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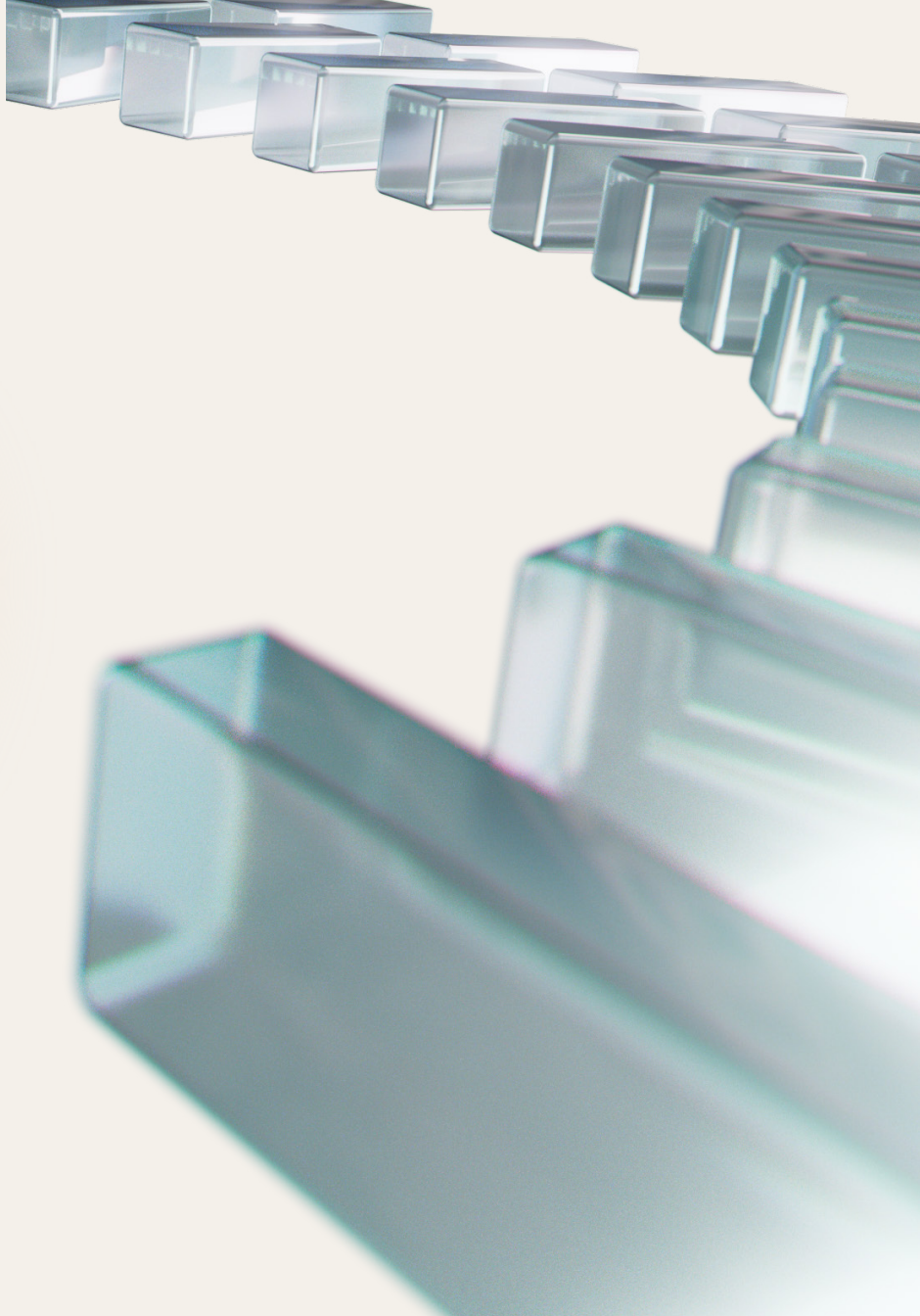
CUSTOMER STORY

Empowering Patient Safety: How CHRISTUS Health Transformed Ambulatory Care



Customer Profile

CHRISTUS Health is an international Catholic, not-for-profit health system consisting of more than 600 centers, including community hospitals, urgent care centers, health insurance companies, and physician clinics in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and New Mexico as well as in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia. With more than 50,000 team members and more than 15,000 physicians providing individualized care, CHRISTUS aims to deliver a complete healing experience that respects every individual.

The Challenge

When Kerrie Griffin first joined the ambulatory quality department at CHRISTUS Health in 2017, there was no process in place for reporting safety events or benchmarking data on the outpatient side. With the risk team centered in Texas and hundreds of clinics spread across multiple states, implementing an efficient and trustworthy reporting process felt like a daunting challenge – but one that Griffin believed was crucial for enhancing patient safety and legal compliance.

Solution

CHRISTUS Health partnered with Inovalon in the fall of 2020 to develop a streamlined reporting process for its ambulatory facilities that would empower data-driven decision-making on best practices for patient safety. The Inovalon team tailored VigiLanz Safety Management – the safety event reporting solution already implemented in the health system's acute care facilities – to accommodate the unique reporting requirements of the organization's ambulatory surgery centers, physician offices, and urgent care clinics, while Griffin focused on creating educational materials and tip sheets that emphasized the tool's ease of use. "My mantra throughout this process has been that it only takes 30 to 60 seconds to enter a risk event," she says. "It all depends on how fast you type."

When the tool was rolled out in April 2021, the risk team quickly learned that focusing on the simplicity of the process was crucial in encouraging staff participation. Griffin also made sure that the training materials effectively communicated why safety event reporting is so important, which helped staff understand how their efforts contributed to the bigger picture and facilitated comprehensive data capture.

> "VigiLanz [Safety Management] is helping us build more robust processes around patient safety by being able to track and trend the data and identify where our problem areas are. It allows us to deep-dive into those risk events and determine where processes are broken."
>
> — Kerrie Griffin, Director of Ambulatory Quality Management, CHRISTUS Health

The Results

It wasn't long before VigiLanz Safety Management transformed safety at CHRISTUS Health. The ability to capture detailed, near real-time data enabled Griffin and her team to respond proactively to potential safety issues and implement effective corrective measures in the ambulatory facilities. Some noteworthy examples include:

1. **Fall Prevention:** Using data from VigiLanz Safety Management, the organization identified high-risk areas and implemented targeted initiatives that resulted in a 38% reduction in falls since August of 2022.

2. **Reduced Workplace Violence:** The data helped pinpoint hotspots for physical and verbal abuse which led to enhanced training programs, improved security measures, and regular physician education on de-escalation techniques that has had a big impact on staff, visitor, and patient safety.

3. **Increased Reporting:** The team successfully doubled event reporting in less-engaged areas by using data from VigiLanz to compare how many events and near-miss events they should be reporting based on their size.

4. **Just Culture Program:** By promoting a non-punitive approach to learning from mistakes, the team successfully increased the reporting of near-miss events from an average of two per quarter to over 30. This shift has not only prevented potential harm but also contributed to a safer, more transparent working environment.

By leveraging Inovalon technology and fostering an environment that encourages open communication and continuous learning, CHRISTUS Health has set a new standard in patient and staff safety across its extensive network of facilities.

> “Since starting with VigiLanz [Safety Management], we’ve been able to create a culture of safety for not only the patient, but for the physicians and the staff that are involved so that everyone has a safe environment to use their voice to deliver safer care.”
>
> — Kerrie Griffin, Director of Ambulatory Quality Management, CHRISTUS Health

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Ready to improve safety management at your institution?

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