

## A Smooth Journey to New Automation

### About Olympic Medical Center

Olympic Medical Center (OMC), located in Port Angeles, Washington, is a comprehensive healthcare provider for the more than 70,000 residents of Clallam County. It provides emergency, surgical, and birth-center services at its 126-bed acute-care hospital, and outpatient services at locations throughout the region.

Olympic Medical Center used to operate its food service from a space with a beautiful water view, but like many hospitals, a space that was outdated and too small for its needs.

"We ended the tray line in our old kitchen on April 26, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. We worked all night to open up the next morning in the new kitchen with Room Service. At 7:30 a.m. the phone rang in the call center and we were off—with no problems," said Graciela Harris, Director of Nutrition Services at OMC. She added, "The CBORD® Room Service software just ran. It worked from day one and it is still working great today."

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### First Came Cashless

Harris made the case to her management team at Olympic Medical Center that they needed to expand and improve the dining experience for guests, employees, and patients. She included new technology in this plan and, along with expanding the dining room, she implemented a cashless solution. Using CBORD's Odyssey PCS™ system, employees are now able to swipe their badge to make purchases at the Seasons Cafe, Seasons Espresso, and the gift shop. Harris decided to install the cashless equipment prior to moving to the new dining facility. This allowed her team to learn the system and gave them one less change to deal with when they moved to the new location. Employees were very receptive to the change, and 43% of employees now have payroll deduction. In addition, the transaction volumes have grown by 22% and ticket averages have increased.

For gift card implementation, OMC got creative. Community members can use the medical center's meeting room, and OMC provides the organizations with a gift card to purchase food for the meetings. This has been an easy, cost-



effective way for the organizations to provide refreshments and for the dining area to keep track of the expenses.



Another improvement came when Olympic Medical Center built a beautiful new dining facility and a new kitchen. Along with the standard daily workload, Harris and her team—during months of construction—managed to train on the new CBORD systems, oversee the construction, test and evaluate recipes, create new menus for patients and the cafeteria, and then manage a successful overnight transition. She credits her team for working together through difficult times to make this huge change an overnight and ongoing success.

### Next Came Room Service

Anyone who has been through major change involving construction, training, and process changes knows that it does not necessarily run smoothly on its own. Harris shared that, in her experience, creating a team-oriented culture is vital to a successful transition.

Nursing was brought into the Room Service change from the very beginning. The nurses were thoroughly involved in the process of deciding how to handle insulin needs, when hostesses should call in a nurse, and other related issues. The nurses were involved in recipe tasting and evaluation and were encouraged to visit a nearby hospital to see Room Service in action. Harris continues to update them through discussions at nursing meetings and orientations.

Special room service carts were designed just for OMC. In addition to carrying trays, the carts have places for pump pots of coffee, decaf coffee, and hot water. Each patient gets a fresh cup poured when his or her meal is delivered, and guests in the patient's room are offered a free cup as well.

When Room Service started, the staff at OMC created the call-center representative position. Harris saw that it could be demotivating to be on the phone all day and decided to change the role, making it a more rewarding job. The employees now split their time between the phones and supporting the dietitians on the floor. They have expanded their role to include visiting the patients and helping out in areas where a certified dietitian is not needed. Now a call-center representative may end a call by saying, "Mrs. Jones, I will stop by this afternoon and see how you are doing." This job combination has worked well for the departments, increasing job satisfaction for the call-center representatives and providing better support to the skilled dietitians in the diet office.

Another twist on the call-center operation at OMC is that it is located at the rear of the kitchen, with picture windows that allow the representatives to have a full view of the kitchen operations. Call-center representatives have the responsibility to redirect employees to patient service tasks whenever they see wait times creeping up. Patients are served in an average of twenty-five minutes. The call-center staff are the "conductors" for the kitchen, overseeing the operation, monitoring the customer wait times, and making it all come together like a symphony.

The Room Service menus are printed in the middle of the patient information book that is given to every patient when he or she is admitted. Each patient gets his or her own clean booklet and, as a result, the staff members have noticed that patients are reading more of the information in the rest of the booklet.



The Kudos Board is prominently displayed in the kitchen. Pinned on it are the survey cards that patients are given with every meal. A small tent card is placed on every tray with a note saying, "It was a pleasure to serve you," along with the server's name. On the inside is an evaluation form. When customers write nice notes, the cards are tacked up on the Kudos Board for all to see.

The farmers' market, pictured here, started in July 2009. Employees can buy local fresh produce each week and, in exchange for the space, the OMC chefs get to select fresh produce for the kitchen at a discount. "I have noticed that employees are asking our chefs how to cook many of the vegetables that are for sale," said Harris. "Our chefs, who formerly stayed mainly in the kitchen, are now interacting with the other OMC staff and answering questions about how to cook the different local vegetables." As a manager, Harris is concerned about every aspect of the food service operation at OMC and credits the department's success to her dedicated staff, volunteers, and that famous, fresh Washington coffee that all her patients are enjoying.

Kudos goes to the entire food service team for a smooth implementation resulting in cost savings, productivity enhancements, and improvements in customer satisfaction scores.

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