



## **The Emerging Role of Nurse Informaticists in Improving Patient Care Outcomes and Staff Satisfaction**

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With a strong urgency to improve compliance in care plans, the nursing leadership team at White Plains Hospital decided to take action by appointing a nurse informaticist to manage the shift in care plan compliance. When conducting an evaluation of its current state, White Plains Hospital found that the care plan utilization rate was only 58%. Additionally, they found that the care plans were not specific to any intervention resulting in wide variations in care practices. After seeing the high utilization rates in evidence-based order sets at their organization, nurse informaticists and the nursing leadership team decided to implement evidence-based care plans from Zynx Health. As a MEDITECH hospital, White Plains decided to align its care plan implementation with its upgrade to the MEDITECH 5.66 platform. The process began with strategic planning sessions to ensure that White Plains Hospital was well prepared for the rapid care plan implementation process. By June of 2013, a care planning council was formed and consisted of interdisciplinary team members that made up the patient care process including respiratory, nursing, informatics, nutrition, physical therapy, and care management to name a few. The results were astounding with 55 care plans customized in just 3 days based on the most current and relevant evidence provided by Zynx Health. A chart review in October 2013 immediately following implementation showed a 90% utilization rate. That utilization rate increased to 95% by November 2013. User satisfaction increased across both novice and veteran clinicians. The success of this rapid implementation and the increase in care plan utilization rates is attributed to: 1. the staunch support of the nursing leadership team 2. nurse informaticists who brought with them a rich history of experience as staff nurses and informaticists that helped bridge the communication gap between clinicians and informaticists 3. the formation of an interdisciplinary care planning council that was made up of staff who touch the lives of a patient at the point of care 4. the adoption of a more meaningful and efficient care plan model: Zynx Health's philosophical, conceptual, and operational approach to customize care plans focuses on the current patient problem that prevents the patient from moving to the next level of care rather than everything a patient might encounter during the care process. As White Plains Hospital began to tackle Meaningful Use Stage 2 requirements in 2014, nurse informaticists have been brought to the decision-making table at much earlier stages than they had previously experienced. The nursing leadership team trusted the experience of the nurse informaticists, having witnessed the success of the care planning project, and found value in involving them in key decision making points for healthcare reform programs. In conclusion, nurse informaticists possess a unique blend of expertise as staff nurses and informaticists. Because of this, nurse informaticists play a significant part in improving patient outcomes, staff satisfaction, clinician adoption, utilization, and compliance, as well as bridging the gaps between care providers in the healthcare setting.