

Rady Children's Hospital Now Controls Vendor Credentialing & Facility Access to Improve Patient Security



CUSTOMER PROFILE

Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego was founded in 1954, and is located in San Diego, California. It is a private, non-profit pediatric teaching hospital and the region's only designated pediatric trauma center.



BEDS: 551

EMPLOYEES: 5,000

VENDORS: 110 vendors registered with symplr, appx. 200 reps total

VENDOR REP VISITS: An average of 6 to 8 visits daily

FACILITY: 6 of the 20 buildings require vendor credentialing at 13 access points

After operating for years without a true vendor credentialing system, Rady Children's Hospital – San Diego now relies on symplr's vendor credentialing and DART to control and monitor vendor access to enhance onsite security and eliminate vendor drop-ins and their impact on staff.

"symplr screens and credentials our vendors, enforces our requirements, and ensures vendors are in compliance with our policies, since they could come in direct physical contact with our young patients when customizing a brace, or meeting with employees in surgical and clinical areas," says Lisa DiCiaccio, Supply Chain Management Systems Analyst at Rady Children's Hospital – San Diego.

KEY CHALLENGES

1. No vendor credentialing system or verification process
2. Unable to screen vendors, enforce requirements, or monitor vendor access
3. Impossible to stop vendor drop-ins and cold calls
4. Disruptive and unproductive use of staff time to manage vendors

SOLUTION

symplr Vendor Credentialing plus DART.

BENEFITS

1. Rady relies on symplr to manage its vendor credentialing & verification requirements
2. Enforceable access controls improve facility safety/security and mitigate liability
3. DART eliminates vendor drop-ins and cold calls
4. Effective vendor management and reporting frees up staff

“Our pediatric hospital policy is designed to maximize patient security and we needed comparable measures for our vendors.”

A thorough assessment and deep dive into the many high-tech vendor credentialing options by senior management resulted in the organization’s commitment to symplr to ensure across-the-board compliance and stop the drop-ins and cold calls that distracted staff and created potential safety and security concerns.

“We’d rather be proactive than reactive, so we invested in prevention,” says DiCiaccio. “You never want to see your organization in the news because something bad has happened.”

symplr gives hospitals and their vendors the automated software platform and tools required to facilitate and expedite registration and credentialing, which allows any facility to better enforce compliance with their unique set of policies and regulations. To ensure every vendor and rep remains compliant, certain checks are repeated annually (felony check, national sex offender), while others (exclusion lists, sanction checks, government watch lists) are rerun monthly to capture every possible update.

DiCiaccio, her colleagues, and senior management collaborated with symplr to determine and specify the requirements for their vendors, based on the areas of the facility accessed, and then rely on symplr to enforce compliance and track the status for each rep. For example, requirements like HIPAA awareness training as well as flu shots, tuberculosis and tetanus shots may be required if vendor reps will be exposed to patients and their confidential information.

“In essence, Rady Children’s Hospital is the lawmaker and symplr is the informer and enforcer,” says DiCiaccio. “symplr keeps me aware of anything I need to know about with personal follow-ups.”



While vendors and their reps understand the need for vendor credentialing, they still maintain that Rady Children's Hospital – San Diego is one of the few regional hospitals to require it. As well, like so many of us, vendors and their reps tend to resist change on principal alone, but even more so when it requires greater effort and pre-planning as well as a financial investment.

“Vendor credentialing is for the good of our patients and our staff so it's a non-negotiable requirement and cost of doing business with Rady Children's Hospital – San Diego,” says DiCiaccio.

As importantly, symplr automates and manages credentialing compliance while giving DiCiaccio and hospital staff the administrative controls to override a credential or perform an out-of-compliance check-in when needed.

DiCiaccio can make an exception, demand a follow-up, refuse entry and even escalate to a facility department that the vendor regularly visits or the vendor rep's manager, which invariably results in compliance.

“Vendors are aware that if they try to skirt a system that is easy to use and has been in place for several years now, they risk being denied access permanently. So it is really in their best interest to follow our requirements” says DiCiaccio, who uses symplr's note feature to track issues and interactions with vendors.

Rady's staff also found that while vendors love taking the opportunity to spontaneously connect, surgeons, doctors and other employees find these drop-in visits and cold calls to be a significant disruption that mentally and physically pulls them away from the task at hand.

“We don't want staff dealing with vendors who want to introduce themselves, say hello, or push hard to make one more sale before month's end,” says DiCiaccio. “Our staff should never feel harassed, awkward, or uncomfortable turning a vendor away.”

In order to minimize these disruptions, the hospital also implemented symplr's DART which requires vendors to request an appointment prior to coming onsite, which the department or individual can accept, propose an alternate date/time, or deny.

The appointment request tool lets staff grant temporary or permanent exceptions; for example, some vendor representatives need to follow-up on customized medical devices, and others need quick access to repair broken equipment. The onus is now on vendor reps to request appointments, though certain hospital staff can also initiate appointment requests.

Rady staff appreciates the control and the anonymity afforded by DART when a multi-person department denies a request. Vendor reps who arrive at the hospital without a confirmed appointment cannot check-in or get a day pass. Instead, they now must visit the supply chain management department's office to clear the visit with DiCiaccio.

"On average, symplr's vendor credentialing and DART save me up to six or more hours weekly, although it can vary significantly," says DiCiaccio, who used to spend entire days dealing with one to two vendors hourly because certain doctors prefer quarterly rep days. "I no longer have to stop doing my other work to deal with a vendor or issue a pass - symplr does it all for me."

Over time, Rady has reaped the benefits of symplr's platform enhancements, including a new check-in dashboard and updated compliance dashboards. At a glance, DiCiaccio can see real-time, daily, weekly, monthly, and annual check-ins. DiCiaccio can tell which reps are going where, how often, and when, as well as which departments get the most check-ins. She knows how many overrides have been approved over a given period, which departments have the most overrides, who approved an override and why.



"At a glance, I can see if a rep is somewhere they shouldn't be - the data puts me in control and gives me a sense of security," says DiCiaccio, who keeps the dashboard window open and checks it several times daily. "It tells me if a rep's visits are legitimate or if they are unnecessarily monopolizing our staff's time."

symplr has proven its affordability, ease of use and superior service. DiCiaccio happily reports symplr's platform and employees have continued to consistently deliver on their initial commitments. During implementation, symplr staff was at Rady Children's Hospital - San Diego to onboard staff and to help credential vendors.

"We felt like a top priority for symplr and they were very hands-on - that hasn't changed since we first worked together," says DiCiaccio.