

DOCTORS HOSPITAL
AT RENAISSANCE

Solution at a Glance

CareConverge clinical communications platform, combining:

- + **Beyond Texting:** Unique, easy-to-use messaging tools enable clinician real-time communication and collaboration across multiple devices and modalities including video, text, voice, and images.
- + **Dynamic Care Events:** Patented Smart Routing engine includes quit and forget, multi-modal delivery, and escalation to assure the right care team member responds and engages with the care team based on current clinical need.
- + **Clinical Collaboration Tools:** Integration—leverage CareConverge's built-in on-call scheduling solution or integrate with your current solution. Seamlessly integrate with other collaboration tools such as EHR's, alarms, remote patient monitoring, lab and radiology results, and nurse call.
- + **Industry-leading critical event management platform:** The industry's most reliable, secure, HIPAA-compliant, assured communication and collaboration platform serving over 1,100 hospitals and over 4 Billion messages sent since 2012.

Better, More Efficient Communications Drives Faster Clinical Response Times and More Timely Patient Care

Delivering clear and accurate communication can make all the difference when responding to acute trauma victims and code alerts. Doctors Hospital at Renaissance has seen this firsthand since implementing Everbridge CareConverge, a facility-wide, automated clinical communication system. By taking advantage of best practice communication templates that pull the right people at the right time, the hospital has improved response times, resulting in more accurate and timely patient care.

Challenge: Ensuring Clear Communications at Scale

Founded in 1997, Doctors Hospital at Renaissance (DHR) is a 500+ bed health system – and the largest physician-owned one in the United States – offering some of the most comprehensive medical care on the U.S. Southern Border. From general acute care services and graduate medical education to individually tailored wellness and preventative health programs, at DHR over 650 physicians and more than 1,200 nurses offer a full continuum of care in over 70 different sub-specialties.

In 2016, the hospital served nearly 40% more patients than it had just two years prior. To keep pace with such rapid growth, DHR expanded from 12 buildings on two campuses to more than 70 facilities across the Rio Grande Valley. This expansion put a strain on the hospital's existing clinical communications system.

As Sherri Abendroth, the Safety Emergency Management Coordinator at DHR, explains, "Our system wasn't HIPAA compliant and didn't support modern communications means, such as texting. As a result, our providers worked around the system, making it challenging to ensure clear, consistent communications, and hold them accountable for communications and response times. Moreover, the system sometimes failed completely, preventing our PBX operators from using it for critical code calls."

Impact at a Glance

- + Shortened code team response times
- + Streamlined door-to-admit time with remote consults
- + Improved PBX efficiency
- + Eliminated human error for on-call
- + Gain comprehensive reporting with notification and confirmation times



Once Abendroth illustrated how the solution would improve the communications workflow and ultimately drive better patient care while enabling the hospital to reduce costs, DHR leadership was sold.

Making the Case for Change

To support the hospital's growth and ensure accurate, timely patient care, DHR's COO charged Abendroth with finding a reliable, unified communications solution. After evaluating her options, Abendroth felt the Everbridge CareConverge clinical communications platform stood out. With Everbridge CareConverge, DHR would be positioned to handle communications related to patient intake, consults, discharges, and other patient status.

"My research found the solution was shown to improve communications, enabling more timely and efficient care coordination. Plus, it includes HipaaBridge, which is a secure messaging application that would help us ensure consistent messaging," says Abendroth.

Paving the Way for Success

Abendroth wisely took into account where DHR's providers were on the technology adoption curve. "Some of our physicians have been practicing for decades and are less apt to use the latest communication technologies, like smartphones," she explains.

With this in mind – and knowing that all change is challenging – she developed a marketing strategy to promote the value of clear communication for coordinated clinical care and better patient outcomes.

To give staff a sense of how Everbridge CareConverge works, Abendroth gradually introduced it by sending out mass notifications requiring no input from staff. Initial messages focused on weather and facility alerts, such as safety issues. This gave staff time to get accustomed to message format and the standard DHR alert.

Once she saw positive response, Abendroth moved forward with the implementation plan, meeting with scheduling staff in all departments to review workflows. Working with the implementation team from Everbridge, Abendroth determined the necessary templates to support the hospital's workflows. Based on the scheduling staff's input, she then built initial calendars and schedules.

Next Abendroth socialized incident management, HipaaBridge and scheduling at committee and subspecialty committee meetings and with medical executives and the Board of Governors. She also created and displayed table tents and flyers in physician and staff lounges about the new communications system.

Going Live with Everbridge CareConverge

After a month of marketing Everbridge CareConverge, Abendroth felt the hospital was ready to move forward with the new system.

The CareConverge platform's calendar feature forms the basis of workflows and communications. "You can create customized calendars that accommodate multiple shifts and various workflow processes," Abendroth continues. To date, Abendroth has built 59 calendars, all featuring multiple shifts, including first call, second call, and residents.

Abendroth greatly appreciates the ability to customize each template. "I can decide on the delivery method, and how many minutes between the first delivery method and the second one," she continues. Most of DHR's templates take advantage



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– Sherri Abendroth
Safety Emergency Management
Coordinator, DHR



DHR also leverages Everbridge's support for scenarios, which combine two or more templates to enable simultaneous notification on one event. The two most common scenarios the hospital uses are the trauma alerts and the stroke alert.

of support for a range of delivery methods, including HipaaBridge, primary and secondary phone texts, primary and secondary phone calls, emails, and alpha pagers.

Trauma and stroke alerts are two common uses of the Everbridge multi-step workflows. This makes it possible to combine two or more templates to enable simultaneous notification on one event. The two most common scenarios the hospital uses are the trauma alerts and the stroke alert. This makes it possible to support escalation and account for different metrics by role. For example, residents and clinical teams might need to respond within five minutes while a trauma surgeon has a 10- or 30-minute window.

Securing Physician Buy-In

Abendroth doesn't hide the fact that while the nursing staff welcomed the new communications system, most physicians were resistant. Knowing the reluctance was in large part because these providers had not adopted electronic communications, Abendroth created a team to meet with each physician. This team registers each doctor in the system, and walks them through a brief tutorial on using HipaaBridge. "Once they see how it works, it's like a light bulb goes off and they realize how powerful a capability they hold in their hands," says Abendroth.

This, combined with the fact that templates can accommodate each person's message delivery preference, has facilitated uptake. To complement this, Abendroth made it part of the hospital's bylaws that credentialed providers must use the hospital's chosen communication methods. At the same time, the hospital's administration and medical staff office are holding physicians accountable for response times.

Delivering Critical Messages with Ease

Calendars and scenarios make it easy for the hospital's PBX operators and unit clerks to send a message to a particular type of physician or hospitalist, eliminating human error in deciding who is the right person to notify. Previously, PBX operators were forced to rifle through a binder full of calendars to figure out who to notify. At times, they would notify a physician who was not on call, leading to complaints.

As Abendroth explains, "Our PBX is the heart of the organization and our PBX operators love the CareConverge system. They don't have to flip through 50 or 60 calendars and figure out who's on call and who to notify."

With the CareConverge system, PBX operators have shortened the time that passes between receiving a notification and sending one out to the appropriate person. Plus, they have reduced complaints from doctors about being notified even though they weren't on call.

When it comes to notifying residents about traumas, operators simply enter the incident location and any patient identifiers or special information. Then, with one click they send the notification to two groups: first on-call and secondary on-call. According to Abendroth, this has eliminated the need to manually call down a call tree and saves its operators significant time.

"Using Everbridge for all notifications has allowed us to create a unified voice, providing clear messages in a timely and more efficient manner," says Abendroth.

The Everbridge Critical Event Management Platform is used every day by +1000 of the country's leading hospitals to drive faster clinical response times and more timely patient care.



Everbridge, Inc. (NASDAQ: EVBG), is the global leader in critical event management and enterprise safety applications that automate and accelerate an organization's operational response to critical events in order to keep people safe and businesses running faster. Everbridge is based in Boston and Los Angeles with additional offices in San Francisco, Lansing, Beijing, London and Stockholm.

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Serving a Range of Clinical Needs

According to Abendroth, HipaaBridge is the first delivery method for every notification. "I've run tests sending an image via SMS or text message and through HipaaBridge. HipaaBridge is much faster and much more reliable."

DHR uses HipaaBridge to coordinate patient care from the time patients are admitted to the ER and then once they are admitted to the hospital. "We keep all necessary staff aware of the patient's journey via HipaaBridge, extending even to discharge and follow-up," says Abendroth.

HipaaBridge has also proven very valuable for remote consults, such as empowering intake coordinators to contact the on-call psychiatrist staff for a video consult. This has greatly reduced the time between patients entering the facility and receiving a hospital room assignment. This faster processing also eliminates the need for staff to monitor patients waiting to be admitted.

Similarly, hospitalists and ER physicians use HipaaBridge to coordinate patient care. ER physicians can easily share lab results, MRI images and other records with hospitalists by snapping an image and transmitting it via HipaaBridge. This gives hospitalists important information before seeing the patient. The same process allows on-call specialists to determine whether they need to head to the hospital right away or can wait to see a patient the next morning.

Taking Advantage of Valuable Reports

Everbridge CareConverge includes reporting that helps Abendroth prove how the system is impacting clinical care.

The reports show when a message was sent, how it was delivered, what time the recipient confirmed receipt, or whether it was undeliverable. The hospital can then compare that data to its response times and on-scene times to better track performance. Reports even show when someone answered the phone but hung up without responding to the notification, empowering the hospital to hold staff and providers more accountable.

"Our provider response times have greatly improved since implementing Everbridge. The reports illustrate that we're decreasing door-to-treatment time, which is important in all cases, but especially for strokes," says Abendroth.

The journal entry feature has also proven valuable in creating action reports and conducting root cause analysis. "Using this feature, we can input information on the fly related to an active incident or communication. When we print our reports, this information appears is time stamped and displayed in chronological order," continues Abendroth.

Working with the Joint Commission

The CareConverge reports have become critical for hospital administration and for Joint Commission clinical certifications and the like. In addition, CareConverge helps DHR alert the administration when the Joint Commission has arrived for a visit.

"During a recent Joint Commission survey, I shared our response times and the communication methods we are using to support our services. The commission was very impressed," concludes Abendroth.