

Greater Baltimore Medical Center to Control Expenses and Become More Cost Competitive With Enterprise Management Software From Lawson®

Like many large healthcare organizations, Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC) is made up of several business entities. With almost one million square feet comprising its medical complex, GBMC includes Physicians Pavilion East and West and many ancillary support buildings, hospice services and outpatient programs.

Multiple financial computer systems on three different platforms traditionally supported those business units, creating a lot of extra work to bring together the numbers for reporting. With Lawson, GBMC now has an enterprise software solution that quickly and easily provides and maintains information for financial, procurement and human resources functions.

Customer Profile

With 314 licensed beds, GBMC is located in Towson, Maryland — approximately 20 minutes from both downtown Baltimore and the Pennsylvania state line. A busy and popular medical facility, GBMC performs more than 30,000 surgeries a year and sees almost 50,000 guests in its emergency department, and delivers almost 5,000 babies a year.

As a teaching facility, GBMC hosts residency programs for new doctors in medicine, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, obstetrics, gynecology and podiatry. US News & World Report named the medical center one of America's Best Hospitals in cancer care, gynecology services and digestive disorders in 2001.

With almost 2,400 full-time-equivalent employees, a wide range of programs and services requiring sophisticated purchasing, and complex payer relationships, GBMC partnered with Lawson for software that addresses the information and data needs of all stakeholders.

Business Situation

“We brought in Lawson when we found out that we had to replace our materials management system,” said Randy Slater, GBMC's Lawson team lead and information services professional. “We looked for an enterprise product that could fill the need of our purchasing department as well as unify a lot of disparate financial systems. There were some years when we had more than 20 separate company general ledger charts of accounts.”

While the need for new materials management systems was critical, GBMC also wanted to be able to aggregate financials and overhaul its employee payroll system. “Our decision to choose Lawson was made by the end users,” said Slater. “In this case, the users took a leadership role, functioning as a team and not a competing group. It all came down to the software's functionality and how well it matched with the users' vision.”

Solution Overview

Customer Profile

- Large medical center with a host of programs, services and business entities.
- Complex and differing financial systems located on three separate platforms.

Business Situation

Closing the books for reporting profits/losses or filing tax forms was time-consuming and difficult. GBMC wanted to streamline human resources processes and adopt new procurement software that could position the medical center for future success.

Solution

Financials, human resources and procurement software from Lawson provide GBMC with business tools to manage costs, make faster and more educated decisions and keep the focus on high quality patient care.

Benefits

- Automated core functions of human resources free the human resources team to assume a larger role as a strategic business function and work to solve the medical staffing crunch.
- Streamlining the purchasing process helps GBMC get the best price for supplies and services.
- Financial management software extracts the financial information needed to drive out unnecessary costs and develop effective operations strategies.

That functionality came in handy when a purchasing employee accidentally deleted 600 lines of information from a surgery supply ordering template. "With the Lawson Add-ins for Microsoft Office we were able to download those items and re-upload them in 20 minutes. That simple task saved the day for an employee who knew that the list could not be re-created any other way," explained Slater.

GBMC's multiple financial systems were grouped together by business unit and organized on three separate platforms. When it was time to close the books, finance personnel would manually consolidate the information on an Excel spreadsheet, eventually creating the necessary financial statements. It was time-consuming and ripe for errors.

"With our multiple systems, everyone did things just a little bit differently," said Slater. "Now with Lawson, everything is automatic. Filing our W2s and 1099s was much smoother this year. We were able to file electronically and create the physical documents in one afternoon. It used to take us three to four days — and overtime to boot."

Implementing the new software didn't require overtime either. "That's another positive aspect with Lawson," said Slater. "We implemented Lawson and nobody lost sleep. No one worked 30 hours straight to meet our deadline and get the system up and operational. We started in the middle of the month — so you can convert to Lawson at any point, any day of the week or any time of the day you want. You don't have to wait for the start of a quarter."

Although patient care is the first priority, financial performance is critical to meeting patient's needs. "Our biggest return on investment with Lawson is empowering our managers with information," said Slater. "Our management team went from total macro data on paper to now having the ability to get almost any piece of information electronically — and at their fingertips — with a few clicks of the mouse. We can better take on the challenge of controlling expenses and becoming more cost competitive."

Contact Lawson

For more information about Lawson business solutions, call 1-800-477-1357, direct at +1-651-767-7000 or international at +44 (0) 1344 360273, or visit www.lawson.com.

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