

UNION HOSPITAL OF CECIL COUNTY

THE CHALLENGE

Union Hospital has nearly 400 physicians, and their manual staff scheduling process made it difficult to keep information up to date. Schedules were created in Microsoft Word® or Excel®, then posted to the hospital intranet. Adding to the confusion, nearly every department used a unique template, so no two schedules looked the same and finding information took even longer.

With manual schedules that could be obsolete within minutes of being posted, clinicians often had difficulty reaching the right person. A colleague listed as on-call was actually unavailable, or another coworker had changed numbers and could no longer be reached using the information on the schedule.

Every department at Union Hospital starts the morning with a safety huddle, discussing issues that occurred the previous day. Through these huddles, staff identified 24 incidents within a one-year period where out-of-date information in the manually created schedules caused communication delays or failures. At best, these incidents can be inconvenient—they waste time for both caregivers and patients. At worst, they can adversely impact the patient experience or even cause patient safety issues.

“We knew we needed to improve schedule and contact information accuracy and standardize our processes,” explains Anne Lara, Chief Information Officer at Union Hospital. “Seconds count in healthcare, and it’s critical for our clinical and non-clinical care team members to find the right person quickly.”



OVERVIEW

Union Hospital of Cecil County is an award-winning, full-service community hospital located in Elkton, Md. Nationally recognized for clinical excellence in the treatment and prevention of disease, the 122-bed not-for-profit hospital is dedicated to providing superior, personalized, quality care. It was named one of Healthcare’s Most Wired™ hospitals in 2017 in recognition of its focus on increased clinical capabilities through technology.

INDUSTRY

Healthcare

BUSINESS DRIVERS

- Efficiently and accurately manage hospital staff schedules
- Enable clinical departments, individual clinicians, and operators to update schedules and contact information
- Improve care team communications and response times

SOLUTION

Spok Care Connect®

- » Healthcare console upgrade
- » Web directory
- » On-call scheduling

RESULTS

- Reduced communication breakdowns due to missing or incorrect contact or scheduling information by 50 percent
- Empowered staff throughout the hospital to maintain web-based on-call schedules with current information

CASE STUDY



THE SOLUTION

Union Hospital was already a longtime Spok healthcare console customer. They elected to upgrade their console, and added Spok Web directory and on-call scheduling. These solutions helped introduce an integrated system that brings together the staff directory, web-based on-call schedules, and clinician-specific information. With a hospital-wide web-based schedule immediately available to the organization, there is a single source of truth for contact information, which has eliminated version control confusion and saved hours of staff time.

“With Spok, every piece of information is readily accessible to anyone who needs it. And the information is always up-to-date, so they can truly rely on it,” says Sandie Newman, Manager of Telecommunications and Customer Service.

THE FUTURE

With Spok, Union Hospital has reduced communication breakdowns due to out-of-date information by 50 percent, and they expect the decline in these incidents to continue.

“Working with Spok has been excellent,” says Lara. “The implementation went well, the trainers were fantastic, and we were up and running very quickly. The improvement in hospital-wide communications was recognized almost immediately.”

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