



WILLOWBROOK HOME HEALTH BRANCHES IMPROVE PATIENT WOUND CARE WITH CORSTRATA

Wound care management presents a growing challenge for many Home Health Care Agencies (HHA) as the number of wound patients across the U.S. now represents nearly one-third of all home health patients. With five branches in middle Tennessee and a rapidly increasing number of wound care patients, Pamela Sotiriadis, RN, BSN, Administrator at Willowbrook Home Health recognized her organization's need to improve wound patient care and satisfaction as well as control costs and nursing staff productivity.

"The growth of our wound care patient numbers was a catalyst for us to take a closer look at our care plans and how effectively we were administering those within the 60-day episode," said Sotiriadis.

WOUND CARE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Wound care is a high-risk, high-value patient segment. The cost associated with hiring and retaining a WOCN on staff can be prohibitive for some agencies who try to train their existing staff to handle the complexities that come with wound patients. Proper and thorough documentation of wounds and wound progress can make the difference of several thousand dollars per patient. Supply costs often fluctuate dramatically depending on how informed the staff and nursing team is on the latest evidence-based dressings and treatments, wreaking havoc on profit margins. And as more referral sources move to value-based care reimbursement contracts, the lack of wound care expertise can cut agencies out of important community referral programs.

As an innovative healthcare organization, Willowbrook Home Health continually evaluates its ability to deliver the highest level of care, while also improving its operational efficiencies to ensure the organization's overall success. Following a review of their wound care management program, the company's administrators realized there were certain areas for improvement.

The logo for Willowbrook Home Health features a stylized illustration of a willow tree in a circular frame. Below the illustration, the text "WILLOWBROOK Home Health" is written in a serif font. Underneath that, in a smaller font, it says "A FIVE POINTS HEALTHCARE COMPANY".

Founded in 1981 by a team of local health care professionals, Willowbrook established its first office in Hendersonville, TN. Willowbrook quickly earned a reputation for providing high quality home health services and has since expanded to multiple locations throughout Middle Tennessee. Willowbrook Home Health's mission is to provide the highest level of care to help seniors remain independent in their homes. Willowbrook Home Health & Hospice joined the Five Points Healthcare family of companies in 2014.

“Our nurses were constantly having to perform additional visits outside of the care plan for our wound patients, which was costing us money. We knew there had to be a better way to maintain our high level of care, but also ensure we were containing our costs. We saw an opportunity to reduce the number of skilled nurse visits as well as ensure our staff were using our formularies optimally to control our supply costs and improve patient outcomes. Our decision to address these challenges led us to Corstrata.”

CORSTRATA WOUND CARE EXPERTS HELP SOLVE CARE PATH CHALLENGES

Willowbrook chose to work with Corstrata’s experienced staff of board certified wound care professionals and leverage the mobile, telehealth technologies they provide to develop a suitable solution to address the organization’s wound care delivery challenges as well as to help meet their intended goals for the year, which included:

- Build patient care census with referral sources.
- Improve patient satisfaction scores primarily related to medication adherence.
- Positively affect quality Star Rating to ensure optimal reimbursements from CMS.
- Ensure quality care transitions for patients from local hospitals to home health.

To start, Willowbrook conducted an initial pilot with its largest branch in Nashville to test the solution and provide a baseline of wound care education for the nurses who would be working with the Corstrata technology and wound care professionals. Following the test, the Willowbrook team chose to onboard all patients with aggressive or acute chronic conditions for two of the branches to utilize the Corstrata HIPAA compliant technology via their mobile phones and consult with the Corstrata wound care experts. The Corstrata team also worked with Willowbrook to develop internal procedures for documentation, communication and how the solution would interface with their EHR software for clinical documentation.

“The Corstrata team is very experienced and easy to work with. They are always quick to respond and help us improve patient care and outcomes. Their collaboration and continued education of our staff helps to ensure we are delivering the highest quality of care to our wound patients,” said Sotiriadis.

Based on the success of the initial program, Willowbrook chose to onboard the remaining branches and enable all nurses to access Corstrata experts for any wound care patient with an acute or aggressive wound to validate wound type and stage and collaborate on the optimal plan of care.

“We have two nurses in our Nashville office, both LPNs, who have been caring for wound patients for many years. Even these seasoned nurses found working with the Corstrata experts to be very beneficial in helping them greatly improve wound care and patient outcomes,” commented Sotiriadis.

IMPROVING PATIENT OUTCOMES AND REDUCING COSTS

The decision to implement Corstrata's mobile, telehealth technology and consult with Corstrata's experienced wound care professionals has had a positive impact on Willowbrook's wound care program. "We have significantly decreased the number of days it takes to heal a patient wound with the help of the Corstrata experts. And patient and staff satisfaction with the video conferencing has been very high," added Sotiriadis.

The company is still evaluating the full benefits as it relates to overall cost reduction in wound supplies and average nurse visits. However, preliminary results are positive, as Willowbrook patients have experienced a decrease in healing timeframes and the company is seeing improvements in the optimization of formularies from nurses utilizing Corstrata.

"We get many patients referred to us with chronic wounds who weren't cared for properly from the beginning. It is often very difficult and expensive to heal these types of wounds," said Sotiriadis. "And while our nurses are very busy, we continue to encourage them to use the Corstrata technology and consultative services, because we believe that taking these extra steps up front can help us optimize the efficiency and success of our wound care program."

PROVEN PATIENT SUCCESS

"We had a patient we were trying to use a specific debridement product with and were having difficulty healing the wound. One of the products suggested by Corstrata was not on our formulary, but we were able to purchase it. Within a week, we saw significant improvement based on the debriding agent they suggested. Both our nurse and patient were very impressed with this outcome."

ABOUT CORSTRATA

Corstrata's board certified wound clinicians use both live video and wound images to evaluate a patient's wound and consult with the Home Health Care provider to recommend the most effective treatment for better outcomes, improved patient quality of life, and lower overall cost.

Our mobile app allows a patient, a caregiver, or an onsite clinician to easily take wound photos, document the status of the wound and initiate a live video call with Corstrata's wound experts. Through our cloud-based telehealth platform, our experts monitor the wound's progress and recommend treatments that promote healing. Corstrata's HIPAA compliant technologies facilitate documentation which reduces the provider's legal liability.

HOW CORSTRATA BENEFITS HOME HEALTH AGENCIES

- Leading edge, innovative wound care resources
- Timely access to wound care specialists
- Reduced visit frequency for wound patients
- Increased staff productivity
- Standardized wound data collection & reporting
- Improved wound care documentation for compliance audits
- Decreased wound liability exposure
- Improved clinical outcomes & patient quality of life
- Enhanced patient/family satisfaction & loyalty