

# Piedmont Athens Regional saves \$298,523 by improving its acute episode-to-clinic transition process

## Piedmont Athens Regional Athens, GA

Piedmont Athens Regional Medical Center is a 360-bed non-profit hospital and regional referral center serving a 17-county service area in Athens and northeast Georgia. They offer a Level 2 Trauma Center and Level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, urgent care centers, and an extensive network of respected physicians, surgeons and specialists.

*“In addition to participating in Vizient’s national Care Continuum from Acute Episode-to-Clinic collaborative, having regional support from Vizient MidSouth helped us stay focused on best practices and also held us accountable to implementation time lines.”*

### Janet Strnad, RN

Supervisor of Patient Care Coordination  
Piedmont Athens Regional

## Challenge

Piedmont Athens Regional wanted to improve their post-acute follow-up care and also focus on the transition from the hospital to their community care clinic.

After conducting a gap analysis, they discovered they could improve in the areas of after-hours appointment scheduling, ED care management strategy, underutilization of their community care clinic, accurate patient contact information, identifying readmissions in the emergency department, centralized scheduling and post-discharge home follow up.

## Solution

- Implement a clinic appointment hotline with messaging capability for evening and weekend calls
- Clinic appointments would be made with the same resident (or team) who followed the patient in acute care
- Residents would make clinic transition of care calls
- A care management team would be established in the emergency department

## Results

Even with other challenges such as staff changes, a long flu season, record high census, plans for an EMR change, data acquisition and multiple data systems, Piedmont Athens Regional still made the following improvements:

- High complexity patient follow-up appointments increased by 51 percent
- Moderate complexity patient follow-up appointments increased by 21 percent
- The hospital’s ED 7-day revisit rate decreased by 10 percent
- Over 35 unnecessary admissions were avoided
- Accuracy of patient information improved
- A savings of \$298,523 was realized



For more information about our performance improvement collaboratives, contact us today at [info@vizientmidsouth.com](mailto:info@vizientmidsouth.com) or (770) 850-7400.

Vizient MidSouth is a membership alliance for not-for-profit health care providers that exists to ensure its members deliver high quality, cost-effective care by connecting them with the knowledge, solutions and expertise that accelerate performance.