# University of Utah Health Care achieved optimal staffing levels and reduced overtime costs by $300,000

## The Measurable Impact of Mediware

Since the implementation of MediLinks Respiratory, University of Utah Health Care has:

- Quantified true staffing needs objectively
- Reduced overtime during the night shift using a nontraditional approach
- Made workload assignments efficiently
- Gained greater insight into managing productivity

> " MediLinks provided the information we needed to adjust our scheduling and staffing to meet the real needs of each shift. "
>
> **Mickey Roach**
> RRT, Systems Administrator - Respiratory Therapy

## Where does the time and money go?

Before the availability of electronic data and tools offered by MediLinks, University of Utah Health Care's respiratory division struggled to find ways to improve staffing levels and productivity. The issues they faced included:

- Lack of information to gauge precise staffing needs
- Difficulty assessing workload assignments
- Cumbersome and inconsistent documentation

UUHC's respiratory division knew it was time to adopt an electronic-based documentation system designed to meet the specific needs of the respiratory division.

## Pinpoint staffing needs in advance

Since using MediLinks, management at UUHC has been able to more objectively identify, in real time, their staffing needs per shift. Management was able to reliably estimate the total number of hours needed to care for the current patient load, based on the current orders and UUHC's time standards. Examining work units and productivity for each shift allowed respiratory mangers to develop a nontraditional approach to staffing. They learned that:

- The first four hours of the night shift were just as busy as the day shift
- The remaining eight hours were much slower

As a result of their findings, UUHC decided to split the night shift into two separate shifts, contributing to a significant reduction in overtime. "With these changes, we reduced our

### University of Utah Hospital - Overtime



overtime costs by $300,000 this year alone. It would have been difficult to achieve these results without the information and staffing tools from MediLinks and the concerted management by our shift supervisors," says Mickey Roach, systems administrator – respiratory therapy.
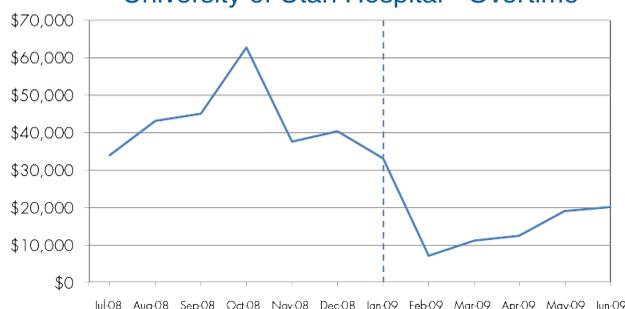
In addition to determining staffing needs more accurately, MediLinks makes workload assignments a snap. "With MediLinks, a manager can take a significant daily workload and assign it to a large staff of therapists efficiently compared to other methods I've seen," stated Roach. MediLinks provided managers with the reports they needed to precisely measure workload volumes for each shift and quickly account for staff.

## Gain greater insight into productivity

Respiratory managers have gained greater insight into their staff's productivity by improving the quality of charges captured. With the use of MediLinks, billing codes are automatically captured during documentation, saving time and reducing the number of lost charges. "MediLinks' charge capture is seamless for our therapists. I have not seen another hospital IT system that offers as much flexibility for respiratory charge capture," confirmed Roach. At UUHC, therapists are confidently capturing charges for all procedures, taking the guesswork out of documentation and eliminating errors. As a result, the respiratory department better understands its productivity levels and the revenue impact of the department.

MediLinks has proven to be a powerful tool that has helped UUHC's respiratory managers leverage staffing needs and drive productivity. "MediLinks offers a comprehensive package to address documentation of respiratory procedures. This has allowed us to automate respiratory protocols and capture valuable data, which we've been able to pull into reports to help us more effectively manage our operation," says Roach.

Established in 1965, University of Utah Health Care (UUHC) is a 517-bed facility that serves people from across the state and throughout the Intermountain West. In 2010, UUHC achieved the number-one ranking in the University HealthSystem Consortium's 2010 Quality and Accountability Study.