

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital:

Utilizing miSecureMessages for Efficient HIPAA-Compliant Communications

Beginning in the 1960s, pager-like systems were put to use and quickly became the industry standard for sending messages. Over the last few decades, the way hospitals communicate sensitive information has evolved, and their technology needs have changed to secure Protected Health Information (PHI) in accordance with HIPAA rules. In light of this, hospitals are now searching for secure communication systems that are also more robust, such as miSecureMessages.

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital is one of those hospitals. Located in Jackson, Tennessee, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital is part of the West Tennessee Healthcare System, one of the top 10 largest public, not-for-profit healthcare systems in the United States. The system employs more than 5,000 people, and services 17 counties around West Tennessee.

Selecting a Secure Solution

Needing an easy-to-use pager replacement system that would adapt to their unique needs, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital began to search for a solution that was also HIPAA compliant. "Being in compliance is always a priority for our organization," said Beth Wells, Executive Director of Patient Access at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital.

After evaluating a number of products, and reviewing them with both the clinical and IS staff members, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital selected miSecureMessages as their secure messaging solution. "What we saw was the ease of use," commented Beth. "That was a very positive thing, and also the functionality that we thought we could utilize as a basis, and grow on. We liked what we saw."

How Jackson-Madison County General Hospital Uses miSecureMessages

The administrative staff, physicians, nurses, clinical staff, case managers, social workers, and physical therapy staff at Jackson-Madison County General

Hospital have all transitioned away from pagers to using miSecureMessages, and the hospital now has over 850 devices licensed on the app. Many of those are personal devices, freeing employees from having to carry multiple phones, or a phone plus a bulky pager.

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital uses miSecureMessages to send messages from clinical users to physicians, nurses to physicians, as well as for physician-to-physician communications. Since many communicate from their personal devices, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital provides both Android™ and Apple® miSecureMessages apps for their staff. Mobile users can send and receive messages using the hospital's Wi-Fi network while at the hospital, or their cellular data, enabling them to access their miSecureMessages Inbox from virtually anywhere.

In addition, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital also uses desktop access. "All of our nursing staff use miSecureMessages on the secure desktop log in," according to Beth. Nurses can communicate with any miSecureMessages user, quickly sending and receiving encrypted messages.

Convenient, Fast Communications

Like every hospital, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital has diverse communication needs. miSecureMessages speeds the communication process by allowing users to quickly select recipients. They can easily select one, two, or three people, or an entire group.

The miSecureMessages group feature, called Circles, allows them to instantly send a message to a specific list of recipients, such as the members of a single department, or the members of a particular practice.

Each employee's secure messages are stored separately from normal text messages and e-mails, allowing a nurse or physician to efficiently find, send, and respond to important messages without having to sift through dozens of other lower-priority messages.

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Meeting Patient Safety Needs

With patient safety in mind, Beth acknowledged how pleased she has been with the changes she's seen relating to nurse-to-physician and physician-to-physician communication. "From a patient safety standpoint," said Beth, "miSecureMessages has been a very positive change. It plugs a hole in a common communication gap, because you have documentation that they did indeed receive your message."

Handling Code Calls with miSecureMessages

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital is a stroke-certified facility, and they are using miSecureMessages for their Neuro alerts. Beth commented, "It goes out to every member of that team, including the CT staff and the Radiologists, any time we have a Neuro alert."

Other types of code calls could also be handled with miSecureMessages. "The reason we aren't using it for any of our other codes, such as Code Blue, is that there is such a large number of those folks, and not all of them have cell phones," said Beth.

Comprehensive Reporting

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital also takes full advantage of the miSecureMessages reporting features. "We run reports fairly frequently," she continued, "especially if somebody has a concern or expresses a need. For instance, somebody who's collecting data for our stroke program needed information about all the Neuro alerts we've had in a particular month, and so we could run a report and see that, so that's very helpful."

With older paging technology, no data is easily accessible, but with miSecureMessages, Beth is able to pull historical reports that display how many messages were sent during a given time period, who sent the messages, and when they were sent.

Getting Started With miSecureMessages

Integrating new technology in a hospital can be a daunting task, but because of miSecureMessages' simplistic design and intuitive interface, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital was confident the transition would be a smooth one.

Beth clearly saw the challenge of training such a large number of physicians, nurses, and other hospital staff at Jackson-Madison County General

Hospital on a new system, but the customer-friendly usability of the miSecureMessages apps helped with the transition. "As far as efficiencies, we've got some physicians that will

not use anything else. They are adamant that they don't want to receive a message in any other way," commented Beth.

Future Plans

With miSecureMessages' functional flexibility, Beth plans to stick with the app long-term, knowing that as their hospital's communication needs evolve, the app will evolve with them.

"We're still in a migration period with physicians," commented Beth. "Our administration has always provided pagers for the physicians, but we are having some of the services turn in their pagers as we've transitioned to miSecureMessages. We are going to see more savings on the pagers, because after the first of the year, we plan to tell them that we're paying for miSecureMessages, and if they want to keep their pagers, they'll have to start paying for them."

When asked what's next, Beth was pretty clear. She said, "We'd love to be able to get miSecureMessages and the 1Call call center system integrated for our operators." With a seamless integration between miSecureMessages and 1Call, they will have the tools they need to fit their exact needs, something Jackson-Madison County General Hospital is excited to leverage in the future.

miSecure Messages

