



Gundersen Lutheran Health System is a comprehensive healthcare network serving a 19 county region in western Wisconsin, northeastern Iowa and southeastern Minnesota. It also serves as the designated Western Clinical Campus for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Medical School and School of Nursing. Realizing that in an emergency, where saving time equates to saving lives, Gundersen Lutheran implemented an emergency communication system that is expected to shave precious minutes off its response time and protect employee safety.

GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN'S e.NOTIFY™ EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM WILL SAVE LIVES

The Challenge

Gundersen Lutheran Health System is comprised of the nation's largest multi-specialty group medical practices, regional community clinics, hospitals, nursing homes, home care, behavioral health services, vision centers, pharmacies, and air and ground ambulances. Protecting its more than 500 medical, dental and associate staff and a support staff of over 5,000 who serve 19 counties in an emergency is no small feat.

"Communication is the number one requirement for successfully coping with any disaster," explains Janet Olmstead, Gundersen's telecommunications manager. "That's why we wanted an automated emergency notification system to manage and respond to emergencies as efficiently as possible. "If we can coordinate efforts and get information out in a timely fashion, we can save lives and money," she says.

With employees located throughout western Wisconsin, northeastern Iowa and southeastern Minnesota, Gundersen needed a flexible, automated emergency-notification system to expedite notification of and response by appropriate Gundersen medical and administrative staff.

"Inability to monitor which medical providers actually pick up a page and limited information about where to go, the type of disaster, location and process descriptions made after-hour emergency notification a nightmare," according to Olmstead. She adds that phone trees tended to distort messages to its 150 administrative people—from the CEO to every department that plays a critical role in a disaster as well as their back-ups.

The Objective

- Expedite emergency notification throughout Gundersen's 19-county region.
- Ensure accurate strategic communication delivery that is documented, auditable and repeatable.
- Ensure efficient response by appropriate Gundersen medical and administrative staff to any disaster for which more than 30 patients would be expected.
- Meet readiness standards defined by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization (JCAHO).

The Solution

The EMC chose Amcom's e.Notify for its features as well as its compatibility with Gundersen's telecommunications system. "Since we were already using Amcom's automated Smart Console operator system and Smart Web applications, we felt integration would be easier. For instance, our

existing system's on-call scheduling feature allows e.Notify to contact on-call staff immediately without the delay of having personnel research and input on-call staff at any given time.

e.Notify ensures accurate strategic communication delivery that is documented,auditable and repeatable. It accommodates emergency-related variables regarding who and how to notify, important information to relay to each party, and when and how often we communicate with each party.

Any one of a dozen to two dozen people— including Gundersen's safety officer, EMC members, key communications personnel and officers of the day—can activate notification, depending on the nature and location of the emergency. "A cross-section of geographically located personnel at various management levels can initiate the system, and we've developed policies and procedures for contacting response-team leaders, the officer of the day, operators and on-call services providers."

e.Notify's ability to copy events made building contingencies into Gundersen's system easier. "Instead of re-inventing the wheel for each variation and scope of an emergency, with our system we can copy our full toxic-related emergency Code White system and adjust various options for a limited Code White. And, e.Notify automatically knows who to page using text or numerics."

In addition to Code White and weather-related Code Gray emergencies, Gundersen plans to use its emergency communications system to alleviate critical-care staffing shortages and communicate during equipment failures and outages. If the telephone system is down, e.Notify will initiate text messaging. If the paging system is down, it will initiate cell phone notification.

The Rollout

Gundersen's EMC is initially focusing implementation of e.Notify on Code White toxic and trauma burn emergencies. e.Notify simultaneously notifies appropriate administrative and providers for each kind of Code White: pulmonary and neurology for toxic-related emergencies; and dermatology, orthopedics, and OR for trauma burn emergencies.

Gundersen's future plans call for nonemployees, such as city officials, to be added to the system for effective coordination of services in handling catastrophic emergencies.

The Results

- Multimodal activation and notification via telephone, pager, email or the Web and event monitoring confirms receipt of and response to notification.
- Off-site system activation ensures that the system is deployed for all types of emergencies— weather, chemical, trauma—no matter when they occur.
- The ability to structure information about the emergency and related variables covers who and how to notify, important information to relay to each party, and when and how often we communicate with each party.
- System will be used to alleviate critical-care staffing shortages and communicate during equipment failures and outages via text messaging and cell phones.

Contact Us

For more information about Amcom e.Notify, call Amcom at 888-337-9274 or visit us on-line at www.amcomsoft.com.



Amcom Software, Inc.

5555 West 78th Street • Minneapolis, MN 55439

Phone: 800-852-8935 • Fax: 952-946-7700

www.amcomsoftware.com