



## TEXAS HOSPITAL SAVES THOUSANDS WITH ACTIONCUE CLINICAL INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM

BY: BILLIE ANNE SCHOPPMAN, RN, BS, CPHQ WITH HOLLY HOLCOMB, RN, BSN

**“We’ve never been so transparent, so involved,  
and so organized.”**

In August 2017, Childress Regional Medical Center (CRMC) teamed up with Prista Corporation to bring ActionCue Clinical Intelligence (CI) into CRMC. We recently caught up with Childress Regional’s COO, Holly Holcomb, to review ActionCue CI’s impact on hospital operations, detailing some of the savings of time and resources they have achieved since going live with the platform.



In this case study, we will dive into two specific projects in which ActionCue CI played a key part in their successful results.

### About Childress Regional Medical Center

Welcome to Childress, Texas: a southeastern panhandle town home to just six thousand residents. [Childress Regional Medical Center](#) provides care for the surrounding five counties, totaling to around thirty-thousand people. Chief Operating Officer Holly Holcomb describes Childress as being a hundred miles from anywhere. “We’re too big for critical access, but not nearly big enough to be an urban center. But Childress Regional is the only facility within 100 miles that still delivers babies, and we’re very proud of that.” They are also proud to have been named a “Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital” by the Chartis Center for Rural Health in 2018 and a “Great Community Hospital” by [Becker’s Hospital Review](#) in 2019.

CRMC is a Prospective Payment System (PPS) facility with ten full-time family physicians, three full-time mid-levels, one full time orthopedic surgeon, and regularly visiting specialists: a urologist, an oncologist, and a general surgeon. They provide inpatient and outpatient care, with 80% of visits being outpatient. They have partnered with UMC in Lubbock to offer onsite chemotherapy infusion services. Their next-door rural health clinic averages 4,000 patient visits per month.



### Meet Holly Holcomb, Childress Regional’s COO

“My title is COO, but I wear lots of hats: I’m the performance improvement manager and compliance officer, I’m the risk manager and privacy officer; I’m anything else I need to be. We needed some kind of online risk management software and discovered ActionCue. We went live in August of 2017, and we’ve already met ROI by the amount of work we’ve captured.”

### Challenge #1: Childress Regional’s 2019 State Survey

Childress Regional is a hospital district with an elected Board of Directors. Every month, the hospital holds Governing Board meetings to discuss finances and quality improvements. Their goal is to remain self-sufficient without completely relying on taxpayers. Even so, the budget gets tight.

Every three years, Texas hospitals are assessed by state surveyors to ensure quality and safety procedures are being followed according to Federal and State metrics. When the time arrived for 2019's survey, state surveyors asked to see metrics related to risk activities. With the help of ActionCue CI, Ms. Holcomb generated facility-wide reports for their review. The system isolated all the metrics needed for their evaluation. During the facility tour, the surveyors identified problem points within the dietary department, resulting in deficiencies being issued and CRMC was given 45 days to carry out a plan of correction before being reassessed by the state of Texas.

### The Solution

Step one was to implement data capture in ActionCue CI using their old forms and audit tools as references. Then, they built a multi-step action plan within the system. Some of their specific action steps included:

- Rotate stock; practice and track FIFO (first-in-first-out)
- Inspect dented cans
- Marking arrival and expiration dates
- Replace refrigerator shelving
- Replace food carts
- Detailed cleaning schedules: weekly, monthly and quarterly

The software even captured how much they spent on these corrections. When the auditor returned 45 days later, ActionCue CI presented proof of the action plan being implemented properly, along with all documentation attached to the report. **They completed their review in less than two hours.**

### The Outcome

Utilizing the ActionCue CI Performance Improvement Action Plan as their only piece of evidence, CRMC was able to appeal to the TDSHS Enforcement Board to successfully have their **administrative penalties decreased by 50%**, a \$1,300 savings.

All deficiencies cleared! The 45-day plan, along with ActionCue CI's reporting tools, were accurate and conclusive. The state auditor even asked for a copy of ActionCue CI's report to present to their colleagues. ActionCue CI is now a central part of CRMC's monthly Board and

department head meetings. “We project our charts, full of live data, and then drill down to the criticals. I can show the Board anything they want to see,” Ms. Holcomb explained. Specific gaps are transparent, which allows each department to create effective action plans. The departments succeeding in their goals are clearly recognized and celebrated.

“During my previous 23 years at Childress Regional, we tracked maybe three near-miss events. Last year with ActionCue, we captured thirty. And that’s the kind of awareness we need in order to prevent issues from happening to begin with.”

### Challenge #2: Reducing Biohazard Waste Expenses

An ActionCue CI alert informed CRMC’s housekeeping director of hazardous waste expenses exceeding their monthly goal, ringing in at \$2,725 per month. For a smaller regional hospital, that is an overreaching expense. Department leaders took on a new hospital-wide project for all 250 employees: to cut down on biohazard waste expenses by 10%.

### The Solution

CRMC staff began to notice red biohazard waste bags being used for non-hazardous trash. Physicians preferred all-use trash bins in the clinic to be slightly hidden from the public view, purely for a cleaner hospital aesthetic. Staff members began to take notice of patients using hazardous waste receptacles to dispose of their personal trash items.

Public trash bins were rearranged for better visibility, and nursing staff were re-educated on proper internal labeling practices. Shortly after, ActionCue CI began to reveal positive results based on two main metrics selected for the project:

- Hazardous Waste Cost YTD: improved from \$9,325 per quarter to \$3,982 per quarter, a cost reduction of over 57%
- Hazardous Waste Cost Per Patient Day: improved from \$17 per patient day, to \$6 per patient day, a cost reduction of over 64%

### The Outcome

After six months of using ActionCue CI to help improve monthly biohazard waste expenses, the initial goal of 10% reduction was blown

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*~ Holly Holcomb*

out of the water: **monthly expenses dropped over 48%** - starting at \$2,725/mo, and plummeting to \$1,400/mo.

With continued tracking and support, CRMC's 48% cut remains steady to this day. Ms. Holcomb reports, "Now, there's a solid system that works for everyone."

### A New Level of Transparency

Before ActionCue CI, identifying specific gaps in quality was a challenge due to not having one central hub for tracking. Ms. Holcomb explains, "with the way it used to work, we weren't able to capture all our work and savings without someone manually taking notes of everything". She describes their old way of event reporting as "a disjointed and less-organized system".

With any new system rolling out to an organization, there is the usual eye-roll accompanying an expectation of extra work and hassle. Prista's support team tackles it head-on. Project managers received individualized, one-to-one online training as they learned the ins and outs. With Ms. Holcomb being Childress Regional's ActionCue CI "superuser", hospital staff know who to call when they have questions about their role in the system. "Being educated in the beginning was very, very important. It helped us get off to a smooth start," Ms. Holcomb says. No more chasing paper forms; no more guesswork.

"We know what nursing's working on. We know what the clinic is working on. We're no longer in performance or quality silos. We're all one collaborative team looking at the same data. It's a solid system that works for everyone."

### About ActionCue CI

[ActionCue CI](#) fully integrates event reporting, risk, quality, and performance improvement into a single, easy-to-use, collaborative online platform.

ActionCue CI enables your team to:

- Quickly record incidents as they happen
- Get clear action plans for improvement based on incident reporting
- Instantly know how your team is performing
- Get started immediately without any downloads

### How Much Can ActionCue Help You Save?

You need fast and reliable data with a system that works for everyone on your staff. ActionCue CI's power and simplicity allows you to spend less time at the computer and get back to more important work. Discover how ActionCue CI can simplify the way you measure risk and quality. [Get in touch with a specialist today.](#)



### About the Author:

**Billie Anne Schoppman, RN, BS, CPHQ** is a noted expert on patient quality and performance improvement in clinical settings. With 25 years in healthcare leadership roles at DTI Healthcare Professional, Sr. V.P. of Clinical Services at Cornerstone Healthcare Group and several nursing management positions, she delivers advisory and execution services in hospital operations, clinical services management, quality management, education and strategic IT recommendations.

### About Prista:

Prista's flagship product, ActionCue Clinical Intelligence, has transformed the way hospitals manage risk, quality and performance improvement by making information immediate and easy-to-use and understand. While a number of software solutions address some of these functions separately, none deliver information in a single, collaborative environment that provides the actionable insights and reporting found in ActionCue CI.

### Schedule a quick demo:

[sales@pristacorp.com](mailto:sales@pristacorp.com)

<https://pristacorp.com/actioncue-ci-solution/#demo>