



CASE STUDY

# Mid-Atlantic health system takes proactive approach to drug diversion monitoring with Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence

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## ORGANIZATION SNAPSHOT

# Mid-Atlantic Health System

### LOCATION

Mid-Atlantic region

### EMPLOYEES

12,000

### INDUSTRY

Healthcare

## CHALLENGE

After discovering an internal drug diversion incident, the health system needed to proactively monitor for cases of drug diversion to identify incidents early and prevent harm to patients, the organization, and diverters themselves.

## SOLUTION

- Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence

## RESULTS

- Adopted a proactive approach to mitigating drug diversion
- Improved documentation process on how controlled substances are handled
- Extended their team with an Imprivata FairWarning drug diversion analyst
- Reduced the potential for drug diversion-related harm across the health system



One of the largest and most comprehensive health systems in the Mid-Atlantic region, they are dedicated to enhancing the health and quality of life of the communities they serve through compassionate and affordable care.

# The Challenge

About two years ago, the health system discovered that a nurse had been pilfering large quantities of Fentanyl to feed an addiction. The case was discovered internally after the Pharmacy team noticed that the nurse, an otherwise excellent employee, had been wasting more medication than was normal within her department. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for drugs to be diverted by an employee who is perceived to be excellent. In fact, the red flags of drug diversion are often indicators of a “gold star” employee – such as volunteering to take on extra shifts or helping busy peers (by disposing of controlled substances).

“It would be someone that you would never even thought had a problem,” explained Assistant Vice President (AVP) of Pharmacy Services. “She didn’t exhibit any kind of outward signs that would have tipped somebody off, but she took a significant amount of medication. We went to the DEA, they came in, and she actually was indicted.”

Thankfully, no patients were harmed by her actions, but the health system knew they needed to take a proactive stance on monitoring for drug diversion to protect not only their patients and organization, but also potential diverters. “That was an eye opener because it was a very sad case. It was someone new to the field and somehow went down the wrong path. We felt that if we had something in place where we could have caught the situation at the very beginning, before it became a larger problem, it would have been something that would have had an impact.”

Following the incident, the health system took action by creating a system-wide drug diversion prevention committee, which brought together professionals across multiple departments to collaborate, including Chief Nursing Officers, Pharmacy, Human Resources, Security, Legal, and Compliance personnel. The committee educates staff on investigating and reporting incidents and was integral to implementing a system to proactively monitor for drug diversion.

**Their key objectives for implementing a drug diversion monitoring system included:**

- ✔ Reduce potential for harm
- ✔ Reduce risk of being in the headlines
- ✔ Reduce potential for fines
- ✔ Reduce the number of diversion instances

**“ It’s just helped with making sure that what we have here is something that makes it safer for everyone involved. ”**

In addition to adopting Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence for monitoring, the team at the health system utilizes it to enhance their HIPAA compliance posture and encourage an organization-wide culture of privacy where users understand that their activity is being monitored and know intrinsically to follow correct protocols.

## The Solution

After evaluating three systems, the health system chose Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence for its ability to detect behavioral trends from Automated Dispensing Cabinet (ADC) data that signify diversion early, allowing them to be proactive. The time savings and expertise of a drug diversion analyst as an extension of their team were also identified as significant benefits. Plus, the solution was reasonably priced even with the concierge service. “It was almost a no brainer,” explained the AVP of Pharmacy Services.

“Having someone from Imprivata FairWarning who is analyzing your data,

going through hundreds of different things that pop up, and then pulling out those top two or three items that really we do need to address was extremely advantageous to us,” she said. “If you don’t have the person to really look at the data on a daily or weekly basis, it doesn’t do you a whole lot of good.”

Diversion incidents are still brought to the drug diversion prevention committee for review, investigation, and action, but now they are able to leverage extensive documentation and the advice of an external expert to inform their discussions.

**“ We talk with [our Imprivata FairWarning analyst and CSM] quite a bit. They’re in touch if we need them for any reason, I just send them an email and they’re very quick to respond. ”**





# The Results

Adopting Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence has empowered this health system to become more proactive in detecting and mitigating drug diversion. “Since we’ve had Imprivata FairWarning, we have identified two diversions that have occurred and they have been fairly early in the stages,” said the AVP of Pharmacy Services. “We were really able to identify the problem before it got much worse and escalated to a point of potential harm to them or a patient.”

One of the complications the health system previously dealt with was disbelief from managers that the identified employee could be diverting, which slowed intervention. This is a common reaction seen across health systems. Now, they can ground those initial conversations in data – specific, incontrovertible facts accelerating response time.

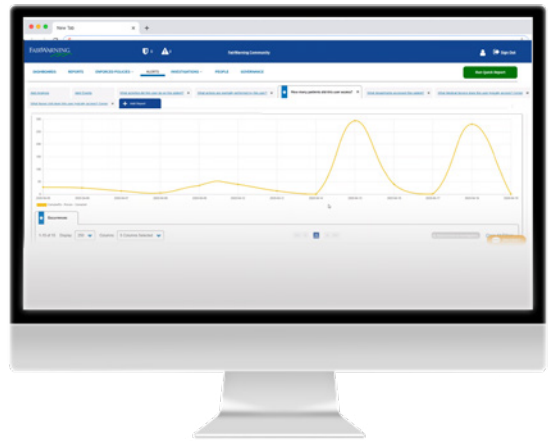
In addition to identifying incidents of diversion early enough to minimize negative consequences, one of the early benefits has been policy adherence. “As we’ve been investigating incidents that have come up, that staff are starting to understand that someone is really looking at this information,” the AVP of Pharmacy Services explained. “A lot of it had been weak documentation, folks not following processes. Now that they know that we are looking at those things, they are being more conscientious. We’re starting to see some of that benefit.”

**Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence helped the health system strengthen their compliance posture while monitoring for drug diversion, enabling them to:**

- ✔ **Approach the detection and mitigation of drug diversion proactively**
- ✔ **Improve the documentation process on how controlled substances are handled**
- ✔ **Extend their team with an Imprivata FairWarning drug diversion analyst**
- ✔ **Reduce the risk of drug diversion-related harm across the health system**



According to the AVP of Pharmacy Services, Imprivata FairWarning Drug Diversion Intelligence provides her with peace of mind; if drug diversion happens within the organization, it'll be brought to her attention right away. "It helps me sleep better at night," she said. "I feel more comfortable that with someone looking at our data, that I know that we are looking at things and that we're being more proactive, that we're going to catch things when they are occurring. Whereas before... you never knew when something was going to hit. It was almost like a surprise, whereas now I feel we're in front of the problem as opposed to waiting for it."



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