

# How a Nonprofit Hospice Improved Its DME Program with Qualis

## At a Glance

A nonprofit hospice organization in Georgia, serving about 400 patients across 16 counties and three offices, faced ongoing issues managing its durable medical equipment (DME). Delays in delivery, billing disputes, poor communication with vendors, and staff frustration were affecting operations and patient care.

After trying to fix these problems with their existing DME arrangement, the leadership team decided to partner with Qualis. Since the change, the organization has experienced better coordination, fewer service issues, and a team they can rely on for support.



“We want to be in the top 5 percent nationally. That means our vendor network has to think and act the way we do.” — **Natasha Fowlks, Executive Director**

# The Challenge:

## Frequent Issues with DME Providers

The hospice is the largest nonprofit provider of its kind in Georgia. While the clinical team was strong, the DME support system was not meeting their needs. Orders were often delayed, deliveries were missed or incorrect, and there were problems with the quality of equipment.

New DME vendors were introduced without consultation, and the hospice had no control over the selection process. This created confusion for both staff and families.

The billing situation also became difficult. The hospice found errors, including charges for patients who had already died. These problems were reported to leadership at the vendor company, but no meaningful resolution followed.



- Deliveries arrived late or with the wrong equipment
- Staff could not see or track order progress
- Billing errors could not be resolved easily
- Families did not receive clear information about equipment
- New vendors were added without input from the hospice

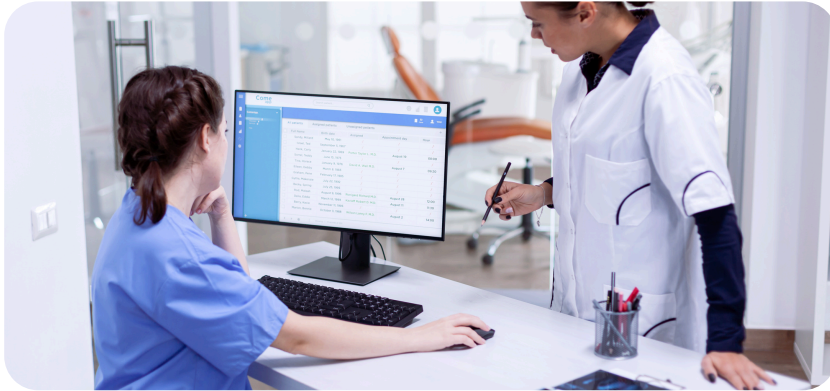
The issues created extra work for staff and disrupted patient care. Sometimes, hospital discharges were delayed because equipment had not arrived as expected. Care teams were frustrated and time was lost managing problems with DME instead of focusing on patients.

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*"You can only escalate so many times. At some point, you need a partner who sees your patients the way you do."*

# The Solution:

## A Service Team That Responds



After meeting the Qualis team at an event and staying in touch for several months, the hospice leadership decided to make the switch. They needed more than a basic ordering platform. They needed reliable service and better communication.

Once the transition was complete, the results were clear. Orders were processed faster, support was more consistent, and the hospice regained control over which DME vendors were being used.

- **Vendors were selected based on performance and reliability**

The hospice could now request providers that met their care standards.

- **Qualis responded quickly to questions and service issues**

Communication was direct and helpful.

- **The system made it easy to place and monitor orders**

Field staff could place requests without making calls or sending emails.

- **Qualis addressed provider problems directly**

If a vendor was not meeting expectations, Qualis followed up and made sure changes were made.

The hospice no longer had to manage vendor issues themselves. When something went wrong, the support team at Qualis handled the situation and kept the hospice informed throughout the process.

“We don’t expect perfection. But we do expect resolution. And we’re getting that with Qualis.”





# The Implementation: A Straightforward Process

Changing systems is usually complicated, especially when patients are involved. But the switch to Qualis went smoothly. A project manager coordinated the transition and stayed in close contact with the hospice team.



From the beginning, expectations were clear. Training was brief and practical. Any issues were addressed quickly and respectfully. The leadership team did not have to get involved in the day-to-day setup.

- **No interruptions to patient care**

The change did not interfere with equipment access or care delivery.

- **Clear communication during setup**

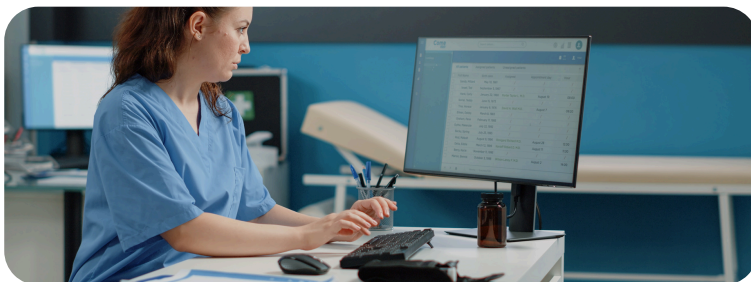
Staff always knew what was happening and when.

- **Executive team stayed focused on leadership priorities**

Most of the transition work was handled by the project team.

- **Quick resolution of problems during rollout**

Any confusion or questions were answered right away.



Staff across locations reported that the system was easy to use. Night shift and weekend nurses especially appreciated being able to order equipment without long phone calls or follow-ups.

“No dropped balls. No confusion. Just steady support and an onboarding experience that didn’t derail our focus on patient care.”



# The Result:

## Lower Complaint Volume and Better Coordination

In the first month after switching to Qualis, the hospice tracked a significant drop in complaints about DME. They went from over 30 complaints to fewer than five. Since then, there have been only occasional issues, most of which were internal.

Leadership, operations staff, and clinicians have all noticed the improvement. Teams are spending less time following up on deliveries or managing paperwork. Equipment is delivered more reliably, and providers are held to a higher standard.

- **More than 30 complaints dropped to fewer than 5 per month**

Problems were reduced significantly and stayed low.

- **Ordering during off-hours became easier for staff**

Nurses had fewer challenges during nights and weekends.

- **Order tracking and records improved**

Every request was logged with a clear history.

- **Fewer patient and family concerns about DME**

The hospice team could focus more on support and care.



When one vendor failed to meet expectations, Qualis stepped in, organized a meeting, followed up with action steps, and stayed involved until the issue was resolved. The hospice was no longer forced to manage those relationships alone.

"The most impressive part? We're not the ones following up anymore. Qualis owns that and they follow through.."

# The Conclusion: A Simpler, Smarter Way to Manage Hospice DME

This partnership gave the hospice what it needed: better tools, more control, and less stress. Staff are no longer juggling DME problems every day. They are better supported, and their time is spent on the patients and families they serve.

The shift wasn't just technical. It was about taking back the time, attention, and control the organization needed to run effectively.

“We’re not chasing vendors. We’re not defending our brand. We’re finally focused on care again.”

