

Outstanding Customer Service Initiative

Situation

Allied Universal prides itself on the level of customer service it provides in the healthcare environment. One example is the UCHealth Patient Watch Program, designed to maintain the safety of the patient, hospital staff, and visitors in a courteous, professional and empathic manner. UCHealth—a nationally recognized, nonprofit network of seven acute care hospitals and clinics that operates throughout Colorado, southern Wyoming and western Nebraska—is anchored by its academic partner University of Colorado Hospital, an award-winning institution.

To accomplish its goal of quality care and service in a caring manner, security professionals must project and maintain a positive image through their actions, attitude, conduct and interactions with patients, visitors and staff to promote trust and a sense of protection and well-being.

Challenge

Patient Watch Officers are assigned to patients who present a danger to themselves or others in both the Emergency Department and in-patient units. Continuous observation and a direct line of sight of the patient are essential. Security personnel can be responsible for one or up to four patients. The program requires team members who are highly trained in de-escalation knowledge and skills to include both verbal and physical techniques.

The Security Watch service is used when a patient:

- is a danger to him/herself or others
- has attempted suicide or has suicidal thoughts
- is homicidal
- is under the influence of an unknown substance such as drugs and/or alcohol
- is physically combative and/or aggressive with the medical staff

In addition to ensuring the safety and well-being of patients, visitors and staff, other important benefits of this program include the more efficient and effective use of medical staff to care for patients by freeing nurses and nursing

Location:

Based in Colorado

Program Statistics:

- > Began in 2010
- > 300-plus patients/week
- > Over 2,300 hours/week

How did it begin? In 2010, the Patient Watch Program commenced in the Emergency Department of one hospital where 20-30 patients (400 hours per week) were being watched by security professionals each week. Because of the successes and cost effectiveness of the program, it has grown to all seven UCHealth hospital Emergency Departments and in-patient areas. Security profession