



NAVEX Customer Success Story

# Empowering Quality Care – Anywhere – with St. Croix Hospice and NAVEX

“Our ‘product’ is people – the people that care for patients...We’re really committed to using technology so they’re not bogged down with unnecessary tasks and can focus on the patient.”

**Kimberly Olson**

*Chief Compliance Officer, St. Croix Hospice*



## Highlights



**Industry**

Healthcare



**Number of Employees**

2,200



**Challenge**

Deliver effective internal reporting and policy management for a rapidly expanding organization with a largely remote workforce



**Solution**

Successful ability for remote-working caregivers to make reports and remain up to date on safety policies and others; successful ongoing synergy between internal reporting and policy management

## Solution

**MULTI-PRODUCT**

**NAVEX One®**

WHISTLEBLOWING & INCIDENT MANAGEMENT  
POLICY & PROCEDURE MANAGEMENT

# About St. Croix Hospice

## Background

United States-based St. Croix Hospice started as a small practice in 2009, and a reputation for quality care ensured it didn't stay small for long. In only 15 years since its founding, St. Croix counted operations across 10 states and service to around 5,000 patients.

Focusing solely on hospice care, the Oakdale, Minnesota-based organization today has more than 70 branches. The majority of employees generally operate remotely while serving patients in their respective location of care.

## Introduction

Joining St. Croix in a compliance leadership role in 2016 and, shortly after, becoming its inaugural chief compliance officer, Kimberly Olson was quick to embark on several efforts to mature and modernize the tools and practices supporting compliance at the organization.

Foundational to that work was the goal of defining, enabling and enhancing a "speak-up" mindset among employees at St. Croix. Much of this initiative was cultural, including personal visits to each branch office at least once a year to reinforce St. Croix's commitment to non-retaliation and encourage employees to make inquiries and report potential misconduct.

To learn more about NAVEX One Policy & Procedure Management® or Whistleblowing and Incident Management® or to schedule a demo, please visit [www.navex.com](http://www.navex.com) or call us at U.S. +1 866 297 0224 or EMEA +44 (0) 20 8939 1650.

# Challenge

Growing to operate across 10 U.S. states and with a largely remote workforce of caregivers, St. Croix Hospice represents a challenging operating environment when it comes to providing a consistent program in ethics and compliance. Employees – and others, including patients and their family members – would ideally have a homogenous mechanism for internal reporting that would work effectively from the field no matter their location. Caregivers would also need the ability to access policies in real time from any work site, providing quick, critical guidance that includes issues pertaining to patient care and safety.

Previously, St. Croix and its branches administered elements of internal reporting and policy management in a more distributed and sometimes on-premises manner – something Olson sought to mature. In addition, for the growing organization, it would be key that reporting and policy systems allowed Olson and others in central leadership to identify trends and act across their network when necessary.

St. Croix was effectively doubling in size every three years – a strong ethics and compliance program would be a cornerstone in supporting the reputation for quality care that drives their growth.

# Solution

St. Croix adopted NAVEX One EthicsPoint shortly after Olson joined the organization, providing an effective tool to support anonymous and named internal reporting across multiple intake channels by employees and others regardless of their location. Not long after adopting EthicsPoint, St. Croix also adopted NAVEX One PolicyTech, helping to manage timely updates, attestation and on-demand access to policies and procedures.

# Result

NAVEX One EthicsPoint and PolicyTech proved valuable given the dispersed nature of St. Croix's operations, where caregivers could easily make a report or check a policy from the field. Scenarios drawing on these capabilities were far from conceptual, given the complex guidance and considerations in end-of-life care.

With NAVEX, Olson and other senior leaders have maintained a consistent and agile internal reporting and policy program that scales effectively to support the organization's growth.

Nearly all respondents in a recent internal St. Croix employee survey – 96% – said they knew how to report a compliance concern. Olson noted guidance for how to make an internal report, including links to her organization's NAVEX-supported web intake channel, are provided throughout St. Croix's digital footprint.

Internal survey respondents have also increasingly signaled other positive impressions of the reporting program, as well as the policy management program. In 2018, 63% of respondents said they felt confident in anonymity when making a report, and 55% said they felt confident in the no retaliation policy. Five years later, practically 100% of respondents affirmed the same.



## WHISTLEBLOWING & INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Build, measure, and grow your speak-up program to foster trust, shared responsibility, and the highest standards of ethical conduct with NAVEX's industry leading whistleblowing and incident management software.



## POLICY & PROCEDURE MANAGEMENT

Manage your policies' life cycle, track attestations, run audit-ready reports, and enable your employees easy access to all vital information with NAVEX's policy and procedure software.

For policy management, in 2020, 71% of respondents said they knew how to access policies. That share has also risen to nearly 100%.

"In hospice, you are often in a person's home. You're not in the office with all these binders with policies you can just pull out. You have your computer – or even just your cell phone," Olson said.

Olson said NAVEX One's EthicsPoint and PolicyTech solutions work as a cohesive system for St. Croix. Employees in the field can easily use a personal mobile device to make a report or inquiry with EthicsPoint – though some reporters, such as family members of patients, still prefer and are able to talk to a person on the phone. Olson monitors trends from the system, which inform timely updates to policies that are also available remotely to employees through PolicyTech. Before any investigation instigated through a report made through EthicsPoint, Olson and others start by checking related policies in PolicyTech.

Using custom-built analytics optimized in partnership with NAVEX support, NAVEX One allows Olson to pull data for easy-to-convey presentations delivered regularly to the St. Croix board of directors. This "birds-eye view" facilitates communication around specific allegations, regional trends, report outcomes and other metrics, she said.

"That's been important. We've been able to say – gosh, something is going on with higher levels of anonymous reporting in this geography – let's look into that," said Olson, who noted her reporting to the board often draws from the framework of program metrics described in the annual [NAVEX Whistleblowing & Incident Management Benchmark Report](#).

Olson said the implementation process for NAVEX services has been positive.

"We work with a lot of vendors, and it's pretty rare for us to say, 'Wow, that was great customer service.' NAVEX has been an excellent partner for us." she said.

Olson was engaged in her work enabling a strong culture of ethics across St. Croix when a major test arrived in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost overnight, St. Croix was faced with the challenging dynamics of deploying a strategy of protecting its caregivers, protecting patients, ensuring a high standard of care and encouraging reporters to elevate concerns amid a pandemic where regulations across state and even county lines sometimes seemed to shift by the day.

All of this evoked an important concept for Olson, who spent 20 years in nursing including 12 specializing in hospice leadership before joining St. Croix.

"Our 'product' is people – the people that care for patients," Olson said. "We're really committed to using technology so that they're not bogged down with unnecessary tasks and can focus on the patient."