

## Case Study: Vancouver Coastal Health (Canada)

# How to Simplify Physician Scheduling in Complex Hospital Settings



Scheduling cardiologists who work across four different hospital sites in Vancouver was always a highly complex challenge. Since the department is composed of more than 60 cardiologists deployed at different sites around the city, with almost 50 different types of shifts, finding a pragmatic solution was a priority.

## The Challenges

01

### The Complexity of the Schedule Planning Process

Because there were a large number of stakeholders involved and many shift types, not to mention the four health facilities, planning the schedule took dozens of hours.

02

### The High Number of Stakeholders Involved in the Absence Request Process

When a physician made an absence request, the scheduler had to communicate with managers at different sites to ensure that there were no scheduling conflicts.

03

### The Difficulty to Ensure Complete Coverage

The scheduler was required to manually check each of the shift assignments to ensure that there were no gaps in the coverage for the Cardiology Department and that the shifts were distributed equitably. This process took an enormous amount of time.

04

### The Risk of Communication Errors

Shift exchanges between cardiologists rendered original schedules obsolete. There was a risk that these exchanges would result in unintended absences as it was impossible for staff to validate each exchange to eradicate miscommunication between physicians.

## The Solution

To meet Vancouver Coastal Health and Providence Health Care's schedule management challenges effectively, the cardiology department chose to deploy Petal. Here are some features of the solution that have greatly helped the department:

- Automated creation of scheduling while respecting complex variables
- Real-time updates to schedules for all hospital staff
- Autonomous shift trading between physicians
- Equity reports and access to specific group data
- Secure messaging to share photos, videos or files
- Personalized notifications system allowing a faster response in emergency situations



## The Results

The Petal platform reduced the time taken by employees to create schedules by 75%. Furthermore, the department now ensures optimal coverage of medical responsibilities, respects fairness in shift distribution and eliminates communications errors.



**Saved Time in the  
Creating of the Schedules**



**Reduced  
Communication Errors**



**Fair Distribution  
of Tasks**

*"We wanted to use a solution developed in Canada to meet the planning challenges related to the complexity of our cardiology department. With Petal, we have found a solution that fully meets our expectations."*

**Faisal Aziz, Regional Cardiac Program Leader**  
Vancouver General Hospital

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