

Beyond the Beeper:

CLINICAL COMMUNICATION DESIGNED WITH PHYSICIANS IN MIND

A patient may interact with as many as 50 different physicians, clinicians, and staff during a four-day hospital stay, making care collaboration and continuity vital for safe, effective, and efficient care. New communication platforms can positively impact collaboration across care teams by unifying workflows and technology. However, these technologies haven't been implemented – or implemented successfully – in many systems across the country.

We speak with physicians every day to better understand their pain points when it comes to care collaboration and communication. Based on those conversations, we've identified the five keys to a clinical communication solution that enhances, not hinders, care collaboration for physicians.

1

Physicians Need A Unified Communication Solution

We all know that effective communication is fundamental to providing high-quality patient care, but it's still a faraway goal for many hospitals and health systems. The effective exchange of information is a prerequisite for accurate diagnosis, quality treatment, and better patient outcomes. Yet when it comes to facilitating clinical communication, most hospitals still rely on dated technology.

Enter the pager. Today, you will be hard-pressed to find professionals in any other industry using pagers as their communication method of choice. Yet, a recent study indicates that in 2017, nearly 80 percent of hospital-based clinicians were **still using hospital-provided pagers**. This suggests that basic secure messaging solutions haven't demonstrated advantages over technologies of the past.

For providers, one-touch access to current patient data, vitals, and more is a must have. Bringing all sources of clinical, patient, and care team data – EMR, directories, labs, assessments, and more – together

into a single platform streamlines communications, and strengthens care collaboration by making it easy for staff to get the information they need to efficiently and effectively collaborate on care.



2

Communication Solutions Should Support Physician Workflow

One of the biggest battles providers face is being forced to conform to pre-set workflows required by technology, instead of technology conforming to the clinician workflow. When clinicians are presented with a product that doesn't complement their existing processes, they find workarounds, slowing down adoption, compliance, and ultimately, care. In addition to reducing the ROI of communication investments, working around technology can increase errors and risk to patient health. Rather than forcing the care team to deviate from the natural flow of care, providers need an intuitive workflow-oriented platform that allows them to collaborate effortlessly; keeping personal contact info private, making sure they're accessible only when they want to be; ensuring

critical messages aren't missed; and customizing notifications to eliminate alert fatigue



3

Reliability Is Critical

Reliability in a communications platform isn't just about physician's getting in touch with colleagues when they need to—it's also about ensuring they have real-time access to the most up-to-date and relevant information. This could be a lab value, image, or a simple patient discharge message. When physicians have reliable information at their fingertips it helps improve care collaboration and patient care, and positively impacts both physician and patient satisfaction. Physicians need a highly reliable platform that allows them to communicate without dropped calls, delayed or unreceived notifications, or unintentional log outs.

The ideal platform that enhances care collaboration needs to play well with other clinical systems by: automatically pulling clinical context about patients into messaging platforms, easily accessing EMR data, providing active care team directories and on-call scheduling functions, and gathering and

prioritizing alerts. To achieve this, health systems need a reliable IT system and infrastructure where the requirements of new technology are paramount.



4

Burnout Hinders Collaboration

According to a recent **study by Mayo Clinic**, more than half of U.S. physicians reported experiencing at least one symptom of burnout. With the digitalization of healthcare, new technology is adopted without consideration of how it will affect the experience for physicians, nurses, staff, and patients.

Communication plays a crucial role in hindering or helping collaboration and workflow, which has a direct correlation to physician burnout. Workflow-driven clinical communication that integrates existing technology platforms can help resolve inefficient care collaboration and physician burnout by providing a solution that engages the entire care team across all roles, departments, and organizations; consolidates communications and clinical workflows in a unified experience; and

provides patient, clinical, and care team information in every secure text to improve efficiency and safety.



5

Training & Education Make All The Difference

Effective care collaboration relies on care team compliance with provided technologies—but adoption is difficult to ensure across a varied workforce. Education is a critical component of adoption. It can help users to understand the value or advantages of using the technology, demonstrate compatibility with workflow, dispel perceived complexities, and establish comfort with the new product or technology. Implementation without education may lead to staff working around the solution rather than using it to improve care collaboration and enhance patient care.



Care team collaboration requires the right tools to be successful. Proper care collaboration depends on a reliable communication and IT infrastructure and sufficient education to ensure compliance by future users of new technologies. Lives are saved when a communication solution integrates into the clinical workflow and expedites processes to the point where care teams have the information they need to collaborate effortlessly. By tracking your technology against these five components of successful collaboration, your hospital or health system can progress toward seamless communication and better outcomes.

