

Client Impact Story

Language of Caring at Adelante Healthcare



The Challenge

Adelante Healthcare has grown rapidly in order to meet the primary healthcare needs in Maricopa County, Arizona. Triggered by this rapid growth, the Adelante leadership team identified a need to launch a strategy that would align new facilities, programs, services and people with their commitment to provide extraordinary patient care, an outstanding patient and family experience, and effective education for patients, employees and the community—all through a patient-centered delivery system that improves overall community health. Said Audrey Bohanan, Chief People Officer, “Of all the strategy options we considered, we recognized the Language of Caring as the strategy best-suited to help us achieve and sustain the culture we wanted to create.”

The Strategy

Adelante leaders recognized that Language of Caring would help them achieve a caring culture that would position Adelante for long-term viability in a turbulent industry. Initially, Adelante leaders engaged the Language of Caring team to hold meetings and focus groups with Adelante’s key stakeholders to learn their history, plans and challenges. They appreciated that Language of Caring offers training targeted to staff and to providers and customizes this training to build on and advance Adelante’s mission, common language and culture. Adelante created a Steering Team to spearhead implementation and evaluation. They also engaged Planning Teams specific to the *Language of Caring for Staff* and *Language of Caring for Physicians* programs.

A full-day Leadership Kickoff for executives and all leaders built a case for the Language of Caring, introduced the team learning modules, JumpStart Session for staff and the

KickStart session for physicians. It also helped leaders identify and prepare to recruit session facilitators and then clarified leaders’ critical roles in promoting widespread engagement, accountability and sustainability. In additional full-day sessions, Language of Caring trained a diverse team of employees to facilitate the JumpStart program for staff and help managers lead the ten skill modules with their teams. Also, Language of Caring physician coaches provided multiple KickStart sessions for all providers across the organization. And they trained a team of physician champions to lead the eight provider skill modules with their colleagues. A total of 238 staff members and 57 providers participated in the initial training. Since then, Adelante Healthcare has increased to 430 employees and they have all had the opportunity to experience the Language of Caring modules.

Language of Caring will also be training a team of peer coaches to be effective role models using Language of Caring’s excellent feedback and coaching tools to support their colleagues in performance improvement. This will provide a ready team of trainers and champions—Super Users for the programs.

Language of Caring has partnered with and supported Adelante throughout the process, with on-site visits to audit and make strategy adjustments, meetings with senior leaders and the planning team, and bi-monthly coaching calls.



Audrey Bohanan
Chief People Officer

Adelante Healthcare's Experience

Says Audrey Bohanan, "Language of Caring offers everything we need to support our culture of patient- and family-centered care. The tools and resources are well-organized and excellent, and there is always something I can either use as-is or tailor to fit our situation. And the Language of Caring coaching team shares their experience and knowledge to support our success."

The Adelante Approach:

- Build Language of Caring into everything they do
- Require all employees to complete the Language of Caring programs
- Annually benchmark employee feedback in the annual engagement survey
- Use Peer Facilitators and webinars to develop talent across the organization
- Increase collaboration by bringing together providers and staff from different departments and health centers
- Design and implement an employee recognition process that recognizes people for mastering and using the Language of Caring competencies

Outcomes

After the first few skill modules, Adelante began seeing and hearing leaders use the skills, and staff and leaders giving each other feedback. Response to the Language of Caring has been overwhelmingly positive. Last fall, Adelante leaders added two questions about Language of Caring to their Employee Engagement Survey so that next fall they'll be able to assess improvement.

Since the implementation of Language of Caring:

- Language of Caring competencies are introduced to every new hire
- Employees are more open to give and receive feedback
- The organization has improved interdepartmental communication as well as staff and provider communication with patients and families
- The program facilitators have strengthened their skills and abilities and how they engage with their co-workers and patients

About Adelante Healthcare

Mission— "Reaching across our communities to provide comprehensive primary health care that is accessible, sustainable and of high quality."

Vision— "Healthy People. Healthy Communities."

Over 35 years, Adelante Healthcare has grown from a clinic serving the local farming community to a system of nine health care centers across Arizona. Adelante is a not-for-profit Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that offers a wide array of services to patients of all economic backgrounds. What hasn't changed over the years is Adelante's commitment to provide high quality, accessible and sustainable comprehensive primary health care that preserves and protects the health of patients, the wider community and the environment.

Adelante believes in affordable healthcare for all, regardless of ability to pay. Their mission is fulfilled through the breadth and scope of primary and preventive health services for people of all ages and all stages of life. They currently serve more than 45,000 patients annually.

Their caring providers and dedicated staff work collaboratively to achieve the goals of:

- Making a positive difference in the health of their communities
- Ensuring that they meet the needs of their patients— now and in the future
- Providing care that is culturally and linguistically appropriate for the communities they serve

Connect with us!

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