



Houston hospital significantly cuts rounding times with Horizon MobileCare Software and Palm® Treo™ smartphones



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Curtis Burkhart
Lead Systems Analyst
St. Luke's Health System

Challenge

Founded in 1954, St. Luke's Episcopal Health System in Houston encompasses St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital and St. Luke's Community Medical Center—The Woodlands. Between the two of them, they offer more than 1,000 beds and admit just over 35,000 adults each year, with nearly a quarter of a million outpatient visits also performed annually.

With admissions continually on the rise and an occupancy rate of 95%, St. Luke's physicians typically have 20 to 35 patients on their rounding lists each day. Previously, they could expect to take eight hours to see all of them, rushing from one to the next and rarely getting an opportunity to spend quality time with any of the group.

That harried pace was the direct result of a lack of access to timely information. A typical visit consisted of the doctor reviewing charts while in the patient's room, often having to leave to check x-rays or lab results. With the right technology in place, however, they could look over important data before visiting a patient, as well as access x-rays and test results without leaving the room.

Solution

St. Luke's decided to deploy McKesson's Horizon MobileCare Rounding software to 122 physicians. Fifty-three of these physicians are Palm® users, with 19 members of that group actively using Treo™ smartphones. The other 34 carry various types of Palm® handhelds. The Horizon MobileCare Rounding application integrates into a hospital's existing clinical information system and delivers vital patient data to doctors no matter where their rounds take them.

At the start of their rounds, St. Luke's physicians synchronize their smartphones and handhelds with the hospital's system, using their cellular carrier, Wi-Fi wireless networking, a cradle, or infrared beaming. With the most recent patient data literally



Solution (cont.)

at their fingertips, they can prioritize their visits and make sure they're prepared before attending a consultation.

The doctors also avoid unnecessary interruptions by accessing x-ray and lab results through Horizon MobileCare. In addition, they eliminate potential miscommunication by reading values on those results themselves, rather than asking a nurse or technician to do it for them.

As a result, St. Luke's has seen rounding times cut in half, which means patients get the quality time they need and physicians greatly reduce their stress levels. Adoption of Horizon MobileCare was also painless, with the doctors who were unfamiliar with the technology finding it easy to use.

"I've heard comments that a couple of doctors have shown patients the data that is on their devices and that puts the patient at ease," says Curtis Burkhart, lead system analyst at St. Luke's Health System. "Patients also feel more comfortable knowing that they are at a state-of-the-art hospital. It makes patients feel like they're getting world-class, cutting-edge care because their doctors are connected and wired to the hospital."

Solution Summary

- McKesson's Horizon MobileCare Rounding software integrates into a hospital's existing clinical information system.
- The application delivers vital patient data to doctors no matter their rounds take them.
- With the most recent patient data literally at their fingertips, doctors can prioritize their visits and make sure they're prepared before attending a consultation.
- Doctors avoid unnecessary interruptions by accessing x-ray and lab results through Horizon MobileCare, and they avoid potential miscommunication by reading values themselves, rather than asking a nurse or technician to do it.
- Rounding times have been cut in half, increasing the amount of quality time patients receive and cutting physicians' stress levels.

Technical Summary

- Palm® Treo™ smartphones
- McKesson's Horizon MobileCare Rounding software

More Information

St. Luke's Episcopal Health System
www.sleh.com

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