



Case Study:

Baptist Medical Center South Specialty Program Development

Baptist Medical Center South in Montgomery, Alabama, a 463-bed not-for-profit hospital offering comprehensive health services for people throughout the state, has a long history of providing care for neuroscience patients, particularly those affected by stroke. Recognition of the need for expanded neuroscience and orthopedic capabilities led Baptist to consider new opportunities through a comprehensive strategic planning initiative. . . the goal: to shape both neurosciences and orthopedics specialties for the future.

Promoting and expanding the neuroscience service composition and capabilities at Baptist Medical Center South (BMCS), the flagship of a three-hospital system in south-central Alabama, was deemed a strategic priority. This was in large part due to the tremendous growth and success of the system stroke program under the direction of the Stroke Program Medical Director. The Baptist team worked with Corazon to construct a comprehensive plan for a full service neuroscience program development, including a detailed market analysis, target volume projections with associated projected financial return, a physician manpower needs assessment, and an operational implementation plan based upon community need and best practice standards.



Main Entrance, Baptist Medical Center South

Working with the Baptist Team, Corazon identified and quantified opportunities in both neuroscience and orthopedics. Corazon helped plan AND successfully execute a very significant and profitable expansion to the service offerings at BMC. After strategic planning, physician recruitment and alignment, staff education, and interim support from Corazon, Baptist achieved a successful stroke program re-certification and expanded neuroscience offerings to include intra-cranial neurosurgical capabilities.

***The First Step:* Identifying strengths upon which to build**

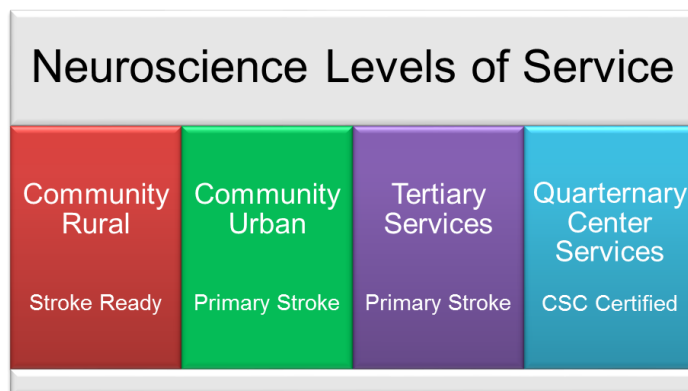
Working within Corazon's unique and proven approach for strategic planning, the Baptist team was quickly able to identify key areas of clinical strength, as well as those that would benefit from enhancement. Through active physician engagement in the process, facilitated by the Corazon project team, universal buy-in of the proposed initiatives was achieved and rapid progress was made.

Over the course of the two-phase project, Corazon identified areas for market growth, as well as developed discrete strategies to enhance clinical and financial performance within existing services. Next, a detailed plan related to expanded services was developed. Opportunities in stroke, intracranial neurosurgery, and complex spinal procedures were identified as the highest priority.

Working through the Expansion: The Corazon Center of Excellence approach

The image below provides a high-level visual representation of the very granular assessment and discussion related to the recommended future identity for BMCS. Approaching this planning process in a detailed, thoughtful, and all-encompassing way produced an actionable, achievable, and financially-viable strategic plan that served as the road map for a successful implementation. Carefully detailing future state clinical services, the associated investment, and projected return allowed the team to understand the potential while also considering the necessary requirements for achievement of the agreed-upon goals.

To support the implementation of a successful program expansion effort, the Corazon team performed a detailed evaluation of all existing program components and needs. The Corazon-led assessment of facility, equipment, staff, educational needs, physician manpower, political considerations, and community need contributed greatly to the more traditional strategic planning components of market, volume, and financial considerations.



The Results: Expanded neuroscience services benefitting the Montgomery community

- Challenges emerged during the first certification visit. Then, due to staff changes and a lack of in-house neuroscience expertise, concerns regarding re-certification became apparent. Corazon placed an experienced neuro CNS to lead the re-certification initiative and mentor the newly-appointed stroke coordinator. As a result, the Baptist stroke program was re-certified with excellent marks.
- The existing neurosurgeons at Baptist performed simple spine procedures almost exclusively. Very little intracranial neurosurgery was being performed as several of the physicians were nearing retirement, though significant opportunity was identified through the planning effort. Corazon successfully recruited a talented neurosurgeon with interest in intracranial and minimally-invasive spine. These programs are now experiencing significant growth month after month.
- Given staff inexperience in complex neurosurgery, per Corazon's recommendation, a comprehensive education plan was developed and delivered to elevate staff knowledge and competencies.
- Spinal implant costs were excessive and no formal method for vendor selection or approval existed. Corazon developed and implemented a physician co-management agreement that served to align the goals of both hospital and surgeon(s), along with a formal process for implant selection. These efforts lead to a significant reduction in cost for spine cases and made volume expansion financially viable.

Future Plans: Sustaining the momentum

The expansions at Baptist continue! Stroke volume is approaching 1,000 per year and intracranial neurosurgery is an integral part of the services offered. Spine surgery is now profitable and the service is growing. An assessment of opportunity related to comprehensive stroke services is slated for later this year.

For a more detailed explanation of this Neuroscience project that involved multiple components of Corazon's services, call 412.364.8200.