

Health systems are making significant investments in mission-critical mobile collaboration to address the communication requirements of clinicians and drive improved patient outcomes. These mobile collaboration environments are complex, requiring hardware, software and network services to all work in sync.

When these environments are not in sync, fragmentation occurs, impeding collaboration and potentially leading to communication breakdown that impacts patient care. Some of the key challenges related to mission-critical mobile collaboration are selecting the right smart devices, devising a mobile device management policy and assessing network readiness.

HEALTHCARE-GRADE SMART DEVICES

Ease of use and ability to function in the healthcare environment are key considerations in choosing smart devices. Battery life is a critical aspect to evaluate. Using a clinical communication and collaboration platform that includes messaging, voice, system alerts and scheduling will use more battery life than using a basic EHR app to view records. Hospitals must decide whether the device will be interchangeable during a shift or whether the batteries themselves will be changed out. Health systems also need to consider durability and infection control.

MOBILE DEVICE MANAGEMENT

Health systems must determine how new applications and software updates will be deployed across the organization's smart devices. In addition, how will organizations handle lost or stolen devices, as well as security threats against sensitive patient data? A mobile device management policy is vital to help monitor, manage and secure smart devices that are deployed across the organization.

NETWORK READINESS

Another important consideration is network reliability to support clinical communication and collaboration. Smart device dead zones are all too common in healthcare facilities. The wireless infrastructure must be engineered to provide adequate bandwidth and coverage to support call volume and roaming. One of the biggest misconceptions among health systems is the belief that the current network will continue to work well when new devices are added to the system.

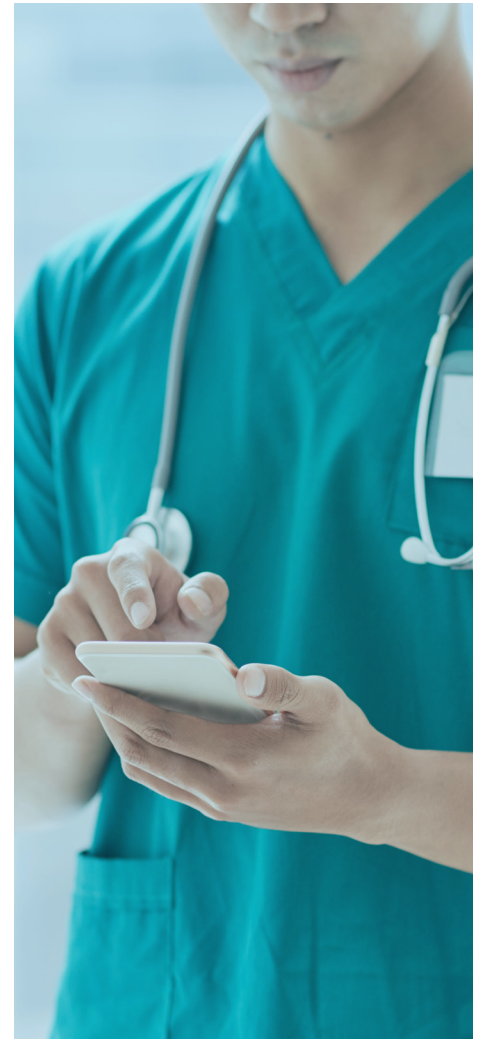
LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT

While clinical communication technologies provide many benefits, they can also introduce risk if the IT environment isn't managed using the principles of lifecycle management. Risk can hide in an unsupported operating system that may have been forgotten, old hardware that cannot be repaired, or outdated applications and middleware that cannot be touched for fear of breaking critical functions. Lifecycle management is essential to anticipate issues, minimize interruptions and prevent adverse events.

MANAGING POINT SOLUTIONS

Often, specific departments or functions within a hospital adopt a point solution to quickly solve a specific challenge (i.e., the ICU nurses need a way to quickly and securely message each other). Taking a patchwork approach to clinical collaboration presents a number of challenges, including communication barriers and lack of interoperability.

Rethink your approach to mission-critical mobile collaboration with one integrated solution for the entire healthcare system. A partner that specializes in mobility can bring the technical expertise to maintain these complex environments.



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