

SUCCESS STORY

A Short Take on Success

The Challenge

- ▶ Three of every 100 residents in the St. Barnabas service area are infected with HIV
- ▶ Quickly identify HIV positive people and connect them with quality care

The Solution

- ▶ Launch a hospital-wide routine rapid HIV testing program
- ▶ Leverage OraSure Technologies' OraQuick *ADVANCE*[®] Rapid Oral Fluid HIV-1/2 Antibody Test

The Outcome

- ▶ Increased the number of rapid tests in two years by nearly tenfold - from just 1,400 in 2007 to more than 13,000 in 2009
- ▶ Created a culture that supports implementation of the rapid HIV testing program

“Everyone should have their HIV status on record. Routine rapid oral fluid HIV testing is a patient preferred testing mechanism with the ability to provide results in the same session. This enables St. Barnabas to quickly identify HIV positive people and connect them with quality care.”

Ralph P. Belloise
Director of HIV Services
St. Barnabas Hospital

Laboratory

Bronx, New York, Acute Care Community Hospital Increases Rapid HIV Testing by Nearly Tenfold Through Shift to Routine Rapid Testing

The Challenge

An Amerinet member since 2007, St. Barnabas Hospital serves a community at the epicenter of the nation's HIV crisis. Located in the heart of central Bronx, N.Y., St. Barnabas is an acute care community hospital and Level I Trauma Center. According to New York City estimates, as many as three of every 100 residents in the St. Barnabas service area are infected with HIV.

St. Barnabas is dedicated to not only caring for the sick, but to ensuring the well stay healthy too. Part of this commitment means helping community members learn their HIV status, so HIV positive people can be connected to care and empowered to change their behavior and minimize the risk of transmission.

In 2006, St. Barnabas began utilizing rapid HIV testing technology, instead of the traditional blood testing method, on a part-time basis in its Emergency Room (ER) and addiction medicine department. “Patients are more open to taking a rapid oral fluid HIV test compared to the fingerstick method,” said Ralph Belloise, director of HIV Services at St. Barnabas Hospital.



“After testing 1,400 patients using the rapid oral fluid method in 2007, we quickly realized this needed to be our standard testing method across all levels of the organization in order to make an impact in the community.”

The Solution

Born out of this commitment, the St. Barnabas hospital-wide routine rapid HIV testing program was launched in April of 2008 and today has grown into one of the largest and most successful programs in the country. “Our goal was to test as many people as possible between the ages of 18

and 64 years old,” said Belloise.

By leveraging Amerinet supplier OraSure Technologies, St. Barnabas utilizes the OraQuick *ADVANCE*[®] Rapid HIV-1/2 Antibody Test to quickly and easily test patients across the hospital including the ER, ambulatory care and inpatient departments and four clinic sites. The only FDA-approved oral fluid test, OraQuick *ADVANCE* provides patients with accurate HIV testing without the need for blood or needles. Results are available in 20 minutes and accuracy is greater than 99 percent.

“From an operational standpoint, the rapid oral fluid testing makes the most sense,” said Belloise. “It is a simple procedure to perform, leaves no medical waste and reduces the need for gloves and needles - a very cost effective solution.”

To implement across the entire organization, St. Barnabas employs six full-time counselors who cover the emergency department, inpatient units and four clinic sites. Counselors use portable testing carts in the emergency department and inpatient settings. This enables them to conduct the rapid HIV test in the waiting room or a patient’s bedside without interruption to the care the patient was initially seeking. In the clinical setting, tests are performed in designated offices.

This testing procedure also leverages a streamlined consent process. Patients simply read and sign paperwork as opposed to the old pre-testing counseling, which was incredibly time consuming.

“St. Barnabas is truly a leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS and we are proud to be a key partner in their success,” said Ron Ticho, senior vice president, corporate communications, OraSure Technologies. “OraQuick *ADVANCE* enables St. Barnabas to screen patients for HIV using oral fluid and provide the patient with their results in 20 minutes. This combination is extremely powerful, as it not only increases the total number of people willing to be tested, but it also ensures patients receive their results - a critical factor in connecting HIV positive people to care and empowering them to change their behavior to minimize the risk of further transmission.”



St. Barnabas HIV Services (from left to right): Gustavo Nunez, George Perez, Evelyn Ramos, Mario Rodriguez, Cristina Gomez and Thomas Garcia.

The Outcome

Since the launch of the routine rapid testing program, St. Barnabas has increased the number of rapid tests in a year by nearly tenfold - from just 1,400 in 2007 to more than 13,000 in 2009. Better yet, the hospital is on track to exceed that number in 2010.

St. Barnabas attributes the success of the program to a streamlined consent process, the use of rapid oral fluid testing, a dedicated, well-trained staff and a culture of support around the entire hospital.

“Everyone should have their HIV status on record,” said Belloise. “Routine rapid oral fluid HIV testing is a patient preferred testing mechanism with the ability to provide results in the same session. This enables St. Barnabas to quickly identify HIV positive people and connect them with quality care.”

The program was so successful that Belloise’s team was asked to help expand OraQuick *ADVANCE* rapid oral fluid testing in the dental department. Next on the schedule for routine rapid HIV testing is St. Barnabas’ satellite clinic, Southern Medical Center.

“We have dramatically increased access to testing for Bronx residents. Of the patients we have identified as HIV positive, 70 percent are now receiving care,” said Belloise. “The entire St. Barnabas organization has embraced this concept of routine testing and created a culture that supports implementation of the program.”

For quality and patient safety efforts to be effective, an organization needs to reach a dedicated culture of patient safety. Amerinet is committed to helping its members achieve improvements in clinical outcomes, patient safety, operational quality and regulatory compliance.

“The success of St. Barnabas’ HIV testing program certainly serves as a great model for other Amerinet members who are interested in implementing routine HIV testing in their facilities. Like with St. Barnabas, our company is committed to helping everyone learn their HIV status, and linking those that may be positive into care,” said Ticho.

Contract Summary

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About Amerinet

As a leading national healthcare group purchasing organization, Amerinet strategically partners with acute and alternate care providers to reduce costs and improve quality through its performance solutions. Built on a foundation of data, savings and trust, and supported by a team of clinical and supply chain experts, Amerinet enriches healthcare delivery for its members and the communities they serve. To learn more about the Amerinet difference, visit www.amerinet-gpo.com.

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