



ONPAGE FOR ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES



ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES CHOOSES ONPAGE TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYEE HEALTH

Alberta Health Services (AHS) is Canada's first and largest provincewide, fully-integrated health system. AHS is responsible for delivering health services to the over four million people living in Alberta and some of the surrounding territories. In maintaining the health of the province's large and growing population, AHS also worries about protecting the health of the system's over 108,000 employees who at times face potential illness themselves when confronted with blood body fluid exposures (BBFE). Ensuring this level of occupational health is the job of AHS' Workplace Health and Safety group.

According to AHS' numbers, there can be anywhere from 500 to over 1000 BBFEs of employees throughout the province in any given month. If these incidents are not correctly reported, received and managed, there can potentially be serious outbreaks of conditions ranging from influenza to pertussis among AHS' staff. At the same time, improper management can also lead to unnecessary expenses for the AHS system.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

AHS provides health services across Alberta's five zones, 24 hours a day 365 days per year. Prior to AHS' adoption of OnPage however, each of the province's five zones had different policies for managing how AHS employees should report BBFE in their zone.

Some zones used a dedicated iPhone for nurses to receive alerts when a BBFE came up. When a nurse's shift was over, she or he would pass the iPhone on to the next on-call nurse.

Other zones had no on-call nurses at all. Instead, BBFEs were handled by the emergency department. Nurses would follow up with the AHS worker the following day if the incident happened after hours.

And some zones managed on-call by having all BBFE reports go to a call center when employees wanted to report an incident. Zones' use of call centers caused AHS to incur significant costs for afterhours reporting

The lack of standardization had negative impacts on the system. Some of the results were:

- Inconsistent quality of response: Some employees got called back immediately and some waited until the following day.
- Significant costs. AHS incurred significant expenses from using BigSky call centers to report exposures

- Emergency room visits. When AHS employees presented at the emergency room, they were entitled for workman’s comp which often meant unnecessary expenses for the healthcare system. Frequently, these expenses were not necessary.

- Workflow challenges. Nurses had significant challenges in trying to get in touch with impacted employees.

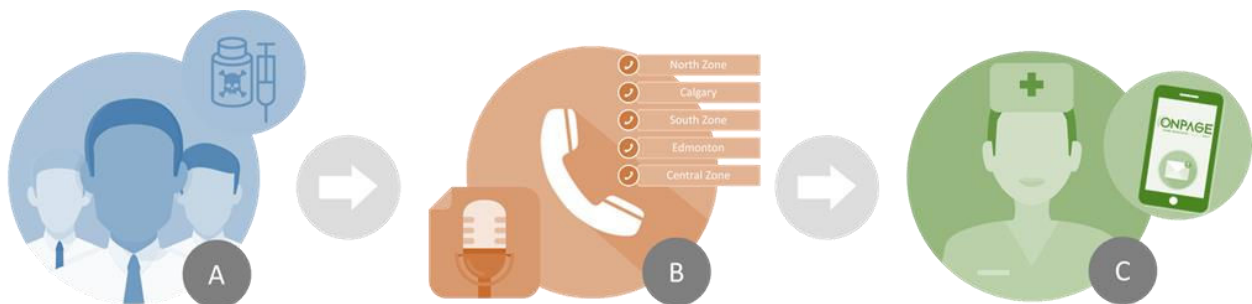
Eventually, the need for standardization led AHS to choose OnPage. AHS realized they needed to ensure AHS employees calling in could reliably and quickly reach AHS occupational health nurses (OHN). Callers’ quality of service should not and should not be impacted by their geography.

SOLUTION

ELIMINATE CALL CENTERS. PROVIDE STANDARDIZATION

AHS realized they needed not only to change the process but also needed to change technologies if they wanted to standardize the process across Alberta. Part of this change meant eliminating call centers and trips to the emergency room by employees when a potential BBFE was suspected.

Instead, in the improved systems, employees would call a dedicated number if they suspected they had been exposed. The dedicated line would play a recorded message and provide instructions on how to leave a call back number and voicemail for the OHN in their zone. The nurse is then able to do a risk assessment and determine appropriate next steps. The employee would then almost immediately receive a call back from an OHN telling them to go to the lab for testing.



BENEFITS

By switching to OnPage, AHS spent 75% less than they did with their legacy process.

DEDICATED LINE + VOICE MAIL

To further improve standardization, AHS upgraded their OnPage service to include the Dedicated Line + Voicemail feature. This workflow enabled AHS employees who had potentially been in contact with contaminated blood or communicable disease to leave a voice mail when they called the dedicated line. In the voicemail, the employee could indicate what was the issue at hand.

By providing a voicemail option in addition to leaving a callback number, nurses could do some of the initial work before calling back the employee. Additionally, the OHN could minimize disruptions to workflow as prior to the adoption of the voicemail feature, OHNs' return calls often found them unable to reach the effected employee.

REPORTING

OnPage also provided AHS with reporting functionality which enabled management at AHS to look into the system and see call volume across times of day, peak hours of paging and highest call volume. Management sees that the insights gained from reporting has having a significant impact on how AHS manages BBFE in the future.

Specifically, reporting will enable management to move to a "province focus" over a "zone focus" for management of BBFE. This means that as reports of exposures peak in certain months, AHS can increase the number of on-call nurses to handle the increase number of calls. However, when there is an ebb in the number of calls, management can decrease the number of on-call nurses from one for each zone to (potentially) three to cover all five zones.

Additionally, by using the reporting feature, AHS has the ability to better manage nursing workloads. If, for example, nurses in a particular zone are working significantly more due to an outbreak, management will be able to view the increase in the number of alerts the nurses are receiving. With this knowledge, management can act to provide relief to those nurses who have spent many extra hours managing alerts.

SUMMARY

With the introduction of OnPage, AHS has been able to provide a consistent level of service across the province. Employees living in the more remote North zone receive the same quality and immediacy of care as employees living in the more populous Edmonton zone. AHS now is able to definitively:

- Improve risk management – Minimize risk of large numbers of employees being exposed BBFEs
- Standardize provision of services – All provinces follow the same operating procedure
- Improve case management – Calls by employees for suspected BBFEs are able to be immediately managed by nurses
- Improve cost management – Costs are significantly decreased as AHS is no longer relying on call centers

According to AHS management:

“ [OnPage] has helped AHS Workplace Health and Safety by standardizing our provincial on call system , and allowing our clients to all have the same equal access to an OHN.”

Those in charge of workplace safety at AHS no longer need to worry about the quality of response individuals are receiving. Now, AHS can focus on providing great care to all employees, regardless of geography.

ONPAGE CAN HELP

OnPage is the industry leading HIPAA secure Incident Alert Management System. Built around the incident resolution lifecycle, the platform enables organizations to get the most out of their digitization investments, ensuring that sensors and monitoring systems and people have a reliable means to escalate anomalies and Clinical Communications to the right person immediately.

OnPage’s escalation policies, redundancies, and scheduling algorithms ensure that a critical message is never missed. Infinitely more reliable and secure than emails, text messages and phone calls combined, OnPage reduces incident resolution time by automating the notification process, reducing human errors, thereby improving productivity, Clinical Communications, and advancing the digital operations of your business.

Whether to minimize IT infrastructure downtime, or to minimize response time of healthcare providers in life and death situations, organizations are heavily investing in digitization across their business and relying on OnPage for all their secure, HIPAA compliant, critical messaging needs

CONTACT ONPAGE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW WE CAN HELP YOU WITH YOUR IT NEEDS.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CALL: ONPAGE.COM

CONTACT- US 781-916-0040 OR DOWNLOAD THE APP

