Phoebe Care Command Celebrates First Anniversary

Albany, Ga. – Phoebe’s high-tech patient logistics command center has shown excellent results in its first year of operation. Phoebe invested $2.5 million dollars to stand up Phoebe Care Command, officially opening the center on Feb. 26, 2019. “The need for a dramatic improvement in our patient logistics became apparent two years ago during an incredibly busy flu season. We made an immediate commitment to putting new technology and new processes in place as quickly as possible to enhance patient experience by improving our patient flow,” said Joe Austin, Chief Executive Officer, Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital.

Phoebe created the new position of Vice President of Patient Logistics and Care Coordination and hired Kim Whitley, a registered nurse with years of patient logistics experience at a large Georgia hospital. “Building a patient logistics command center from scratch and creating a new culture focused on patient flow was an exciting opportunity for me. We had an unusually ambitious timeline, but our team came together with outstanding support from Phoebe’s senior leadership to make it happen,” Whitley said.

The command center was constructed on the hospital’s first floor in a matter of months. It features technology from Teletracking, the world leader in patient flow solutions, and it brings together representatives from every department that affects patient flow and patient experience. “Our technology allows us to keep track of every room and every patient in real time. We’re able to admit patients from our ER quicker to reduce wait times in the emergency center. As soon as a patient room is available, our environmental services staff is notified so the room can be cleaned quickly and prepared for the next patient. We also hired additional transport staff who get immediate notifications any time a patient needs to be moved,” Whitley said. “Every aspect of patient flow is improving, and that makes for a better hospital stay for our patients.”
Now, the Phoebe team also plans well in advance for a patient’s discharge to ensure patients do not have long waits once their physicians say they are cleared to be released. One goal is to complete 25% of daily patient discharges by 11 a.m. The week before Phoebe Care Command went online, the hospital’s rate was just 7%. It had climbed to 21% by the end of January.

“That’s just one example of the impact our center is having. Everything we’re doing is aimed at improving our efficiency and the service we offer our patients, and we look forward to continued improvements in year two,” Whitley said.

Phoebe celebrated the anniversary Wednesday with an open house for employees. “It’s incredible that we were able to implement these major changes so quickly, and we’re extremely pleased with the results so far,” Austin said. “This only happened because of the Phoebe Family’s commitment to our patients, and we certainly want to honor their work and celebrate these successes with them.”

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