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SUCCESS STORY

Spectrum Health care teams benefit from real-time, integrated communication solution



Health system:

Spectrum Health System

Location: Grand Rapids, MI

Campuses: 12

Beds: 2,110

Employees: 25,000+

An important clinical communications metric for many hospitals is the ability to reach physicians on the first call attempt. When nurses have to repeatedly call physicians to get answers, it can result in delays in patient care.

That's why, after Spectrum Health streamlined clinical communications between physicians in 2014 through PerfectServe Synchrony™, it was soon able to expand access to the technology for nearly 4,000 nursing roles.

The integrated system of communications services linked through PerfectServe Synchrony now delivers secure messages to providers on call via a web portal or mobile devices. As a result, the nursing teams at Spectrum Health, a not-for-profit health system based in West Michigan with more than 25,000 employees, now have an efficient, accurate call schedule that enhances patient care.

Reaching the right physician on the first try

PerfectServe was recently recognized in the Gartner Market Guide for Clinical Communication and Collaboration for its distinct Dynamic Intelligent Routing™ capability. Dynamic Intelligent Routing analyzes call schedules and provider contact preferences to ensure that with the touch of a button — via the PerfectServe web portal or mobile application — nurses can be connected to the right care team member for that moment in time who can take action on the clinical situation at hand.

“[With PerfectServe] our nurses reach the physician on the first attempt more often,” said Julie Scholten, RN, project manager for nursing administration at Spectrum Health.

Because of this time-saving benefit, nurses receive the information they need from physicians much faster and are able to accomplish more in a shift. They make fewer phone calls, and receive callbacks more quickly, thanks to streamlined, two-way conversations taking place in one system.

“*[With PerfectServe] our nurses reach the physician on the first attempt more often.*”

Julie Scholten, RN
Project manager for nursing administration at Spectrum Health.

“Our hospitalists have used patient-centered communications from the beginning of our engagement with PerfectServe. And now that nurses and physicians have the same access, I can pull up a patient’s name and see exactly which physicians are listed in the chart for any service I need.”

Michelle Wangler
hospital supervisor at Spectrum Health

Implementing the Help Chain on demand

Spectrum Health uses a chain of command policy called the “Help Chain” to escalate clinical concerns through the appropriate lines of authority for timely resolution. Activating the Help Chain with PerfectServe technology complements Spectrum Health’s patient safety culture. It allows for faster intervention by clearly identifying who can resolve a clinical concern beyond the attending physician.

“There are a lot of benefits,” said Melissa Wangler, a hospital supervisor at Spectrum Health. “When nurses can’t reach an attending or an issue needs to be escalated, the physician executive on call can deal with it in the moment or on follow-up.”

Tracking the status of clinical messages

Before using PerfectServe, Spectrum Health nurses relied upon manually managed provider schedules to identify the appropriate provider, make the call and wait. If they did not receive a callback, they would check the computer for recent orders. If they saw the order that addressed their need, they knew the physician had received their message. However, if they did not see the order had been placed, they had no recourse except to try to reach the physician again.

With PerfectServe Synchrony now in place, nurses have access to a communication interface that allows them to see in real time when their messages have been delivered and read.

“Our bedside nurses do not have to sit at a desk and wait for a callback,” Scholten said. “PerfectServe enables them to get real-time answers faster and more efficiently. It takes the guesswork out of coordinating patient care.”

Reaching physicians from the bedside

With PerfectServe Synchrony, nurses are able to instantly connect with physicians in times of patient need — without ever leaving the bedside.

“Our hospitalists have used patient-centered communications from the beginning of our engagement with PerfectServe,” Wangler said. “And now that nurses and physicians have the same access, I can pull up a patient’s name and see exactly which physicians are listed in the chart for any service I need. I can then reach out to that physician from the patient’s room without ever leaving the conversation.”

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Wangler said this has been working so well that the hospital system plans to add more service lines to the platform, paving the way for more point-of-care conversations.

Finally, a single source of on-call-schedule truth

Ultimately, PerfectServe was able to deliver what Spectrum Health’s nurses wanted: an accurate and reliable system of identifying and contacting on-call providers.

“Whatever we use, it has to have the ability to leverage a call schedule,” Scholten said. “And I think that’s the limiting factor with a lot of tools in the space. When we’re trying to call a physician, we need the ability to get the right person, right now. We wanted one source of truth for our physician call schedules, and PerfectServe is it.”

About Spectrum Health

Spectrum Health is a not-for-profit health system, based in West Michigan, offering a full continuum of care through the Spectrum Health Hospital Group, which is comprised of 12 hospitals; about 180 ambulatory and service sites; more than 3,200 physicians and advanced practice providers, including about 1,400 members of the Spectrum Health Medical Group.

About PerfectServe Synchrony™

PerfectServe Synchrony is an integrated system of communications services that delivers secure messages to the provider on call for any given clinical situation via a web portal or mobile device, depending on the clinicians’ preferred method of contact. The easy-to-learn and easy-to-use software allows physicians to update their own schedules so that a single source of truth always exists; nurses and other clinicians know exactly whom to contact for any given situation.