Satellite Healthcare is one of the nation’s first and leading providers of dialysis services and kidney disease therapy. The highly-engaged caregivers at Satellite offer patients personal and compassionate care, empowering them with wellness education, treatment options and innovative medical expertise. Satellite consistently advances the standard of chronic kidney disease care so it can achieve its mission of ‘Making Life Better for Those Living with Kidney Disease’.

THE CHALLENGE

In 1973, Norman S. Coplan M.D. began Satellite Healthcare as a not-for-profit, community benefit organization intended to improve the quality of life of his dialysis patients. Today that organization has grown to incorporate nearly 30 dialysis centers across the United States that meet the long-term clinical needs of more than 4,000 patients. Its primary emphasis has remained the same—to offer comfort, education, and hope for patients with chronic kidney conditions.

However, such growth and success has not been without its hurdles, says Human Resources Manager Christine Cooney. With such a broadly distributed organization, Satellite Healthcare was challenged with making a diverse company feel like a company with a unified culture. “Because of the nature of our business, our employees are very compassionate, caring, and community minded,” she explains. “But we didn’t have a reliable way to give back and recognize one another and make everyone feel like one group.”

For many years, the company used an internally administered recognition program that gave out cash to managers and left distribution to their discretion. “It was an incredibly flawed system,” says Cooney. “Managers’ hearts were in the right place, but the money was used for things outside recognition or not at all. It wasn’t organized. We couldn’t track it. And when we did our employee engagement survey, one of the things that came screaming back was that people didn’t feel recognized.”

Armed with a clear directive to provide a better vehicle for recognition, Satellite Healthcare began to think about their options. “We wanted a program that could provide recognition, and reflected our values” says Cooney, “Those values are what we rally around. We also wanted the ability to create more long-term quarterly initiatives. It was a matter of finding the right platform to do it.”

THE SOLUTION

That platform was Globoforce—the world’s leading provider of social recognition solutions. “We were looking at Globoforce because we’d read Eric Mosley and Derek Irvine’s book, Winning with a Culture of Recognition,” says Cooney. “We knew that the
principles of social recognition were a good fit for our own mission in healthcare.” But what really convinced Cooney was a trip to a regional healthcare conference, where she sought out representatives from another Globoforce customer. “I sauntered up to the sales folks working the booth and asked if they had a recognition program,” she recalls. “I was asking them about it and they were telling me how cool it was and I was able to get an informal reference. I felt pretty good after I talked to those people.”

Globoforce designed the Heroes program for Satellite Healthcare, which focuses on the company’s core ICARE belief system (values): incorporating Innovation, Community, Accountability, Respect and Excellence. Employees across the organization embrace ICARE as an expression of their commitment to patients and each other. It allows anyone in the Satellite Healthcare network to instantly recognize coworkers and tie that recognition back to the ICARE values.

THE RESULT
Satellite Healthcare’s Heroes recognition program went live in January of 2012 and was met with very high accolades. The breadth and flexibility of the program, with its ability to incorporate Satellite Healthcare’s values and branding, was a significant benefit, says Cooney. “With the Globoforce solution, we were able to design our own logo and use our own branding. We made posters for all the clinics, put flyers into the new hire packet, and managers are constantly orienting folks to the program. Plus, we put nominations up on the intranet—Heroes is always out there. It is top of mind.”

This high degree of awareness is apparent. Recognition rates have risen 29.5% since the program’s launch. And as employees reach out to recognize peers in other locations, it has helped the company form a more unified culture.

The immediacy and social nature of the Globoforce solution has been another benefit, says Cooney. “Globoforce is as close to instant recognition as you’re going to get. The person is nominated, approved, they get an email, and it is up on the feed so everyone can see it and add their congratulations.”

Perhaps most importantly, the Heroes program has helped Satellite Healthcare to help employees feel more recognized while reinforcing the strengths inherent in the organization. “Our employees are very engaged and engaged in our values, and our whole recognition program revolves around our values. This has provided the vehicle that people were looking for to appreciate each other. Our entire organization is engaged. It unified all of us, and we didn’t have that before.”

Learn more about strategic, social recognition and how it can drive business results for you.