BENDIGO HEALTH

spōk

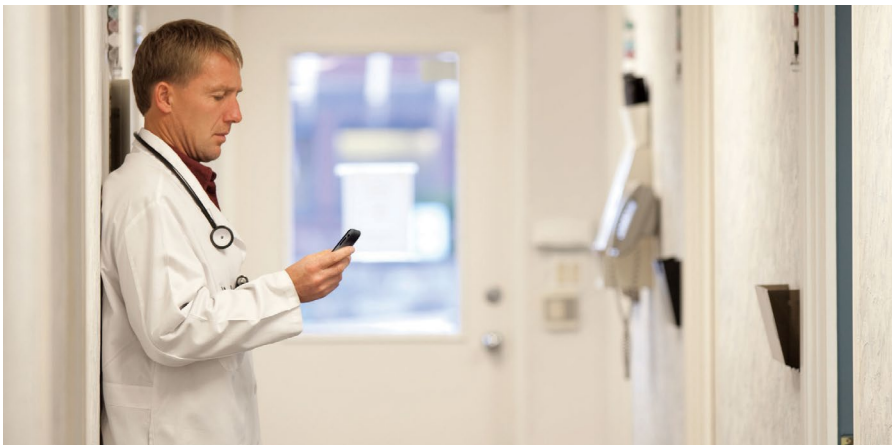## THE CHALLENGE

Bendigo Health recognised the value of sharing crucial information via mobile communication devices, but was challenged by the variety of devices and systems needing to be connected throughout its facilities. Currently, the organisation supports a wide array of Cisco® wireless phones, BlackBerry® and other smartphones, Rauland-Borg® and Merlon® nurse call systems, pagers, desktops, and tablets. As communication equipment and capabilities have grown, so has the need to connect them to central sources of information and to each other – regardless of the source or the receiving technology preferred by the recipient.

Another challenge faced by the information and communications technologies (ICT) group of Bendigo Health is a familiar one – resourcing for these rapidly changing technologies and doing this while meeting the healthcare organisation's goals of continually improving patient care, staff safety, and effectiveness. Bendigo's ICT Operations Manager, Phil Coppin, and his staff have managed the growth of their network by focusing on building the best capabilities they can afford, then being alert for new applications, staff needs, and developments in medical and communication technology.

According to Coppin, "The pace of change is incredible, so we've invested in the best wireless network we could put in to allow us to take advantage of tools as they've become available. We've also worked hard to enable communications across all of these tools and technologies. We've felt very fortunate that we've had the ability to provide the capabilities needed with the means we have."

THE SOLUTION

Bendigo Health has created a strong wireless network across their facilities as part of the strategy to enable communication enhancements quickly as new technologies develop. When Coppin and his staff looked for ways to enable communication device interoperability, they looked first to Spok. Bendigo Health's focus was to enable their varied systems to deliver real-time notifications and messages to devices currently in use across the network as well as those that may be added in the future. Bendigo turned to

OVERVIEW

Bendigo Health is an expanding, multi-service regional health organisation. Based in Bendigo, Australia, it is one of the largest regional health providers in the state of Victoria. More than 3,400 staff and hundreds of volunteers are stationed at 20 locations in nine cities and towns across the region.

With its geographic diversity, volume of service and demand, communications are gaining increasing recognition as a vital part of meeting the organisation's quality of care and other strategic goals.

INDUSTRY

Healthcare

BUSINESS DRIVERS

- Automatically send key personnel critical communications
- Enhance patient care with faster communications and response times
- Link various alert/alarm systems to staff's mobile devices now and in the future

SOLUTION

Spok® Messenger Clinical Alerting

RESULTS

- Seamless integration with multiple nurse call and duress systems
- Increased caregiver mobility through enabling caregivers to receive messages on Cisco wireless phones and smartphones
- Improved patient and staff safety throughout the organisation
- Reduced response time and increased staff satisfaction

CASE STUDY

> "We're particularly pleased with the noticeable staff, visitor, and patient safety improvements we've gained in our high-care dementia facility."

Phil Coppin
ICT Operations Manager

Spok because of the long-term relationship with the local Spok representatives. "We've enjoyed many benefits from our relationship with [Spok]," said Coppin.

Because of its demonstrated ability to integrate virtually any communication device, Spok Messenger was chosen to enable quick, accurate messaging across all device platforms. In addition, Spok Messenger provides traceability and reporting to track messaging response times and enable improvement efforts throughout the organisation.

Bendigo Health wanted to improve its duress call capabilities throughout a four-wing, 60-bed dementia care facility to help enhance staff, visitor, and patient safety. To do that, they selected the AeroScout® Wi-Fi RFID solution, linked to Cisco wireless phones, smartphones, pagers, and other communication devices via Spok Messenger. This real-time location system's (RTLS) Staff Safety solution enables a caregiver to press a button to call for assistance when a situation escalates. While the duress alarm is significant, the RTLS signal is even more crucial, because it also delivers information to identify the location of the incident. The AeroScout message is delivered to Spok Messenger, which transmits the complete duress signal and location information to everyone on the network on their chosen communication device.

Spok Messenger is also used to deliver alerts sent from monitoring equipment in the hospital's drug and food storage refrigerators. Staff receive alerts whenever monitors detect a change in storage conditions. "We will continue to add to this capability as wirelessly enabled medical equipment is acquired," said Coppin. "We'll be able to send service schedules along with location information to help improve equipment maintenance, patient care, and staff effectiveness across the entire organisation."

THE RESULTS

"We're particularly pleased with the noticeable staff, visitor, and patient safety improvements we've gained in our high-care dementia facility," said Coppin. "Our caregivers now feel much safer. In fact, we've successfully handled 100 percent of the duress calls made since we've had the AeroScout Staff Safety and [Spok] Messenger systems in place."

Coppin concluded, "We're convinced that by pushing the envelope with wirelessly advanced systems, we can enhance efficiency and effectiveness, improve onsite safety, and provide better patient care."

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