



#### Name of Organization

St. Michael's Hospital

#### Healthcare Organization Type

Hospital

#### Products

Feedback

#### Key Challenges

- Complaint information was paper-based
- Files were not standardized
- Inefficient report creation process

#### Key Benefits

- Vastly improved reporting capability
- Resolution time greatly reduced
- Decrease in clerical work

#### Client Website

[www.stmichaelshospital.com](http://www.stmichaelshospital.com)



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**ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL**  
A teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto

## CLIENT CASE STUDY

# St. Michael's Hospital

St. Michael's slashes complaint response times and increases reporting capabilities

#### The Challenge

In the past, St. Michael's had a Patient Relations department that ensured complaints were resolved within a reasonable time. However, the organization wanted to decentralize part of this function by empowering managers to be responsible for issues in their own areas. Two factors made it extremely difficult for managers handling complaints.

1. Information was not readily available. All files were paper-based and not easily accessible. As a result, staff needed extra time to acquire information, making it difficult to quickly respond to complaints.
2. Files were not standardized. Paper files were not maintained uniformly across all departments, making it difficult for others to find relevant details quickly.

The delays and ineffective responses hindered efforts to resolve patient complaints satisfactorily.

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### Organizational Snapshot

St. Michael's Hospital understands the value of complaints. As a 535 bed inner city teaching hospital in Toronto, St. Michael's receives a considerable feedback from patients which is used for both risk prevention and quality improvement initiatives. Although the hospital has a designated full-time employee to manage patient feedback, there were opportunities for improving the process of managing and reporting on feedback.

## Background

St. Michael's believed there was a quicker way to elicit responses from staff and create a paperless environment. The goal: reduced resolution times and fewer lost files. St. Michael's chose Feedback feedback management software from RL Solutions, to streamline its process for patient complaints and create electronic files.

Prior to implementing Feedback, the Patient Relations office was littered with paper, creating a risk that files might go missing. As well, Patient Relations staff spent two days a month creating management reports and information was not readily available.

## Results

After installing Feedback, staff were able to access standardized information from across the entire facility. This has significantly reduced the amount of time spent searching for files and has enabled managers to address concerns more efficiently.

After implementing the scanning capability in Feedback, paper chases are now a thing of the past. All correspondence is now scanned directly into a file where it can be viewed and shared. It has eliminated the need to maintain paper copies and virtually eliminated the likelihood of lost files. As well, email links through Feedback have reduced the lag time on responses from two weeks through inter-office mail, to two days.

Reporting that used to take two days a month now takes only seconds, giving staff more time for patients and managers more timely information for

“Instead of spending 3 hours to run a report, it now takes just over 1 hour. And instead of waiting 2 weeks for a response through inter-office mail, email responses are practically instantaneous!”

**Robert Fox, Director of Quality and Clinical Resources**

St. Michael's Hospital

decision-making. All of these changes have significantly affected the ongoing efforts of the hospital to continually improve the quality of care provided to its patients.

## Quick Facts Summary

- Clerical work decreased from 3.5 hours to 1 hour per file
- Resolution time reduced from 2 weeks to 2 days
- Vastly improved reporting capability
- Established ability to decentralize the complaint management process
- Improved overall staff communication
- Streamlined the number of steps it takes to respond to a patient complaint from 15 to 6

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