Facilitate CAP audits with a paperless policies and procedures solution

Customer
Southwest General Health Center

Employees
2,400

Number of Beds
358

Location
Middleburg Heights, OH

Departments Using OnBase
Medical Laboratories

The Challenge

Ensuring its staff accesses and acknowledges the most current policies and procedures is a top priority for Southwest General Health Center. However, paper-based processes made managing revisions and ensuring easy access across its four satellite labs a challenge.

It was also difficult to demonstrate the lab's compliance with document management requirements and offer auditors quick access to information, putting Southwest General's accreditation by the College of American Pathologists (CAP) at risk.

That's when Southwest General turned to OnBase.

The Solution

Southwest General already used OnBase to manage clinical documents. By expanding its solution to streamline CAP audits and improve its lab document control process, Southwest General also increased the value of its existing investment. The solution's design was based on CAP document control requirements to allow the labs to effectively prepare for and facilitate regular inspections.

"We've been audited six times by CAP since the OnBase solution was implemented," said Robert Brophy, senior system administrator. "We've always passed the inspections and the auditors have great feedback on the solution."

Brophy added that auditors especially appreciate the document history feature which allows them to view a record of every action taken on a document, including who looked at it and when.

To simplify the policy creation and revision process, OnBase automatically delivers new or updated documents to the right individuals for review and electronic sign-off. Once policies are approved, with the click of a button administrators distribute them to appropriate lab staff via email. Email notifications contain links to the documents for acknowledgement and delinquency notices when a review is 60 days past due. With more than 1,200 policy documents, forms and checklists stored in OnBase, Southwest General's 80 lab employees have instant access to the most up-to-date information.

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> **"The CAP auditors are really impressed with our solution. They recommend OnBase to other hospitals to manage their lab document control processes."**
>
> – Robert Brophy, senior system administrator, Southwest General Health Center

Using a variety of reports, lab managers and administrators track acknowledgement by document or by user, supporting compliance with internal guidelines and external regulations. And with the ability to retrieve past versions of policies – even rescinded documents – Southwest General is well-equipped to meet any litigation-related requests.

The Difference

Streamlines CAP audits: "We are always preparing for a CAP audit," said Marian Badaczewski, manager of laboratory services. "OnBase improves many of the tedious audit tasks and makes it more manageable on a day-to-day basis." The solution also facilitates inspections. Lab managers use OnBase to demonstrate compliance with document control guidelines as well as provide a record of approvals and acknowledgements.

Reduces time and storage costs: "Our biggest cost savings are in time and storage. We've eliminated the need to manage everything on paper, which was all very tedious," said Badaczewski. OnBase also eliminates the storing costs for hard copies of current and previous lab manual versions and other policy-related documents.

Improves policy creation and approvals: When a new policy or procedure is added to the system, required reviewers – lab directors, medical directors and pathologists – receive email notifications. Reviewers can create virtual sticky notes on the documents, efficiently collaborating until the policy is finalized. Electronic signatures simplify the approval process by allowing stakeholders to easily indicate their agreement to the new policy.

Simplifies reviews and revisions: As part of CAP accreditation, labs must conduct a biannual review of existing policy and procedure documents. OnBase keeps track of required review dates, delivering the policy or procedure to the appropriate stakeholders to reduce the risk of errors or oversights.

Improves user access and acknowledgement: "We now have control to ensure nothing changes and that the current version of a lab document is the one published and available to end users," Badaczewski said. "It's a very secure process." When a lab adds or updates a policy or procedure, OnBase notifies users via email to click a link to read the document, streamlining acknowledgements.

Requires minimal IT resources: "The solution is easy to administer and I'm able to manage most challenges that come up," said Brophy, who has opened only 10 support tickets in more than eight years. User adoption is also simplified. "One to two hours of training is all that's needed for most users," Brophy added.

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