



IMPROVING HOSPITAL PERFORMANCE

UC enables employees to improve patient care



A guide from Mitel

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Powering connections



Patients today have many choices of healthcare providers, and they have high expectations of their patient experience. How can you stay competitive within a patient-centered healthcare landscape? Proactive, service-focused patient communications are critical. With the capability to seamlessly integrate collaboration applications no matter the device or location, unified communications (UC) can improve staff and patient communications and overall hospital productivity. **Learn how UC can improve your hospital performance.**

Why unified communications, why now?

The way we work — and how hospital teams and patients interact — has changed dramatically. Has your business phone system kept pace with the times? More importantly, is it capable of helping you meet tomorrow's challenges?

Today's unified communications solutions can help you meet challenges head on. UC addresses the broader scope of business communications by integrating commonly used applications:

- Voice
- Email
- Chat/IM
- Messaging
- Video
- Conferencing
- Collaboration

Drivers behind the demand for UC

Hospitals of all sizes face a variety of challenges, both internal and external, around day-to-day operations. To help define your business case, start first by assessing what specific needs you want your UC solution to address.

VoIP, the technology that powers modern communications via the Internet, is changing the way the medical world stays connected. Here are three key categories to consider as you make your customized UC business case:

- **System requirements**
 - Telephony standardization
 - Clinical integration
 - Provider acquisitions
- **Productivity needs**
 - Care coordination
 - Treatment efficiency
 - Staff access
- **Regulatory demands**
 - HCAHPS
 - HIPAA / HITECH
 - HRRP

How UC improves hospital performance

Now that you understand the commonly used applications that comprise UC and have assessed your specific needs and the business case for your hospital, let's explore how UC can improve hospital performance in these three key areas:



Patient engagement



Staff collaboration



Clinical workflow



Patient engagement

Ensuring patients follow discharge orders, attend follow-up appointments and engage in other post-treatment activities requires hospitals to offer technology interventions that allow patients to efficiently participate in their care and collaborate with their providers.

Patient portals

- UC enhances patient portals with telephony features
- Patients can utilize convenient call back or live web chat tools
- Hospitals improve patient engagement across all points of care
- **Result:** Patients and providers are more engaged

Automated notifications

- UC can automate outbound reminder calls and other notifications
- Hospitals can increase HCAHPS survey response rates and scores
- Patients receive timely reminders of appointments, prescription refills and more
- **Result:** Hospitals proactively engage patients and lower re-admission rates

Business case support

- *Lower re-admission rates can negate potential reimbursement reductions and other penalties*
- *Enhanced portal features can help maintain the 5 percent patient portal utilization threshold (Stage 2 / MU)*
- *Online bill pay via portals (with telephony features) shortens AP churn and improves patient satisfaction*
- *Effective and timely engagement of patients can increase overall patient loyalty and retention*



Staff collaboration

Multi-professional care teams spend at least 25 percent of their time on communications-based activities. To optimize information exchange and patient treatment, they must collaborate efficiently, effectively and securely.

Multi-modal collaboration

- UC enables staff with multiple tools, such as team chat and video integration, to improve team access and collaboration efficiency
- Staff can update their availability and preferred notification medium (i.e., text vs. phone call)
- Hospitals can eliminate the workflow drag of phone tag and other related delays
- **Result:** Real-time team collaboration and reduced information exchange latency

Mobile UC

- UC keeps staff connected with the same user experience – mobile or desktop
- Clinicians enjoy twinning: one device, two numbers – work and personal
- Hospitals can leverage Wi-Fi versus carrier networks for mobile UC usage
- **Result:** Hospitals keep staff mobile while reducing expensive cellular costs

Business case support

- *First attempt voice-only calls fail 85 percent of the time in healthcare environments*
- *90 percent of staff bring their personal smart devices to work*
- *73 percent send and receive work-related texts*
- *Out of 1,000 physicians surveyed, 95 percent frequently use text messages*

Sources: KLAS Wireless Security Report, KU Medical School Survey, Spyglass Consulting Report, FierceMobileHealthcare



Clinical workflow

The delivery of patient care involves many processes through which patient treatment passes from initiation to completion. The ability of hospitals to streamline their clinical workflow throughout each patient encounter is critical.

Patient care planning and care coordination

- UC supports critical care planning workflows — patient evaluation, diagnosis and treatment decisions — by allowing care teams to see whether other team members are available and enabling team collaboration.
- Bedside clinicians can effectively reach other dispersed specialists and remote stakeholders with accessible diagnostics and reports
- Secure, on-the-fly care planning meetings can be easily created and joined from diverse devices with a mobile application
- ▶ **Result:** Care teams engage with a single collaboration solution and are empowered to foster patient-centered, accountable care.

Business case support

- *Reduce workflow delays that occur at the transition of care points with improved staff collaboration*
- *Enhance coordinated, transitional care programs with greater collaboration tools and features*
- *Boost PPACA core competencies (patient experience, quality of care and re-admission rates)*
- *Shorten average discharge times and improve patient perceptions of care and satisfaction*



An overview of UC deployment options

Now that you have further business reasons for how UC will improve hospital performance, it's important to understand and decide on the most optimal UC deployment option for your hospital.



On-site

- Hospital fully owns and operates the solution



Cloud

- Applications hosted remotely, run either by the UC provider or a hosting partner
- Hospital consumes the service as a monthly subscription expense
- Cloud provider manages the service, relieving IT of most or all network-related tasks



Hybrid

- A mixed deployment with some UC elements remaining on-site and others hosted in the cloud



What to look for in a UC partner

- The flexibility to offer and support all three scenarios from a single solution that is easy to deploy, manage and use
- A consistent user experience for staff, patients and allied providers, no matter where their UC service resides
- A full suite of applications and capabilities to grow into as collaboration needs evolve
- The ability to offer both public and private cloud options
- The ability to provide an enterprise-grade telephony and UC experience
- Competitive pricing along with quality, reliability, security and user experience
- Flexible licensing that makes it easy to add features, applications and new users – on-site, cloud or hybrid – as the hospital grows
- A seamlessly integrated UC solution that makes life easier for IT and can be customized to the hospital's other systems and applications
- A user experience that is intuitive and simple, requiring minimal training
- A proven brand and reputation in the marketplace



Finding the best fit for your hospital

More and more hospitals are embracing UC to improve collaboration, productivity and overall performance. If you're looking to step up your business communications and explore all the business benefits UC can deliver, contact the experts at Mitel today. Call EDV on 1300 738 737 or email quotes@edv.net.au