SteadyCare Check-In Plus Supports a Positive Work Culture for Residential Service Locations

SoundCommunityServices

Sound Community Services, Inc. (SCSI) is an award-winning organization that provides support and services for individuals with behavioral health and substance use disorders. The organization operates six 24/7 residential care locations throughout southeast Connecticut.

The Challenge

At its residential care facilities, SCSI faced common industry challenges. It was difficult to validate overnight staff accountability without on-site supervision. Some could have shown up for work with a blanket and a pillow in hand. Or arrived late for a shift. Or left early. Or missed a shift altogether.

Leaders at SCSI needed a way to monitor accountability to help residents — and employees — avoid the pitfalls of common "third shift" issues. They recognized the importance of an alert and present staff to help minimize incidents and agency risk. Errol Maurice, the current Senior Director of Residential and Community Programs at SCSI, stated, "It wasn't good enough to review overnight checklists in the morning. We had to be sure that someone was there to respond to potential issues in real time to protect everyone on site."

Finding a Solution

The company explored its EMR system's ability to verify and monitor overnight staff presence, location and awake status. "We needed more than our EMR could offer," said Maurice. "Something that would verify on-site employee interaction and send alerts if they didn't regularly check in."

It didn't take long to determine that cloud-based Steadycare Check-In Plus was the right solution. It was fast and easy to set up, and its flexible options allow management to:

1 Verify employee arrival and departure times

2 Decide how often the night staff should check in

3 Determine what information is required at check-in

4 Set up system reminders to prompt staff when check-in is due or overdue

5 Create supervisor alerts for missed check-ins
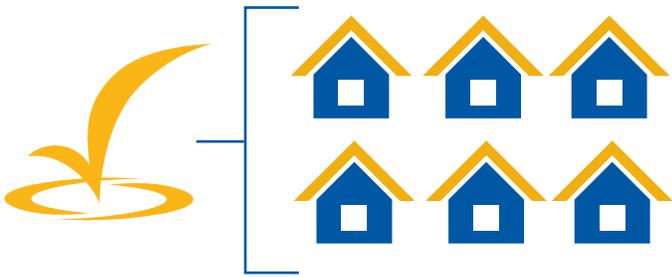
In 2008, SCSI made a plan to introduce SteadyCare Check-In Plus at its residential care locations. **Today, the agency relies on Check-In Plus at all six of its 24/7 facilities.**

Putting Everything in Place

For SCSI, simply setting up a new system and procedures was only part of the solution. Employee support and buy-in would be critical. The check-in system had to be presented in the right way to boost positive company culture.

"Let's face it. No one wants to feel like they're being watched on the job," said Maurice. "But right up front, we presented the positive aspects to the staff, and how the system helps them." Check-In Plus holds each individual accountable and relieves the pressure to report co-workers for tardiness, absence or sleeping. From the start, SCSI used the system to reward good performance with staff breakfasts, awards, gift cards and other acknowledgments.

> " *The overnight staff appreciates the benefits. [Rod Sullivan] One 27-year employee says with a smile, "Thank you, SteadyCare Check-in Plus, for keeping me awake at night."*

Long-Term Results

Maurice, a 13-year staff member himself, has seen the value of a system that reinforces positive performance. He says SteadyCare Check-In Plus supports the organization's mission of compassion, accountability, respect and excellence (CARE). "The staff gets it. They know we're all accountable to our residents, our community and the organization."

Leadership can access daily, weekly or monthly activity reports at any time, from any location. The SCSI staff maintains a 97% compliance rate with timely third-shift check-ins. If a health emergency, medication-related incident or other problem occurs, the agency can verify that staff members were present and awake to intervene. Managers can spot potential performance issues and provide coaching to keep staff members motivated.

97% compliance rate

The key to the program's success is good communication and a thorough understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities, according to Maurice. He takes a proactive approach to distinguish between a positive and a seemingly punitive culture.

A Continued Collaboration

The SCSI team truly values its relationship with SteadyCare. "Over the years, Check-In Plus has grown with us. We love the flexible options that accommodate our needs," said Maurice. "A big part of that is the amazing customer service from SteadyCare. They don't just sell you a product and walk away. They care about how the system supports safety and security at our locations. We've been with them for many years, and that's not going to change. If you have overnight staff in any kind of business, SteadyCare Check-In Plus is a game-changer."

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