Sarasota Memorial Health Care sees immediate benefits of texting.

When Voalte® sought to test its technology, it turned to Sarasota Memorial Health Care System. The 806-bed facility is Florida’s second largest acute-care public hospital, and since 2003 has held the Magnet Nursing Services Recognition, the nation’s highest honor for excellence in nursing.

THE CHALLENGE

Sarasota Memorial selected the Medical Respiratory Unit to evaluate the Voalte One™ solution. At the time, the unit was using overhead paging to contact clinicians after experiencing disappointing results with a mobile voice badge solution.

Voalte collaborated with Sarasota Memorial to create a deployment plan that included workflow analysis, clinician training, product installation and go-live support. The plan also detailed the direct integration between Voalte One and Sarasota Memorial’s WestCall® nurse call system, Connexall middleware and their Wi-Fi network.

During the pilot, the hospital staff worked closely with the Voalte team to gauge the success of the application, including how easily the nurses adapted to carrying and using the iPhone™. A special feature of the application enabled nurses to provide real-time electronic feedback to Voalte. This helped the company fine-tune the product for the needs of the hospital’s individual departments and users.

“The nurses have embraced the technology and have given us great feedback. Voalte One makes them better able to respond quickly to patients’ needs.” —Jan Mauck, RN, CNOR, Chief Nursing Officer

PROFILE

- 806-bed acute-care hospital
- Nursing Magnet Hospital

UNITS SERVED

- Medical Respiratory Unit
- ICU/CVICU
- CV/Thoracic Step Down Unit
- Anesthesiology
- Surgical Services
- Case Management
- Phlebotomy
- Emergency Care Center
- Mother-Baby
- Rehab
- Human Resources
- PICC team
- Pharmacy
- Medical-Surgical Units

TECHNOLOGY IMPACT

- 78% less overhead paging
- 33% less ECC process waste
- Rapid adoption of text messaging (205,000 messages per month)
- Improved patient care coordination
- Improved patient flow between units

INTEGRATIONS
VOALTE IMPACT

Clinicians noticed results immediately. Nurses were better able to respond quickly to patients' needs, while noise and confusion in rooms and hallways was significantly reduced. The findings of a private study revealed that there were 78 percent fewer overhead pages following the Voalte installation, prompting several patients to ask why the hospital was so quiet.

Seeing the positive impact on the Respiratory Unit, Sarasota Memorial sought to use Voalte One to improve communication between hospital units. More specifically, the hospital wanted to improve coordination of patient transfers from the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit to the Cardiovascular/Thoracic Step Down Unit. The challenge: The charge nurses responsible for coordinating the transfer were rarely free at the same time to conduct a telephone conversation.

The text-messaging component of Voalte One was the perfect solution to improve patient flow. Each nurse was able to quickly and efficiently communicate via text message as their workflow permitted, without requiring the availability of the other nurse. This eliminated the frustrations of missed calls and repeated exchanges via voicemail.

EXPANSION

Seeing communication improvements both within and between units, Sarasota Memorial decided to expand to the 75-bed Emergency Care Center (ECC). The unit’s goal was to reduce the length of patient intake time to a maximum of 90 minutes for non-critical inpatient admissions and less than 30 minutes for ICU patient admissions. By re-evaluating the ECC workflow process and incorporating the Voalte One solution, they were able to cut back the intake process by 101 steps, leading to a 33 percent reduction in process waste.

During the one-month initial implementation, the 135 ECC users averaged 533 texts each, which totaled an astounding 72,000 texts. In June 2011, Sarasota Memorial completed its largest expansion of the Voalte One solution when it deployed an additional 200 iPhones throughout two towers, covering seven Medical-Surgical units, the Mother-Baby unit and Rehab units. Ancillary departments such as the Pharmacy, PICC team and Phlebotomists are also using Voalte One to improve efficiency throughout the hospital.

Today, the Voalte One solution is deployed on nearly 400 iPhones and over 200 desktop computers, and supports over 1,500 registered users. By integrating voice, alarm notifications and text messaging (over 205,000 messages per month), Voalte is proven to improve communication at the point-of-care.

“We harness technology to improve care and increase efficiency. The Voalte application had components we felt would assist in providing a better experience for our patients.”

~Denis Baker, Chief Information Officer