

## **INTRO/TITLE:**

Nebraska Pulmonary Specialties (NPS), a front-runner in providing comprehensive diagnostic services and using advanced technology for patients with pulmonary disease, has been providing specialized medical care since 1997. While NPS has remained true to its vision of providing high-quality care, the NPS of 20 years ago is quite different from that of the NPS today. Among those changes is size in terms of both providers and locations as NPS has grown significantly to meet the growing needs of the community and improve access for patients.

## **CHALLENGE:**

While quadrupling the number of specialists and growing to multiple locations with satellite offices throughout the state of Nebraska came with great opportunity, as with most growth, opportunity came with change: changes in processes, changes in people and changes in culture. While NPS may not have the depth and breadth as a large health care system, it still had grown to become a more complex entity and NPS leadership needed to embrace the opportunities and challenges that accompanied the complexity.

To address and influence the culture shift the workforce was experiencing, NPS leadership made employee engagement a top priority. They created a new set of core values to connect employees to NPS's evolving purpose, improved hiring practices, formalized orientation and training programs, and provided employees with more individualized professional educational and development opportunities.

Despite the increased focus on culture, NPS struggled with silos, closing gaps between the workforce, and connecting employees - new and old and across departments to not only to each other but to NPS's new set of core values.

## **SOLUTION:**

When AMPT, an employee engagement platform powered by social recognition and communication, was first introduced to NPS leadership it was met with skepticism. While leadership saw immediate value in AMPT and the recognition-rich culture it would create, they were concerned with how they could roll one more thing- one more platform- to an already inundated group of specialists, providers and employees.

*"At first, I saw AMPT as yet another digital platform. I saw it as optional and not a solution that would not impact or change my interactions with my patients or those I work with. Then one of my team members recognized me. The AMPT notification alone excited me. The feedback on my performance elevated that feeling. I soon realized AMPT wasn't optional. In the environment in which we work in, positive communication between team members needs to be more prevalent as it will motivate and elevate the employee and patient experience."*  
Dr. Doug Fiedler, M.D, FCCP

However, understanding that finding a better way to engage and connect with their growing workforce a- workforce that both intentionally and unintentionally had not only generational but professional gaps, was a real need, taking on this one more thing was exactly what they needed to do.

Looking back on the AMPT implementation, Abbie Fougeron, Administrator of NPS, can only remember how easy AMPT was to roll out and how quickly employees adopted the program. An ice cream social served as an opportunity for Abbie to not only introduce the AMPT social recognition and communication platform, but more importantly speak to leadership's commitment to working together to create a better experience for all employees. After this meeting, the employee activity on AMPT organically grew as employees started to recognize each other and interact with the posts shared on AMPT.

### **Outcomes:**

NPS contracted with AMPT to fulfill the need of a more efficient and effective way to connect with its growing workforce. Using recognition as the foundation of those connections proved to not only lead to better engagement but a more cohesive team working towards a common purpose. Within the first year employees shared 495 number of moments of recognition with 43% of these coming from employees in non managerial roles . These numbers proved success as prior to AMPT, the only time employees communicated receiving formal praise was during performance reviews and often it was described as vague or forced.

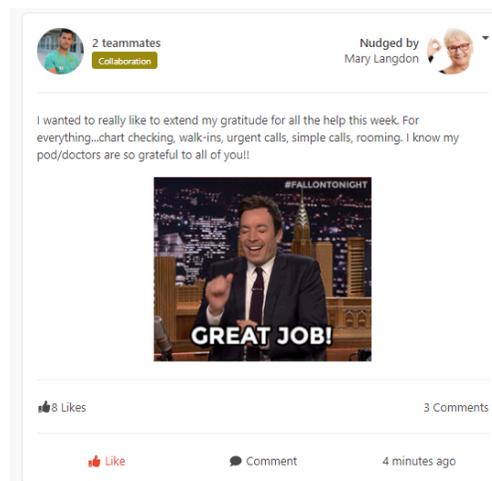
Three years later AMPT continues to be a strong force in NPS's culture. With the moments of recognition shared on AMPT now exceeding 1200 nudges, NPS attributes AMPT as not only an integral part of their ongoing engagement strategy but a powerful retention tool.

And while this data alone supports that using AMPT and recognition to engage employees proved to be a valuable decision, the context captured from AMPT and the unexpected outcomes from using a social media application to encourage recognition further supported that AMPT provided employees, managers and leaders with much more than a message board to share appreciation.

### *Impact on Employees*

AMPT is both a fun and positive environment for employees to not only learn about their peers but their peers' effectiveness. Employees are able to see concrete examples of how individuals, teams and departments impacted the care of NPS patients. Providers can gain more awareness of the roles and responsibilities of non-clinical staff and non-clinical staff a better understanding of how their daily activities impacted providers' interactions and care with patients. Through publicizing the positive work being done by individuals and between departments, AMPT helped

and continues to help change perceptions, break down silos and connect employees to NPS's purpose and each other.

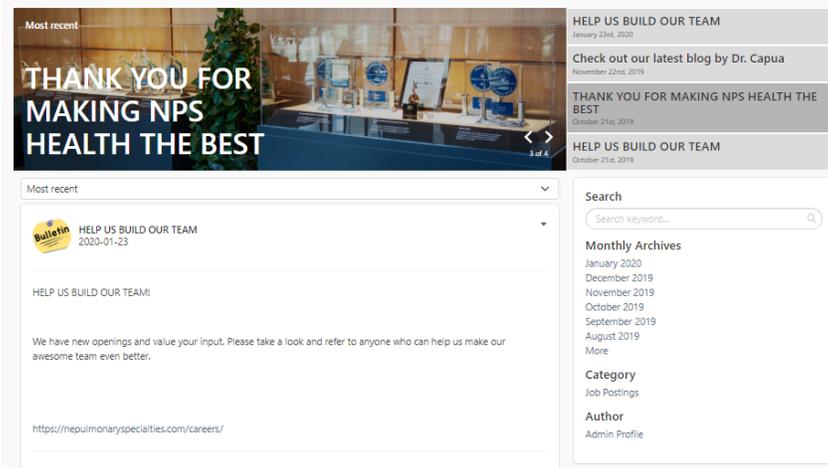


### *Impact on Managers and Leaders*

For managers and senior leaders that are removed from the day to day activities of the people they lead, AMPT serves as a microscope providing invaluable insight into the performance of their teams. The recognition posts shared on AMPT not only support that team members are working well together, but it improves the relationships between employees and managers. Armed with concrete examples of how employees are living out the NPS's values, managers are able to have more continuous and effective performance improvement conversations. And as AMPT helped create an environment where positive information sharing is commonplace, the managers find employees are more receptive to constructive feedback.

*“AMPT supports and provides a layer of stability to NPS’s performance structure. As leaders, we can not be everywhere and too often our time is stretched too thin with our best employees. Through engaging with the recognition posts on AMPT a manager can acknowledge and motivate employees performance without being physically present and that is powerful” - Abbie Fougeron, CMPE Administrator*

For NPS leaders AMPT also serves as a communication highway where they can easily cascade pertinent information including newsletters, events, and internal job postings. Similar to other social media applications, AMPT is not only an attractive medium for employees to absorb information, but it also allows them to engage with the content which can provide NPS with real-time insight into workforce engagement.



With AMPT leaders and managers also have access to data and analytics derived from employees activity on AMPT. Real-time tracking and trending provide visibility to the temperature of the organization and hold leaders and managers accountable for engaging with employees on AMPT. Leaders can also track how impactful managers are on influencing their team's behavior and NPS's culture.

## MyTeams

See how your leaders influence their report-to's, see key trends, and gauge how impactful they are to your culture.



With immediate access to their team's profiles and AMPT activity managers can also quickly identify what drives the members of their team and use that information to proactively address individual needs. For NPS, AMPT and the information gathered goes well beyond just showing employees they are appreciated. It provides managers with a unique data set that can be used for continuous performance improvement and formal performance appraisals.

### *Impact on Culture*

As NPS was growing the culture was naturally shifting, and it was AMPT that provided the context that helped leadership identify and embrace the shift as it related to NPS's core values and performance structure..

### Core Values

In August of 2016, when NPS began to expand, they added core values as a guide for employees. As the recognition shared on AMPT was directly tied to how an employee(s) performance connected with a NPS core value, the data extracted from AMPT showed leaders that the value system, while created with the right intentions was not right for NPS.

A core group of NPS employees reconvened to make the core values more applicable to the current workforce, but this time they had the voice of the employee via AMPT data to act as a guide. The analytics supported the strengths or weaknesses of the current core values and the qualitative data associated with each provided insight into the behaviors employees associated with that behavior. As a result, some values expanded while others were replaced. And maybe the most important of it all - AMPT helped NPS see the importance of positivity and excitement in the workplace which led to the birth of their 5th Core Value- Work Hard and Have Fun.



## **Conclusion**

While more complex than it was 20 years ago with more departments and a breadth of services, NPS is still a specialty hospital. As such when it comes to attracting and retaining top talent, it can not always compete with the larger hospitals and health systems on salary options, benefits, flexible schedules and other perks. However, NPS can and does compete on culture and AMPT is one of the many tools in NPS leadership's arsenal that ensures they are providing their employees with an environment filled with trust, where everyone is working together to a common goal, that employees feel valued for their contributions and in which employees understand it is acceptable to have fun at work.