



Case Study

Wheat State Manor, Inc.

Client

Wheat State Manor has been providing senior care in Whitewater, Kansas since 1974. This skilled nursing facility offers a full range of services, including nursing, pharmacy, physician services, nutrition, restorative therapies, and social services. Wheat State currently employs more than 90 caregivers in its facility.

Before launching Silverchair, Wheat State delivered training via in-person inservices, with manual tracking done with sign in sheets and spreadsheets. The facility began using Silverchair in May 2010.

Challenges

Employees Didn't Take Training Seriously

According to Wheat State's Administrator, Mike Smith, previous training efforts had a "the way we've always done it" approach, with inservices that were tied to pay days featuring speakers or other content. Employees also did not take the training sessions seriously: out of 90+ employees, "only about 30 would actually show up to the inservice," Mike says. "When you say 'mandatory training' and they still don't take it seriously, that's a problem."

According to Mike, "The attitude of doing things the way you always have means you're living in the past. When you do that, there's no possibility for the future." Mike and Wheat State

CHALLENGES

- Employees didn't take training seriously; attendance was low
- Training and tracking was costly and time consuming

knew they needed to make a stronger case for training to their employees and make education a condition of employment at the facility.

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*Mike Smith, Administrator,
Wheat State Manor*

Training was Costly and Time-Consuming

Training also proved to cost too much time and effort in proportion to compliance. Training was tracked using sign in sheets and manual data entry into Excel. "It would cost us one person's entire day just to get through new employee orientation," says Mike. "We had good employee records, but it took some time."

When employees didn't take training seriously, it cost the facility money: "The cost of having a small number of people sitting in training was about \$8,000 per year for only 40% compliance," Mike says.

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Mike wanted to find a way to get employees to embrace training while stemming costs: "What would be [required] for us to gain 100% compliance?" Mike began researching online learning as a way to streamline training, save time, and cut costs.

Results

Greatly Improved Compliance

Wheat State Manor implemented their online learning system in May 2010 and immediately began seeing positive results. "We've gotten a ton of training done in the first few months. Within 30 days, we matched our total compliance rate from last year," he says.

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Average Compliance

Before Silverchair	With Silverchair
40%	92%

Mike helped employees see the value of education by assigning courses that directly related to an upcoming survey. “We were preparing for survey so I assigned courses to our nurses and CNAs that covered areas we were cited for during last year’s survey.” Mike has also streamlined new employee orientation in the Silverchair system; the orientation is assigned to the new employee automatically. “The new employee can finish their orientation before they start at the facility, which is very cool.”

Mike is pleased with the boost in compliance and the way employees have taken to the system. “Out of 90+ employees, only about 4 or 5 people are behind in their training,” he says. “Employees like the system. I had one laundry supervisor complete more than 30 hours of elective training on her own, and other employees have gotten together to have a ‘Silverchair party’ where they work on their training together.”

Wheat State has been able to achieve its goal of making education an important part of employees’ jobs: “Silverchair helped us create an environment where [education] is easy and accessible to staff,” Mike says.

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Significant Cost and Time Savings

One of Mike’s goals in researching online learning was to find a way to save money and time dedicated to training. “In my research, I saw that for 50% less than I was currently spending, I could get better compliance with Silverchair.” Employees are also taking more courses per student that previously, giving Wheat State a good return on investment.

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Average Training Costs

Before Silverchair	With Silverchair
\$8,000/year	\$4,000/year

Mike has also saved time in tracking and reporting on training using the features of the online learning system. “I’ve authored courses on orientation and drug policy and am working on a few others, and I like that I can pull reports to let me know who I need to talk to about policies or training,” he says. “The ability to track everything quickly is a huge plus.”

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Conclusion

Like many facilities, Wheat State Manor found it challenging to make training a priority for employees, resulting in large amounts of money and time being spent for few results. Online learning allowed Wheat State to make training easy and accessible for students while saving money and time for the organization.

Employees now like training and education has become a standard condition of employment—and part of Wheat State’s culture of care. “We’re a church-owned organization and we’re committed to a Christian, loving environment with the best care and best practices,” Mike says. “The information is now fresh in [employees’] minds when they work with residents. Think about how many face-to-face sessions it would have taken to have that impact.”



Locations:

Charlottesville Portland
Des Moines Raleigh
Knoxville

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