovative systems and technologies to meet health care needs. For example, PVHS was among the first health systems in the nation to use a robotic-assisted surgery system in four medical specialty areas and among the first 24 health systems in the world to integrate medical imaging systems across service lines. The Meditech Information System is a secure, user-friendly electronic network that ensures the flow of accurate, real-time information across the organization. To promote optimal patient experiences, PVHS uses the GetWell Network—an in-room, interactive patient education program that allows patients to obtain information about their care team, access the Internet and e-mail, communicate complaints

and compliments, and order on-demand movies. For the past five years, PVHS has been on the *Hospitals & Health Networks* list of the “100 Most Wired Hospitals and Health Systems” and the *Information Week* list of the “Top 500 Information Technology Innovators.”

By *ensuring financial stability*, PVHS maintains its independence and builds a solid economic foundation to secure the future. The system's financial results are significant in an environment in which reimbursement for health care is being tightened and costs for care delivery are increasing. For example:

- MCR, the largest capital project for PVHS, opened on time and on budget, and started positive cash flow well ahead of schedule.
- In 2006, the average PVHS charge was \$2,000 lower than that of its main competitor and \$7,000 lower than the Denver metropolitan rate.
- At 62.3 percent, market share in the system's primary service area is 42 percent higher than that of the closest competitor.
- Equity earnings from joint ventures increased more than threefold from 2004 to 2007, to \$7 million.

## Caring for the Community As Well

With a not-for-profit mission, PVHS develops and implements services that address community health needs, such as:

- a well-workplace initiative with area employers;
- screening and prevention programs for heart disease and prenatal issues (such as low birth weight);
- an injury prevention program for seniors; and
- a Safe Kids Coalition program.

A free community case management program, which pairs advanced-practice nurses and social workers with high-risk, chronically ill patients, has decreased emergency department visits for these patients by 50 percent annually and resulted in more than \$850,000 savings for each of the past three years. PVHS also improves health care access in rural communities through activities such as establishing specialty clinics, providing low-cost medical equipment, and creating a family medicine residency program to place physicians in medically underserved areas. A telehealth program enables remote specialty consultations and continuing medical education for rural health care providers.

Giving back to the community also means environmental stewardship. The 2006 international U.S. Green Building Council conference featured MCR, which implemented numerous innovative “green” concepts and recycled 79 percent of construction waste.

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