



Memorial Hospital is a 330 bed facility in Belleville, a city in central Illinois. The regional hospital's busy communications center processes more than 120,000 calls per quarter.

ELIMINATING PAPER AND IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY

The Challenge

The hospital has been an Amcom client for more than a decade. As a long-standing customer, it needed to upgrade every aspect of its system to streamline call center operations.

The Objective

Memorial Hospital has several goals it wants to achieve in rolling out Amcom applications:

- Increase productivity of operators
- Eliminate the need for paper directories and notes
- Cascade pages and notes to physicians based on the seriousness of calls
- Notify quickly off-duty nurses of impending shifts available due to sickness or other issues
- Reduce time allotted for operator training
- Use Amcom's e.notify as a disaster notification system to reach physicians and support staff during tornadoes and other disasters
- Allow one operator to handle all calls during slow night hours

The Solution

Memorial Hospital upgraded to Smart Center 4.0™ for system administration and to Smart Console™ workstations for managing call center workflow. The institution will soon introduce Amcom's Smart Web™ and e.Notify™ Premise.

The Results

"Amcom's applications are used by as many as five full time and five part time operators to call, email or page physicians, departments and staff," says Luci Compton, supervisor of the hospital's communications' center. "After 9 p.m., however, the calls become the responsibility of just one operator."

Despite a steady stream of calls throughout the night the operator capably keeps up with the workflow—transferring calls to departments, nurses, staffers and individual doctors—through the Amcom Smart Center 4.0 platform. "That one operator is responsible for fire alarms, panic alarms, two medical buildings, code blue plans, and pediatric alarms—this is the most important person we have here at night," says Compton. "The more time you can free up for that person the better. And Amcom software helps us do that."

Smart Center receives kudos for moving calls to appropriate individuals and departments. "The most critical thing the software in our call center does is to give operators everything they need at their fingertips and on the screen," says Compton. "Before we had 50 pages of paper and we used post-it notes to inform doctors of information they needed. Now it is all dictated and sent through messaging, email and voicemail."

The software's various menus help the hospital message doctors frequently, or infrequently, based on the seriousness of the calls. Physicians are contacted via email, generally, to give them information on patients who called. A directory allows operators to look up individuals quickly to connect them to callers in seconds, says Compton.

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Luci Compton, Memorial Hospital communication center supervisor

Like many hospitals in the rest of the country, Memorial suffers a nursing shortage requiring it to contact several nurses when a few call in sick. Compton plans to use Smart Web software to automatically call off-duty nurses based on seniority and pre-determined availability—and call them repeatedly until they answer.

"This will be tremendously helpful in finding substitute nurses without having to call each one individually," she says. "Nurses will be asked to enter a one on their phones if they can come in for a particular shift and to press two if they cannot. This lets the communications' staff know which can come in—all with the click of a computer mouse."

The ease of the software has led to a shortened training period. "We can hire new people off the street and have them trained and up and running in three days," says Compton. "Amcom's training options are outstanding the applications are pretty simple to use."

The e.Notify application, which will be introduced soon, will also be a boon to Memorial. The hospital has instructions for personnel when disasters such as tornadoes, common in the Belleville region, take place. "It will be like having hundreds of people on speed dial," she says.

Compton remains excited to see the implementation of Smart Web and refinements to e.Notify. Physicians, she believes, will begin using e.Notify for more mundane chores such as setting up meetings and while Smart Web will bring further automation to the communications' center workflow. "We've been very pleased with Smart Center and we look forward to putting in place Smart Web soon," she says. "The company has offered us great support and we feel like we're part of their family."



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