

Rutland Regional Medical Center



The challenge

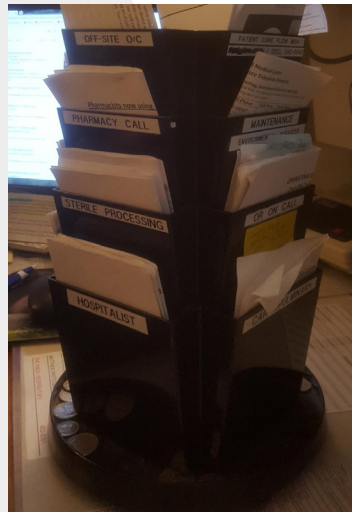
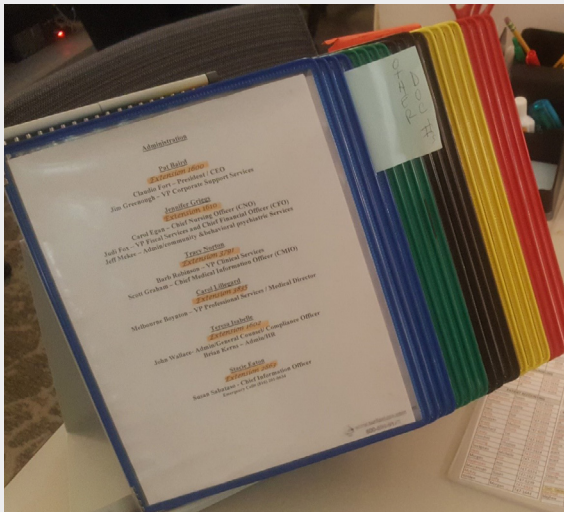
To process calls and code events, operators at RRMCC relied primarily on paper-based processes. All routine calls were processed manually, with very few online applications available. For instance, operators used a desktop flip file directory (pictured below) at their workstation for quick access to frequently used information. Logging code events was another manual process that involved entering code details into a Microsoft Access database.

RRMCC was also hoping to replace an outdated on-call scheduling process, as information was often inaccurate or not readily accessible because staff relied on paper on-call schedules. Each department would create their own schedule (often in different formats). These schedules were sent to the Medical Staff Office and then uploaded to SharePoint for viewing. The emergency department (ED) clerk would create a one-page daily on-call summary sheet for the ED and fax a copy to the switchboard operators.

The after-hours scheduling information was printed and physically housed in a tower like organizer (pictured below). "Our operators were overburdened with inefficient processes that slowed them down," explains Jim Greenough, VP corporate support services at RRMCC. "They needed a solution that could simplify the call-taking process. We needed a platform to automate important communication functions and support our business goals, such as cost reduction, higher physician satisfaction, stronger productivity, and better customer service."

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Jim Greenough
VP Corporate Support Services, RRMCC



Overview

Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) is the largest community hospital in Vermont and the second largest hospital in the state. RRMC has been providing high-quality healthcare for more than 100 years. This 144-bed hospital employs over 1,600 professional and support staff including 242 providers trained in 37 specialty areas. The RRMC call center has several shifts throughout the day, with three operators during peak hours and one "hot seat" operator station staffed 24/7.

Industry

Healthcare

Business drivers

- Eliminate manual, paper-based processes
- Establish in-house answering service for after-hours outpatient calls
- Reduce the time spent coordinating and updating on-call schedules

Solution

- Spok® contact center solution, on-call scheduling, and enterprise directory

Results

- Saved approximately \$35,000 annually by bringing answering service in house
- Decreased average call handling time by 75.3% (or 25 seconds)

CASE STUDY

The solution

In April 2019, RPMC began using Spok Care Connect® platform for operator console, on-call scheduling, enterprise directory, and call recording with great success.

Use of the Spok enterprise directory has been particularly impactful. "It's great to see operators relying on the directory as the source of truth for staff information and patient information," said Jeremy Carrara, telecommunications manager at RPMC.

Using Spok contact center solution, RPMC color coded patient names to enable operators to quickly distinguish between patients that are bedded, discharged, or considered VIP. Furthermore, the additional information page of the patient record provides unique information, such as middle name, street address, and DOB. This information helps eliminate ambiguity for patients with the same first and last name, resulting in more accurate transfers and ultimately leading to better patient care, greater workforce efficiency, and improved workflow.

"Spok helped us eliminate paper records and disparate technology solutions, such as logging codes into Microsoft Access," said Carrara. RPMC was able to completely eliminate this extra step since all codes are processed via Spok console, and the system automatically provides details in the event log. Carrara explained there's very little reliance on paper records. "Paper is only used as a safety net as staff transition to electronic information and become familiar with the new console software. Once all on-call schedules are in the Spok directory, there will be even less reliance on paper."

Although on-call scheduling has not yet been fully deployed at RPMC, critical schedules are being entered by the scheduling team (not operators) and the need for desktop flip files and the on-call tower organizer have both been eliminated since the implementation of Spok. "There wasn't much resistance from departments to enter their schedules, once the advantages of Spok were made clear," says Carrara. "In fact, most find the new data entry process easier than their previous system." Carrara continues to promote use of Spok at RPMC and has scheduled internal presentations with several clinical groups as a way to educate and empower clinical staff to use Spok as a self-service tool to search for and contact other staff.

With the deployment of Spok contact center solution, the previously outsourced answering service was brought inhouse. "We anticipate adding another console to help with the 22.4% increase in call volume," said Carrara. "We're also looking at possibly expanding the service to other community providers as a possible source of revenue."

The results

Deployment of Spok contact center solution led to numerous efficiency gains. Most significant was the dramatic decrease in average call handling time from 43 seconds to 18 seconds (or 75.3% decrease). This is despite the 22.4% increase in call volume that occurred after bringing the answering service in house.

According to Carrara, the in-house answering service has allowed for an annual savings of approximately \$35,000 for their organization.

Qualitative results have been gathered showing positive feedback from staff using Spok solutions. The self-service nature of Spok solutions has reduced the number of calls staff make to operators for information. Now they simply search on-call schedules and contact staff directly.

