

CASE STUDY

Innovative Patient Management Strategies in FQHCs: North Olympic's Journey with PHP



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OVERVIEW

North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN), a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) network located on the scenic Olympic Peninsula in Washington state, serves as a vital healthcare resource for its rural community. With a commitment to providing comprehensive, patient-centered care, NOHN operates four locations, including a mobile health clinic, and offers services ranging from primary medical care to dental, vision, and behavioral health, with plans to expand further.

Embodying a mission of delivering high-quality, accessible healthcare, NOHN builds on a rich history that started nearly 40 years ago with two pioneering physicians in Family Medicine, evolving to meet the growing needs of its community while maintaining its core values of inclusivity and quality care.



ORGANIZATION TYPE

An FQHC offering primary medical, dental, vision, and behavioral health services through multiple locations, including a mobile clinic.

ORGANIZATION SNAPSHOT

A comprehensive health network embodying a mission of delivering high-quality, accessible healthcare.

TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS WITH PERFORMANCE HEALTH PARTNERS

70%

reduction in
incident
resolution time

18

hours saved
per month on
admin tasks

67%

decrease
in open
incidents

100%

reduction in
behavior
agreements



CHALLENGES

Despite its strong foundation and commitment to excellence, North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN) faced significant operational hurdles that threatened to undermine its mission. Central to these challenges was an outdated incident management system that was not only cumbersome but also markedly inefficient. Jackie Lebihan, Chief Operating Officer at NOHN, described the system as “very antiquated,” which made it “very hard to navigate.” The inefficiency was exacerbated by a lack of clean interfaces and functional dashboards, making the system difficult for staff to engage with effectively.

The complexity of the old system significantly stifled staff’s ability to manage incidents. It resulted in a cumbersome reporting process that deterred staff participation, ultimately affecting patient care outcomes.

Jackie noted, “All of these things just made it suboptimal for what we’re really trying to accomplish—delivering the high-quality care our patients deserve.” This inefficiency was quantified by the administrative burden placed on staff. Prior to PHP, the team at NOHN spent an excessive amount of time managing incidents; up to 30 hours a month were dedicated solely to administrative tasks related to incident management.

Furthermore, the slow processing time meant that incidents remained open far too long, often taking weeks to resolve, which not only delayed responses to critical issues but also left many incidents partially addressed or unresolved. This situation highlighted a pressing need for a robust solution to streamline the incident reporting and management process, reduce administrative burden, and ensure that NOHN could continue to deliver high-quality, accessible healthcare while managing incidents effectively and efficiently.



With our previous system, we barely scratched the surface of what we could achieve with incident reporting. Now, with PHP, we’re resolving incidents within a week—a drastic improvement from the previous three weeks we used to take.”

—**Terri Hauff**, Senior Clinical Risk Manager

THE PHP SOLUTION

Recognizing the dire need for a more effective system, NOHN turned to Performance Health Partners (PHP) software, seeking to leverage its healthcare-specific functionalities and acclaimed user-friendliness. The choice was largely influenced by PHP's Best in KLAS designation, a marker of excellence in the healthcare technology space.

"The KLAS designation was a key factor in our decision; it reassured us of the software's quality and compliance with high industry standards," Jackie explained. "Additionally, the ease of use demonstrated in the personalized demo further convinced us, ensuring that the new system was quickly and smoothly adopted by our staff."

The implementation process of PHP was remarkably smooth, reflecting the meticulous planning and robust support provided by the PHP team. Jackie Lebihan noted, "I've gone through so many different implementations throughout my career, and yet Performance Health's implementation was one of the easiest I've yet to experience."

The process unfolded, she explained, "like clockwork," with each step executed on schedule and without any hitches. NOHN's PHP implementation project lead was particularly commendable for her responsiveness and expertise. Jackie appreciated her consistent professionalism, stating, "There wasn't a question she couldn't answer... every meeting we made good forward progress," highlighting the seamless handling and successful execution of the project.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- ☑ Highly intuitive interface that facilitates quick and easy reporting of incidents, errors, and near misses by staff.
- ☑ Automated notifications and routing to relevant contacts, thereby improving compliance with regulations.
- ☑ Real-time dashboards that enable quick trend identification, immediate visibility of department-wise incidents, and the creation of comprehensive reports within seconds.
- ☑ Fast support for any questions or issues.
- ☑ A customized solution designed to meet the specific needs of the FQHC network, ensuring alignment with existing workflows and processes.



IMPACTFUL RESULTS

Operational Efficiency and Staff Engagement

Post-implementation, NOHN experienced a dramatic transformation in its operational dynamics. The intuitive design of PHP led to a significant increase in the reporting of incidents. “With our previous system, we were only scratching the surface of what we could do with incident reporting,” Jackie shared. Under PHP, the process became so streamlined that incidents could be resolved within a week, a stark improvement from the previous 21-day timeframe.

The decrease in administrative burdens was equally impressive. Terri Hauff, NOHN’s Senior Clinical Risk Manager, highlighted the shift in workload management, “Before PHP, we were dedicating 30 hours a month solely to administrative tasks related to incident management. Now, we’ve been able to reallocate the majority of that time to directly engage with patients and on follow up.” This redistribution of time has allowed staff to focus more on direct patient care opportunities, thus enhancing patient outcomes and satisfaction.



Improvements with Performance Health Partners:

Incident resolution time reduced from 21 days to **under a week**

18 hours saved per month on administrative tasks, reallocating time toward patient safety initiatives

Three-fold decrease in open incidents, enhancing the efficiency of resolutions



“This new system has not only improved our operational efficiency but has genuinely enhanced the quality of care we provide to our patients, making their treatment experiences much better.”
—**Jackie Lebihan**, Chief Operating Officer

Transformative Patient Management: Addressing Challenging Patient Interactions

An unexpected benefit of implementing PHP's software has been its profound impact on managing complex patient-provider interactions. Before PHP, interactions with challenging patients often left providers feeling overwhelmed and unsupported, with their default recourse being behavior agreements or outright dismissal—measures that were misaligned with NOHN's ethos of inclusive care.

NOHN experienced a transformation in its operational dynamics post-implementation, with incident resolution time reduced by approximately

67%

Terri, elaborating on this transformative change, observed, "One of the trends we saw was a new provider submitting up to five incidents a week about disruptive patients. With PHP, we were able to collect pertinent details that supported enhanced understanding and greater analysis, which led to us opting not to rush to patient dismissal, instead offering additional new provider support around managing difficult patients." The enhanced visibility provided by PHP facilitated a shift from punitive measures to a more empathetic and effective management approach, significantly reducing the use of behavior agreements and fostering a less confrontational atmosphere.

Jackie, reflecting on the broader implications, added, "We haven't had any behavior agreements since we implemented PHP, which is quite remarkable. Addressing behavior issues one-on-one with patients is less confrontational and tends to improve their compliance with treatments." This approach not only alleviates stress on providers but also ensures that patients receive the compassionate care they need, regardless of their behavioral challenges.

Moreover, Terri shared insights into how PHP has enabled NOHN to refine its processes: "By being able to address behavior issues directly and individually, we can intervene in a way that is more human-centered and compassionate. We work on understanding the unmet needs of our patients. When disruptive behaviors interfere with a successful visit, patient outcomes are negatively impacted. Through enhanced insight, in large part due to Performance Health, we're now keeping patients in the clinic, helping them cope and meet their treatment goals without dismissal."

Improvements with Performance Health Partners

- ✓ **Reduction in behavior agreements** from routine to zero since implementation
- ✓ **Better support and tools** for handling challenging interactions increase job satisfaction
- ✓ **Fewer dismissals** mean more patients continue receiving care, supporting better long-term health outcomes

“PHP has allowed us to intervene before issues escalate, eliminating the need for behavior agreements and fostering a more supportive environment for our patients.”

This enhanced management capability not only improves the patient experience and patient outcomes but also solidifies NOHN's commitment to inclusivity. Terri added, “We have gained better control over the process, ensuring that decisions about patient care are thoughtful and systematic. This high-touch approach has helped us develop stronger relationships with those patients who were previously considered challenging, turning potential dismissals into opportunities for better health outcomes and greater stability in care provision.”

Spotlight on Incident Management: Addressing Vaccine Errors

Another critical improvement area with the introduction of PHP's Incident Management System at NOHN has been in the management of vaccine errors. Previously, the limitations of their previous system obscured the tracking and visibility of such errors, making it difficult to address them effectively. With the introduction of PHP, NOHN experienced a transformative change in how these incidents are handled.

Jackie highlighted the clarity PHP brought to the process: “We saw a clear pattern developing around significant amounts of vaccine errors. This enhanced visibility allowed NOHN to undertake a strategic overhaul of vaccine management, centralizing management in Pharmacy to ensure tighter controls and enhanced standardization.” This shift not only streamlined operations but also significantly reduced errors.

These changes reflect a substantial enhancement in the safety and efficiency of vaccine distribution at NOHN, showcasing how PHP software has enabled the healthcare network to elevate its service quality through better incident management and data-driven decision-making.

Improvements with Performance Health Partners:

Significant decrease

in vaccine errors due to improved controls and standardized processes

Increased confidence

among medical staff in vaccine handling and administration

Reduction in errors

contributes to higher patient trust and satisfaction levels, as they receive safer and more reliable care

FUTURE OUTLOOK

NOHN's experience with PHP exemplifies the transformative potential of specialized patient and employee safety software in healthcare settings. The improvements in operational efficiencies, patient management, safety, and staff engagement have not only redefined internal processes but also profoundly impacted patient care quality. Looking forward, NOHN plans to leverage the scalability of PHP to accommodate its growth and further enhance its service delivery.

CONCLUSION

This case study underscores the critical role of digital tools in modernizing healthcare, providing a compelling narrative for other organizations considering similar technological advancements. As NOHN continues to evolve, its partnership with Performance Health Partners will undoubtedly be a cornerstone of its success in delivering exceptional healthcare.



HAS YOUR INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM KEPT UP WITH THE TIMES?

Performance Health Partners helps healthcare organizations provide the highest quality care in the safest possible environment. Our best-in-class enterprise software solutions are built to grow and scale with your organization over time by filling process gaps and driving quality outcomes. To learn more, connect with our team by clicking the link below.

LET'S GET STARTED



"By addressing patient behavioral issues directly and personally, we show up as humans, not just healthcare providers, which profoundly changes the dynamic and outcomes of patient care."

— Terri Hauff,,
Senior Clinical Risk Manager,
North Olympic Healthcare Network

Customer Success Stories



"Working with Performance Health Partners has given me so much time back in my life. The customer service staff is amazing and fast, and I could not ask for a faster turnaround time. And the software is so customizable. It's great, and I love it."

— **Joann Coke**, Quality Coordinator, Sparta Community Hospital District



"PHP's responsiveness is not something I've experienced with any other vendor. The response time is always under 48 hours, no matter what's going on. Whether it's a help desk ticket or reaching out directly, we always hear back fast, and that's impressive."

— **Cyndi Locke**, Risk Management and Patient Relations Manager, Fenway Health



"Having the ability to analyze various types of incident reports has provided tremendous insight. Getting an in-depth look into each department to determine if there are any trends, patterns, or specific events that occurred in a certain month is amazing."

— **Charlene Wright**, Director of Quality & Risk Management, Family Health Services

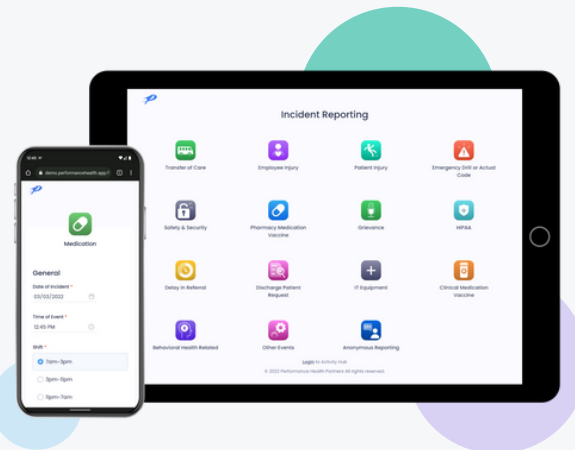


"I'm so satisfied with Performance Health Partners—it's been such a win for us. It has propelled our quality improvement, risk management, and incident reporting processes on an impressive upward trajectory. For others, I highly recommend it."

— **Jessica Cole**, Senior Director of Compliance and Risk Management, Prism Health

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