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HEALTHCARE CASE STUDY

Elevating the Continuity of Patient Care With CrisisAlert™

How Vail Health Enhanced the Patient Experience
and Safety with a Wearable Duress Solution


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The continuity of patient care is critical in healthcare environments, and even more so in behavioral health settings. Vail Health, a leader in healthcare services with a commitment to exceptional patient care, was expanding its scope of practice to include outpatient behavioral health and working to open a new inpatient behavioral health unit.

Due to an evolving patient demographic and the risks associated with behavioral health incidents, Vail Health was seeking solutions to increase clinic safety for both staff and patients. They decided to leverage a rapid incident response technology to address these challenges.

Vail Health implemented CENTEGIX CrisisAlert™ to improve safety and accelerate response times during an urgent incident. But, the improvement in continuity of care and overall patient experience were additional unexpected benefits.

The Problem

Vail Health's Wieggers Mental Health Clinic began seeing patients in early 2023. The organization has undergone growth, including the introduction of comprehensive medication management and substance abuse treatments. After safety concerns were raised by staff, it became clear that the existing systems for handling urgent patient needs and clinic safety were insufficient. Front desk staff and healthcare providers expressed the need for an immediate, discreet solution that could address critical incidents without causing alarm or escalation.

The Solution

In response to these concerns, Vail Health evaluated several safety solutions, ultimately choosing the CrisisAlert™ platform by CENTEGIX. The wearable duress badge empowered staff to discreetly summon help with a simple button press, notifying internal response teams and, if necessary, local law enforcement.



"We had many conversations about enhancing clinic safety while also trying to de-stigmatize the idea that behavioral health does not equal violence. Our experience with CrisisAlert™ allows us to reframe that conversation to promote an increase in safety, clinical access, and support from our care team."

Kala Bettis, MA, LSC, LAC, LPC, Integrated Behavioral Health Supervisor, Vail Health Behavioral Health

Expanded Use Cases

The implementation of CrisisAlert™ was well coordinated and welcomed by staff. Regular training and check-ins ensured that employees were confident and prepared to use the technology effectively. Staff quickly adapted to the platform, feeling reassured by its ease of use and reliability.

While CrisisAlert achieved its primary goal of improving clinic safety, soon after use, a few unexpected benefits emerged. The ability for a staff member to summon help during situations where further clinical action or supervision was required became extremely valuable. One example was when a patient arrived at the clinic intoxicated and had driven there with her child in the car.

“It was not clinically helpful for the provider to open their computer in that moment, because the patient was talking about substance abuse and domestic violence,” explained Kala Bettis, Integrated Behavioral Health Supervisor. “Instead of using Teams to request additional support, they pressed their CrisisAlert badge, and I immediately responded. That’s a use case we didn’t intend for, but it enables the session to continue until someone can come and provide additional support.”

Bettis described that the badge is now also used if someone needs to be hospitalized. “It’s not that we feel unsafe. But it’s for an escalating clinical issue that requires more hands on deck.”

Results

Since implementing CrisisAlert™, Vail Health has seen several tangible benefits in both staff safety and continuity of patient care:

- **Enhanced Safety for Staff:** The CrisisAlert™ badge has provided a sense of security among the staff, especially at the front desk, where incidents were more likely to occur. Staff report feeling more confident handling difficult situations, knowing that backup is just a badge press away.
- **Improved Response Times:** The system has provided faster response times in critical situations, enabling support staff to intervene before situations escalate. In one notable case, a staff member was able to discreetly trigger an alert when a patient who expressed suicidal intent was attempting to leave. This enabled the team to quickly intervene and prevent a potentially tragic outcome.
- **Continuity of Patient Care:** CrisisAlert not only improved staff safety but also contributed to smoother patient care. In behavioral health settings, where de-escalation is critical, the ability to summon support discreetly has allowed Vail Health providers to maintain a calm environment and minimize disruption to patient care.



"There was a patient who came in at the peak of a crisis. About ten minutes into her session she abruptly exited and left the building. The provider feared she may act on a plan to commit suicide, so we used CrisisAlert™ to immediately summon support from our internal responders and discuss next steps. We were able to reach the patient's emergency contact and quickly engage law enforcement to intervene. That badge literally saved a life that day."

Christine Stiebel, Patient Experience Coordinator

Conclusion


The implementation of CENTEGIX's CrisisAlert™ system at Vail Health has significantly improved both staff safety and continuity of care. By providing a discreet, wearable solution, CrisisAlert™ has empowered Vail healthcare professionals to respond to emergencies swiftly while maintaining focus on delivering high-quality care for their patients.

As Vail Health continues to grow, CrisisAlert™ will remain an integral part of its safety infrastructure, ensuring that both staff and patients are protected and supported during every stage of care.



Like Vail Health, you can create a safety culture for your organization. See how.



 **CENTEGIX®** Learn more today. Because every second matters.

For more information on our safety technology platform, visit www.centegix.com/healthcare.