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A Critical Alert Systems Company

Using Centralized Nurse Call to Improve the Patient Experience

SITUATION

When Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare began planning for its 886,000-square-foot New Main Campus, improving the patient experience was a top priority. Overall, the hospital had a goal to create a less intimidating and more comforting healthcare experience for patients and their families. A key element to their success would be a nurse call system that enabled staff to quickly and effectively respond to patient requests for both medical and non-medical needs.

Established in 1926, Elmhurst Memorial Hospital was operating multiple nurse call (also referred to as “call light”) systems throughout its original facility. Over time, the various systems became a challenge to maintain and provided little flexibility for integration. A goal for the New Main Campus was to install a single system that could provide a superior patient experience as well as meet the needs of diverse internal stakeholders.

“In addition to improving patient satisfaction and aligning with our new environment and processes, we wanted to be able to mine call light system data to support our focus on continual improvement,” said Jean Lydon, Associate Vice President, Patient Care Services, Elmhurst Memorial Hospital. “We were looking for a system that could provide relevant data to hospital administration and finance, as well as to our nursing and medical teams. And, it had to meet the requirements of our IT and facilities departments.”

APPROACH

Elmhurst Memorial Hospital assembled a multidisciplinary team to assess and select a nurse call provider for the New Main Campus. The team was comprised of more than 12 representatives, including nurses, nursing unit clerks, patient care technicians, hospital administrators, IT specialists, and facilities managers. Site visits were a critical assessment tool for the team, allowing them to see nurse call systems in action and talk to peers about their system’s benefits and limitations.

A visit with the local distributor, CSI to a hospital using Intego’s Centralized CommonPath™ made immediate and long-term impressions on the Elmhurst team. “The first thing that struck us was how quiet it was on the floor,” recalls Lydon of that visit. “The Intego centralized system had virtually eliminated the alarms, buzzers and overhead paging associated with most call light systems. Patient requests were quickly answered and triaged by dedicated operators. Those same operators were able to send requests directly to the appropriate caregiver’s communication device and monitor request fulfillment.”

The Elmhurst Memorial Hospital team recognized the powerful improvements in patient satisfaction that were possible through Intego’s Centralized CommonPath. In addition to a more peaceful environment and faster, more efficient responses to patient requests, the system offered dynamic reporting capabilities. Conversations with current customers also highlighted the reliability of the centralized system, as well as Intego’s approach that focuses on configurable solutions that extend beyond the initial installation.

Elmhurst Hospital connects with Intego® Centralized CommonPath™:

- Patients receive a personal response from the dedicated nurse call operator within 5-6 seconds of activating a request
- The centralized nurse call operators triage an average of 26,000 patient calls a month
- Bathroom requests are being fulfilled within 2.9 minutes
- Pain medication request fulfillment occurs within 5.9 minutes
- Program Directors receive a monthly “top ten” patient requests for their nursing units
- Intego reporting identifies busiest times of day for patient requests on a unit-by-unit basis

Elmhurst Memorial Hospital
New Main Campus
155 E. Brush Hill Road
Elmhurst, IL 60126

INSTALLATION HIGHLIGHTS

Elmhurst Memorial Hospital's New Main Campus boasts 259 private inpatient suites that are organized in 12-bed pods designed to bring the caregiver closer to the patient. The facility also has private recovery rooms for endoscopy, ambulatory surgery, cardiac catheterization lab and the emergency department. In all, that represents 450 Intego patient stations feeding into a centralized remote operator center to triage patient requests.

Integral to the workflow management and reporting capabilities was the installation of Intego's Real Time Locating System in patient care areas. Staff badges are automatically read by the system, and identify the individual caregiver, when he/she enters the patient room to fulfill a request. This simple approach requires no additional action by staff and creates an accurate and detailed log of response times and staff utilization.

The Elmhurst Memorial Hospital team worked closely with CSI to customize patient request palettes by nursing unit along with specific workflows customized to individual patient requests. Each unit was also able to design response parameters, and escalation protocols, suited for their unique patient needs. Intego's software-driven approach to nurse call even allowed for integration with patient beds, providing an alarm system for patient bed exits and fall risks.

"We had never used a call light system for outpatient services before as those patient recovery areas did not include private rooms," noted Lydon. "By taking patients out of immediate eye sight of the staff, we wanted to make sure that any potential safety issues in the new facility would be fully mitigated by the new nurse call system."

Intego's Centralized CommonPath also had a profound impact on the way code and rapid response teams respond to calls in the new facility. In the previous facility, only one code team was in place and overhead paging was used extensively when calling a code. In the New Main Campus, the goal was to eliminate overhead paging. The larger facility and layout made this a challenge – especially with three code teams operating in the building.

"Patients, staff and administrators have all benefited from Intego's centralized nurse call system."

RESULTS

Elmhurst Memorial Hospital opened the doors on its New Main Campus on June 25, 2011. Staff immediately noticed how quiet it was on the floors and in the patient pods. Intego's centralized system eliminated all the alarms and overhead paging associated with their old nurse call systems. "Staff also appreciated that they could now be proactive in meeting a patient's needs, as the centralized system allowed them to walk into the room with a solution rather than a question," notes Lydon.

The patient experience has improved thanks to faster responses to patient requests made possible with Intego's Centralized CommonPath. Data from the first nine months of operation at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital's New Main Campus tells a compelling story:

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Elmhurst Memorial Hospital has also seen significant increases in overall hospital rankings and patient likelihood to recommend. In the first nine months at the New Main Campus, overall patient satisfaction scores increased from 66.7 to 79.3, and likelihood to recommend went from 74.1 to 84. Patient scores for the new outpatient surgery units soared to new levels, with satisfaction levels ranging from 90 to 100.*

"Patients, staff and administrators have all benefited from Intego's centralized nurse call system," says Lydon. "Satisfaction increases and anxiety is reduced when patients know their requests are being answered quickly. For staff, the immediacy and efficiency of the system in responding to patient requests means better patient care. And, administrators have found the reporting capabilities provide a level of detail that helps us with our commitment to continual improvement."

* Results based on HealthStream telephone interviews with patients conducting the HCAHPS survey.

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