



## CUSTOMER PROFILE

# CaroMont Health Uses Blended Learning from the HealthcareSource eLearning Library<sup>SM</sup> to Improve Compliance, Patient Safety, and Employee Engagement

Many healthcare organizations require their employees to earn the American Heart Association (AHA) Basic Life Support (BLS) certification every two years to learn single-rescuer and team basic life support. CaroMont Health in North Carolina is no exception. To satisfy these requirements, CaroMont Health held classroom-training sessions for those new to the certification and for those who needed to renew their credentials. When the classroom sessions became too time consuming, the healthcare organization decided to launch a blended learning program.

### Adopting a Blended Learning Approach

Every year, CaroMont Health held 75 to 80 AHA BLS renewal classes and 12 first-time classes. On average, each class was delivered to 12 participants by two training instructors from the Education Department. Unfortunately, this training approach presented numerous challenges. The Education Department found it time consuming to handle scheduling for both employees and instructors. They also found it onerous to keep track of the required books that had been checked out of the training library by employees. At the same time, CaroMont Health needed to manually track which employees were due to renew their certification and which had completed the training. This was a time-consuming process that turned stressful when auditors requested reports.

Since classroom-training sessions lasted around three-and-a-half hours, employees had to coordinate with their supervisors to clear their schedules. The organization averaged one to two no-shows per class, wasting both time and education resources. Given the difficulties associated with traditional classroom training, CaroMont Health's Education team decided to launch a blended learning approach using the eLearning Library.

### Taking Advantage of Flexible eLearning

The online learning portion of the BLS training is offered through the eLearning Library, and CaroMont Health



### About CaroMont Health

**Location:** Gastonia, North Carolina

**Overview:** CaroMont Health is a health care system that provides inpatient and outpatient services across five counties in North Carolina and South Carolina. The system includes seven affiliate companies including a network of 43 primary and specialty physician offices. Across its health care system, CaroMont Health employs 3,800 dedicated professionals, including a medical staff of 452. In 2013, CaroMont Health provided services to 795,692 patients. The organization has won numerous awards, such as the Midas National Platinum Award for Excellence in Quality Outcomes and being named one of Thomson Reuters' Top 100 Hospitals.

**Employees:** 3,900 healthcare professionals and more than 450 medical staff

**HealthcareSource Solutions:** eLearning Library<sup>SM</sup>, NetLearning<sup>®</sup> LMS, Position Manager<sup>®</sup>

administers it through the HealthcareSource NetLearning<sup>®</sup> Learning Management System (LMS). By using the eLearning Library together with the NetLearning LMS CaroMont Health's Education Department can manage both classroom and online education from a single system.

To help employees understand the new blended learning process, CaroMont Health chose to create two additional modules and offer these to staff in a 3-module curriculum. The first module explains how the online training works and sets expectations for employees. The second module from HealthcareSource contains the AHA online course. The final eLearning module addresses signing up for the required face-to-face skills check-off session.



### Encouraging Adoption through Change Management and a Staged Roll-out

CaroMont Health rolled out the blended learning program for BLS in stages, starting with the organization's physician practices, who wanted all their employees on the same training cycle for BLS. To address change management issues, the CaroMont Education team developed a communication campaign. The first part of the campaign focused on explaining the new BLS blended learning program to nursing administrators and addressing their concerns. After securing their buy-in, the Education team educated employees about the new BLS training in monthly eLearning notifications and employee newsletters.

Seeing that the pilot group satisfactorily completed the BLS training using the blended learning method, the Education Department launched a broader roll-out program. Using the date employees last completed the BLS course content, the Education Department configured automatic class enrollments within NetLearning LMS to assign the new blended learning curriculum to staff when they were due to complete their recertification.

### Improving Course Access and Information Retention

Now employees can access the online BLS program anytime from anywhere, including at individual clinical practices and their homes. CaroMont employees take on average 45 minutes to complete the online course. Because the book required for the classroom training is integrated into the online course, the Education Department no longer needs to purchase and track physical books. Within 60 days of completing the online course, employees must demonstrate what they've learned in a face-to-face check-off session that takes 15 minutes on average. The Education Department manages enrollment and scheduling of the face-to-face class through the NetLearning LMS. The Education Department can even use NetLearning to manage physical resources like room space and the equipment needed during the skills check.

NetLearning tracks employees' completions of both the online courses and in-person classes, which is needed for the AHA to finalize the certification. The eLearning Library course also generates certificates, which are required for entry into the skills check-off class, as well as certification cards once training is complete.

### CHALLENGES

- Time consuming to handle schedules for employees and instructors
- Difficult to keep track of required books that had been checked out of the training library
- Manually tracking when employees needed to renew their certifications
- Wasted resources from class no-shows

### RESULTS

- Training costs reduced by more than 38%
- Reduced training time by 53% for employees and 67% for instructors
- Employees can access the BLS program 24/7 from anywhere, and break learning up into smaller, more manageable chunks of time
- Eliminated the need for books in the training library

CaroMont has found that blended learning improves information retention, which ultimately translates into higher patient safety. According to Dana Jones, Education Support Specialist for CaroMont Health, "In the classroom, different instructors have different teaching styles, so the information conveyed to employees is inconsistent. Online courses guarantee that all learners receive the same information." Plus, employees can take the online portion of the course in smaller chunks and at times when they are able to focus. "Blended learning reduces the anxiety that some employees feel about classroom training," continues Jones.

### Recouping Costs and Time

With the LMS, the Education Department can easily run reports to confirm that employees are up to date with their training. The auto-enrollment functionality makes it practically impossible for employees to miss required training. As a result, CaroMont Health can avoid being cited, fined, or at risk of more dire consequences.

The organization's employees have responded positively to blended learning. They appreciate that the training takes less time, and that they have more flexibility as to when and where they complete training. "Employees prefer the blended learning method as it allows them to make better use of their time and feel more confident about their skills when going into the in-person skill check," explains Jones.



Since deploying the eLearning Library's blended learning program, CaroMont Health has saved significant time and money. It has reduced training costs by more than 38%, for a savings of nearly \$57,000. It has also reduced the amount of time employees spend in BLS training by nearly 53%, and the amount of time instructors spend by almost 67%. That time and money is now spent on patient care and other high-value activities. Classroom instructors gain over 500 hours each year they can dedicate to classes that are not well suited to online instruction. It would cost CaroMont Health approximately \$80,000 in staffing costs to accomplish the same amount of work if a classroom-only method was still in place.

### Planning Additional Online Courses

Looking ahead, the CaroMont Health team is contemplating other places in their education and training plans where online or blended learning could provide opportunities for time and cost savings. Options under consideration are the American Heart Association's Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) training. These online courses could be used as alternatives to classroom training, in the event that employees cannot attend a face-to-face training event. According to Jones, "Now that we've successfully transitioned to blended learning for our BLS training and seen just how painless it can be, we're looking forward to exploring options where this learning method could also benefit our organization."

#### About HealthcareSource

With more than 2,300 healthcare clients, HealthcareSource is the leading provider of talent management solutions for the healthcare industry. The HealthcareSource Quality Talent Suite<sup>SM</sup> helps healthcare organizations recruit, develop, and retain the best workforce possible in order to improve the patient and resident experience. The company's cloud-based talent management solutions include applicant tracking, behavioral assessments, reference checking, employee performance, compensation, competency and learning management, and eLearning courseware. A private company focused exclusively on the healthcare industry, HealthcareSource consistently earns high marks for client satisfaction and retention. KLAS Research recently named HealthcareSource a category leader for Talent Management for the third consecutive year, in addition to recognition in Healthcare Informatics 100, Modern Healthcare's "Healthcare's Hottest," Inc. 500|5000, Deloitte Technology Fast 500, and Becker's "150 Great Places to Work in Healthcare" list.

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