

case study

**hospital for special
surgery modernizes
policy approaches to
improve operational
excellence**



client



the Hospital for Special Surgery

Founded in 1863, the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) is amongst the nation's oldest and most renowned hospitals. With 244 beds and over 5000 employees, the HSS serves over 150,000 patients and performs close to 32,000 surgeries, including 1% of the country's joint replacement surgeries each year. What's more, the HSS treats professional athletes from around the world and cares for 20 professional and collegiate teams--including the NY Giants, Mets and Knicks--as the official team physicians.

For 26 consecutive years the HSS has been among the top-ranked hospitals by U.S. News & World Report Best Hospitals--taking No. 1 in Orthopedics and No. 3 in rheumatology in 2017-2018. Perhaps even more impressive is being within the 99 percentile for 34 consecutive quarters (8 years) of "most likely to recommend" when benchmarked against other hospitals in the Press Ganey Associates' database.

organization

Based in New York City, Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) specializes in orthopedic surgery and the treatment of rheumatologic conditions.

challenge

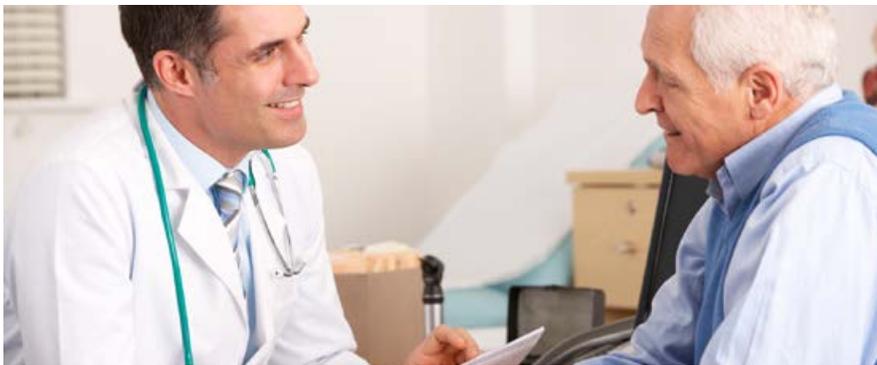
Consolidation and standardization of policies & procedures

solution

Flexible web-based enterprise policy & procedure management platform

the call for a new approach

When the Hospital for Special Surgery decided to implement a new EMR system in 2014, they wanted to take the time to review their processes. Recognizing that their current paper process was ineffective, they saw it as a necessity to improve upon their organizational methodologies. In particular, HSS looked to transform their inpatient and outpatient experiences. As such, they asked the Operational Excellence (OE) team to spearhead the task at hand and lead transformation efforts around the enterprise. Not only did OE help lead the project but they also engaged many disciplines throughout the hospital including nursing, physician assistants, and physical therapy.



Policies and procedures are the cornerstone of every well run hospital.

With a focus on changing behavior, culture and process, OE and the team set their attention on the organization's policies and procedures. Believing it to be the cornerstone of every well run hospital, they began to explore how policy and procedure are engaged in the clinical workflow. What they discovered was that there were numerous content experts creating and driving different policies forward within the organization and no standard way to document these for review. This resulted in inconsistencies in how their policies took shape, a lack collaboration between departments, no standard approval process, and having multiple versions of policies throughout the organization.

uncovering new and improved solutions

Armed with a new understanding of where their problems stemmed from invigorated The Hospital for Special Surgery's team of senior leadership to dedicate their time to revamping their process. Their first order of business? Finding a solution that would offer them robust capabilities to automate, manage and standardize the policy and procedure creation workflow.

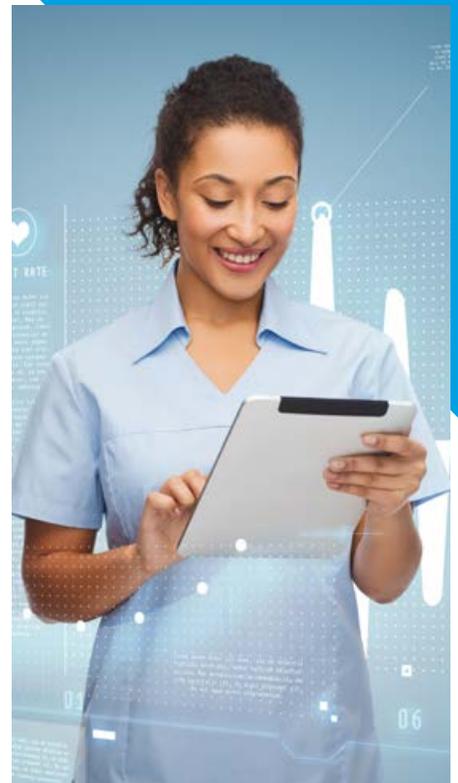
So, the search began for a tool that would help them:

- Update current policies and procedures
- Automate creation and approval workflows
- Standardize the format in which policies are created
- Electronically sign-off on stages
- Send alerts when updates are needed
- Pull reports and metrics on policy performance
- Educate and test comprehension

And the tool had to be:

- Cloud-based
- Easy to use
- Budget friendly
- Capable of robust keyword searches

After reviewing several options, The HSS ultimately decided on PolicyMedical's PolicyManager™. Namely for PolicyMedical's great customer service track record, its ability to tie policies to regulations and standards, and lastly for the fact that it checked off the organization's list of must-have features.



Centralizing and standardizing on a proven solution that could streamline the entire policy lifecycle was key.

transforming the Policy creating process

In their continued efforts to improve efficiencies across the institution, HSS created an Interdisciplinary Practice Council. This council acted as a leadership team that was responsible for developing, reviewing and assessing new policies as well as updates to current policies for approval and final sign-off. This process accomplished two things: first, it ensured that all policies followed a standard template and second, it ensured that those policies were reviewed and tracked via a final sign-off process.

achieving excellence

Automating and streamlining their policy management workflow brought on a number of beneficial changes throughout the organization. Some highlights include:

- Staff education improved with links to videos, quizzes and learning management systems in the policies
- Providing front-line staff access to up-to-date policies from anywhere at anytime
- Streamlined on-site survey process
- State of compliance readiness
- Cost savings - no longer having to spend money on paper, ink and storage

After refining this process, the HSS experienced a notable change including greater collaboration, improved morale, and increased productivity. The most noticeable change was the impact eliminating old paper-based policies had on increasing patient safety, quality and risk mitigation. By moving to an automated system where the dissemination of new and updated policies took on a more orderly process, HSS was able to remove the possibility of old policies being used in error.



To improve efficiencies across the institution, HSS created an Interdisciplinary Practice Council.

advice for successful transformation

For those looking to give their policy management system a bit of a revamp, The HSS highly recommends three things:

1. The creation of a standard interdisciplinary group or committee dedicated to overseeing the process on a regular basis. This team's responsibilities would also include anything that falls under the breadth of setting tone for new policy creation, adaptation of old policies and linking to regulatory bodies.
2. Identify and secure champions both on the leadership side and on the operational level. Engaging clinicians is key to getting the interprofessional team to utilize the tool and be successful. With senior level executives being part of the undertaking early on, it cut down on decision making and buy-in time significantly.
3. Have a system to help automate your policy and procedure experience. As mentioned, doing so has helped them increase productivity, cut costs, and increase patient safety!

onward and upward

With the help of PolicyMedical's web-based enterprise policy and procedure management platform, HSS was able to revamp their workflow to meet their vision. Having already experienced a number of benefits, HSS hopes to continue to improve their processes with the continued support and friendship of the PolicyMedical team and customer service staff.



Automating policy management increased productivity, reduced costs and improved patient safety.