

**CASE STUDY**

## ECU Health Builds a Clinically Integrated Value Analysis Program and **Saves \$520,000 in a Year**



Partnering with GHX was absolutely the right decision. Without them, it would be a huge detriment. Not only for our team and supply chain, but also for our patient population and the care we provide.”

**Shannon Hicks**

Director of Strategic Sourcing Contracts and Value Analysis, ECU Health

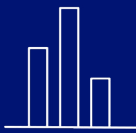
## Client

ECU Health's system of care includes 1,708 beds across multiple facilities, including a two-campus academic medical center that serves as the teaching hospital for the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. The system also comprises eight community hospitals, as well as numerous outpatient facilities, home health and hospice services, and wellness centers.



**\$520k**  
saved in first  
year

Improved  
alignment  
between clinical  
and supply  
chain teams



Evidence-based  
product decisions

Costs managed  
more effectively



## Highlights

### CHALLENGES

- Efficiently **analyzing and approving** medical supplies and technologies
- Achieving system-wide **cost savings**
- Integrating more **clinical expertise** into supply chain

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### SOLUTION

ECU Health leveraged GHX Consultancy Service and GHX Product Introduction Management, two components of the GHX Value Analysis solution suite. This enabled them to:

- Develop a **clinically integrated value analysis** program
- Streamline product requests
- Make product decisions **based on evidence**
- **Standardize processes** across 10 hospitals

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### RESULTS

- Delivered **\$520k** savings in one year
- Enhanced **multidisciplinary collaboration** and decision-making
- Improved staff morale and **boosted efficiency**

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# Challenges

## PRODUCT SELECTION HAMPERED BY INEFFICIENCIES

As the Director of Strategic Sourcing Contracts and Value Analysis at ECU Health, Shannon Hicks works to ensure that medical supplies and technologies are acquired efficiently, cost-effectively and with patient care as the ultimate priority. This requires a structured approach that fosters collaboration between value analysis teams, clinicians and supply chain professionals with decisions based on clinical evidence.

When Hicks joined ECU Health, its existing value analysis process, while functional, was fragmented. The program focused on individual facilities rather than leveraging the scale and interconnectedness of its 10-hospital system. This approach made it harder to standardize processes and achieve system-wide cost efficiencies.

## FRAGMENTED VALUE ANALYSIS TEAMS AND PROCESSES

One critical pain point was managing new product requests. These submissions were handled via email threads and paper forms, sometimes resulting in delays, lost requests and a lack of transparency. The absence of a centralized system left stakeholders, including clinicians, department heads and vendors in the dark about the status of their requests.

Manual workflows also hampered product evaluations. Clinical and supply chain teams could not efficiently access accurate information on product performance, safety and cost. As a result, both groups conducted their own research, leading to duplicated efforts that stretched team resources and slowed decision-making.

Ineffective vendor collaboration created another bottleneck. Without a structured process for gathering information and negotiating costs, delays sometimes occurred and opportunities for savings could easily be missed.

“We needed to have more robust value analysis, with more visibility and transparency, along with better communication from beginning to end,” Hicks explains. “What we lacked was a central place where we could bring suppliers and sponsors together to collaborate and secure the lowest cost for the organization.”

Hicks and her team set out to find a solution to streamline the value analysis process and empower their teams to achieve greater efficiency and impact. ■



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# Solution

## BUILDING A MORE CLINICALLY INTEGRATED SUPPLY CHAIN

With the potential for improvement at the front of their minds, ECU Health recognized the need to collaborate with GHX. GHX's team of industry-seasoned value analysis consultants supported the development and implementation of a clinically integrated, evidence-based value analysis program.

GHX used a phased approach to facilitate a transformation that was thorough, patient-centered and aligned with ECU Health's goals. The process began with an in-depth assessment of their existing value analysis framework to identify key stakeholders, evaluate workflows and uncover pain points across the system.

"GHX's methodical approach to assessing our system helped us see the gaps and opportunities for improvement. They worked hard to understand where we were—and made sure we could move forward," Hicks says.

## STREAMLINING THE PATH TO SMARTER PRODUCT DECISIONS

Building on the insights they discovered, GHX developed a customized value analysis program. Central to this transformation was the creation of



essential governance tools, including a Value Analysis Program Charter. This document outlined in granular detail the structure, objectives, roles, responsibilities and guiding principles of the program, providing clear direction for everyone involved.

Additionally, GHX introduced a standardized workflow for new product requests, which improves consistency and efficiency across the system. At the core of the new workflow is GHX Product Introduction Management, an online solution designed to streamline the entire value analysis process.

**"GHX brought clarity and alignment to product reviews. The evidence-based data within the tool helps our team make informed decisions."**

— Shannon Hicks

GHX provided a single entry point for new product requests, offering greater visibility and accountability to all stakeholders, including physicians, supply chain staff and clinical leaders. The new process helps eliminate the inefficiencies caused by lost emails and manual tracking.

GHX also worked with ECU Health to automate elements of its product review process, helping to reduce workload and minimize the potential for errors. Everyone involved in the process has access to comprehensive data related to product performance, safety, and cost and can offer detailed feedback across multidisciplinary teams, supporting faster, more data-driven decisions.

GHX brought clarity and alignment to product reviews,” Hicks says. “The evidence-based data within the tool helps our team make informed decisions. We’re empowering everyone to work smarter and engage earlier, helping us balance cost-effectiveness with patient-centered outcomes.”

### ENGAGED TEAMS AND STANDARDIZED PROCESSES

The new program was launched with ongoing support and training provided by GHX. Weekly meetings with all relevant teams help ensure the program remains on track and evolves to meet ECU Health’s changing needs, highlighting the ongoing engagement of all stakeholders.

Hicks says, “GHX has been amazing. Their education sessions were key to making sure that everyone understood how to use the platform, which was a huge win. Having the Charter out there—and the visibility it provided—made everything work so much more smoothly.”

With the program successfully expanded across all 10 hospitals, ECU Health has fostered a unified approach to value analysis across the organization. “We have truly standardized our processes,” says Hicks. ■



## Results

### DELIVERING \$520K OF SAVINGS IN A YEAR

ECU Health’s value analysis program has been transformed into an evidence-based, clinically integrated workflow, underscoring the organization’s commitment to operational excellence and high-quality patient care.

**In just one year, the team processed more than 190 projects** through the new program. Standardized, streamlined processes help significantly reduce the time and resources spent on research and manual tasks. This boost in operational efficiency means that the team can focus more on patient care rather than dealing with supply shortages or delays.

“The program has been widely adopted throughout the organization,” says Hicks. “There has been lots of wonderful engagement, especially from our physician community. Teams are now using evidence insights within the tool, which has cut down the time spent conducting their own independent research.”

With product selection guided by data, and the organization identifying new opportunities for standardization, **the program has already delivered \$520,000 in savings.** ECU Health expects to realize additional return on investment as the program continues to scale.

### AN ALIGNED, ENGAGED CULTURE

Beyond the savings results, the new program has contributed to creating a culture of greater transparency and collaboration. Multidisciplinary teams, including physicians, are aligned, engaged and informed. "Everyone feels more a part of the process now," says Hicks.

Meanwhile, supply chain disruptions have been minimized due to a more structured and proactive approach to managing medical supplies. This stability allows physicians to concentrate on what matters most: delivering exceptional patient care. Suppliers now have a clear pathway for submitting and tracking requests, with timely feedback on submissions that reduces back and forth. This improved process strengthens relationships with

ECU Health and accelerates the adoption of the safest, most cost-effective products.

"We now have evidence-based research at our fingertips and can provide our physicians and clinicians with the best products faster, which positively benefits patients in the long run. Without GHX, it would be a huge detriment, not only for our team and supply chain, but also for our patient population and the care we provide."

### IMPROVED STAFF MORALE AND INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Hicks's team has reduced stress, improved productivity and become better organized, in part due to the transformative power of Product Introduction Management.

"I would definitely say there has been an increase in staff morale, especially with our value analysis managers," Hicks says. "Being able to collaborate so easily across teams helps everyone complete their tasks more efficiently." ■



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»» **Contact GHX today to learn about developing a more clinically integrated supply chain.**

