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The CIOs Triple Threat Guide to Care Team Communication

Mine the EHR, use data to your advantage, and keep patient data safe.

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Introduction

Stuck in 1990

Visit any hospital today, and you're all but guaranteed to find a perplexing dichotomy. You'll see state-of-the-art medical equipment, highly-trained and dedicated staff, and advanced EHR systems supporting optimized clinical workflows. But dig deeper and you'll find these shiny objects and impressive people are constrained by archaic communication tools and processes. Pagers, faxes, overhead intercoms, whiteboards, answering services, and email — they all add friction to an increasingly complex care setting.
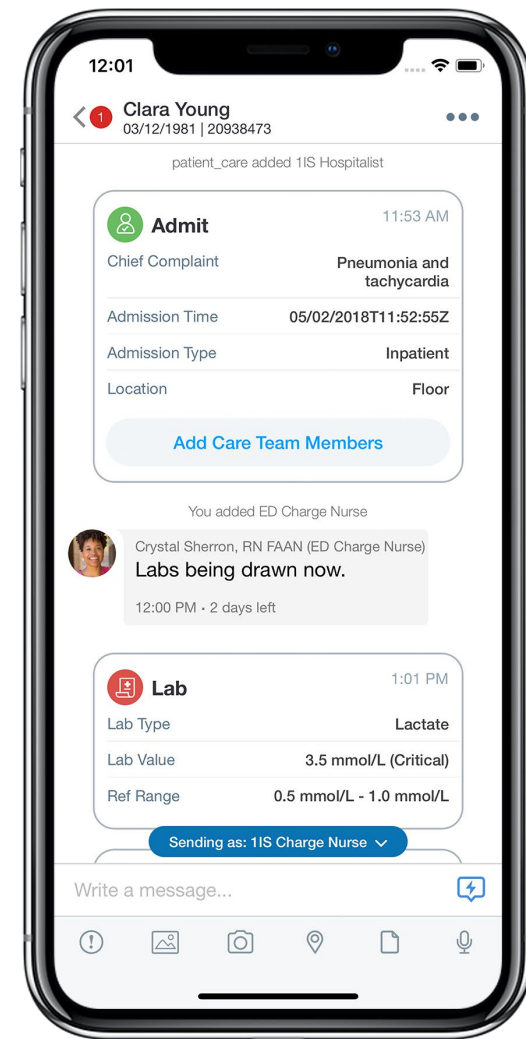
No other modern-day industry, particularly one as vital as healthcare, relies so heavily on outdated tools. Aside from the burden it places on care workers and patients, the collective cost of such toil and inefficiency reaches into the billions. Easily.

Leap to the future...today.

Fortunately, the future is here and IT has the power to solve many of these communication hurdles by implementing an integrated clinical communication system. This solution represents a tiny fraction of a total EHR budget, yet it can unlock enormous value by making EHR data accessible at the point of care in real time – automated alerts, results, and team communication on a smartphone, tablet, or workstation.

"According to a Ponemon Institute study conducted in 2013, providers waste more than 45 minutes every day because of inefficient communication systems. That loss in productivity costs the average U.S Hospital nearly $1 million annually and represents a burden to the U.S. healthcare system of more than $8.3 billion every year."*

* HIT Consultant, 5 Best Practices for Establishing a Unified Mobile Clinical Communications Strategy, May 3, 2017.

The Pressure to be Profitable

In this climate of accelerating technology and spiraling operational costs, even the most prestigious hospitals now struggle to turn a profit.

These circumstances challenge hospital CIOs. How do you identify, select, and implement optimal systems that not only maximize productivity, but that employees will embrace? A practical, potent remedy is found in the modern Clinical Communication and Collaboration (CC&C) system.

To assist you in navigating this evolving landscape, we'll shine a spotlight on three crucial areas where a CC&C system can deliver high returns:

Security and Privacy

EHR Value Extraction

Data-Driven Utilization

"The Cleveland Clinic witnessed a 71% decline in operating income; MD Anderson dropped $266 million.

—Forbes, Why Major Hospitals Are Losing Money By The Millions (Nov. 7, 2017)
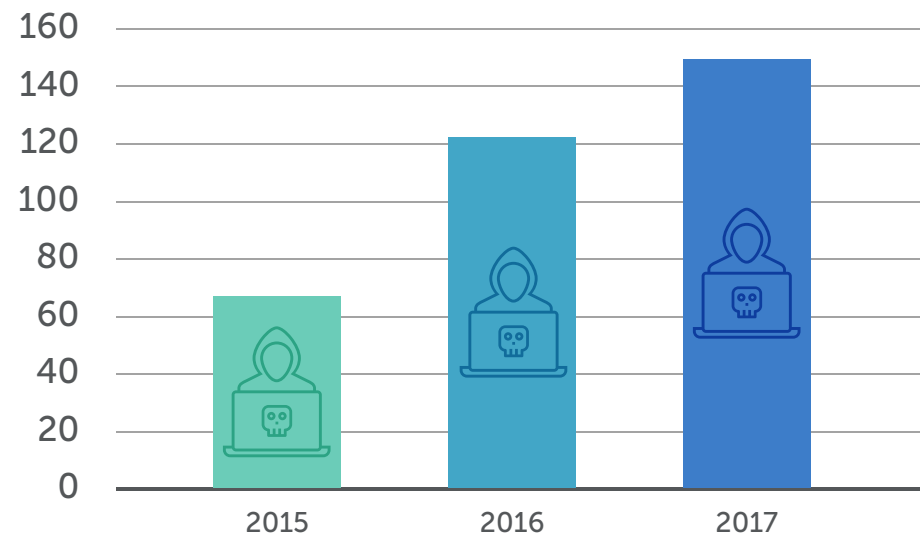
SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Hackers Covet Your Hospital

In a recent study by the Journal of Hospital Medicine, 21.5% of hospital-based clinicians said they'd received standard unsecured text messages that include individually-identifiable patient information. All too often, convenience trumps compliance.

IT has an enormous burden to locate and close security gaps before hackers find them. CC&C solutions address the gaping problem of unsecured texting, taking at least one threat off the table.

Healthcare Hacking Incidents

"On the black market, the going rate for your social security number is 10 cents. Your credit card number is worth 25 cents. But your electronic medical health record (EHR) could be worth hundreds or even thousands of dollars."

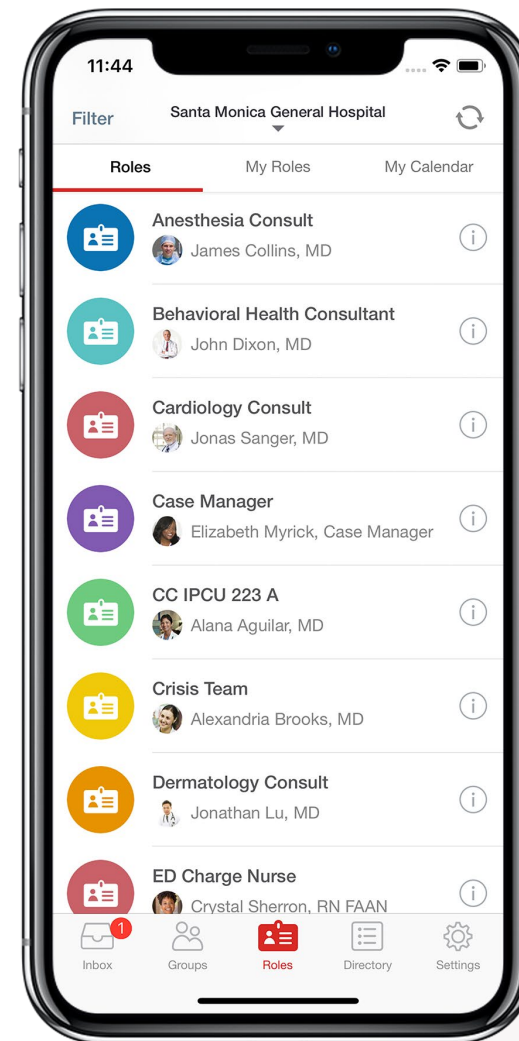—Forbes, Your Electronic Medical Records Could Be Worth $1,000 To Hackers (Apr 14, 2017)

SECURITY AND PRIVACY

CIOs' Messaging Dilemma

Among the threats to an organization's data, the BYOD movement has put CIOs in a particularly tough spot. You don't want to deprive your hospital staff of a highly efficient tool like texting, but you can't jeopardize patient data by allowing staff to text PHI using consumer-grade texting apps – even encrypted ones like iMessage or WhatsApp – on devices you don't control. But your budget may prevent you from purchasing and maintaining devices for thousands of clinicians.

Fortunately, clinical communication solutions tailored to BYOD can help mitigate this risk by giving care teams an efficient way to freely discuss patient cases and receive alerts while preserving full IT control over users, devices, and organizational policies. Patient data remains private and encrypted, care teams stay productive, and IT holds the keys. **A win-win for everyone.**

SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Encrypted, Ephemeral, and Archived

SMS messages can be hacked, and the law of averages confirms that the longer data hangs around on devices, computers, and network servers, the greater the risk of that data being compromised. Today's CC&C solutions close these security gaps. Advanced clinical communication solutions offer the following crucial capabilities:

- End-to-End Encryption – Message exchanges are protected both at rest and in transit.

- Self-Destructing Messages – CC&C messages permanently self-destruct after a set amount of time. (FACT: patient data can live indefinitely on devices and phone company servers.)

- Message Archiving – Archiving can securely preserve messages – even self-destructing ones – for discovery purposes in the event litigation comes knocking in the future.

The best solutions have earned credible third-party certification from an organization like the HITRUST Alliance.

"Organizations should pick vendors with a demonstrated track record with 'security by design' – a security method that uses continuous testing, authentication safeguards and adherence."

-- Healthcare IT News, January 16, 2017

EHR VALUE EXTRACTION

By 2021, investments in EHR systems will top $36 billion,[1] making the EHR a hospital's single most significant IT-related expense by a longshot. Hospitals invest massive sums in their systems to keep them running, adding pressure to CIOs to continually maximize the return on investment.

Closing the EHR Mobility Gap

EHRs were designed to be systems of record, housing patient information mainly for billing purposes. Making that data actionable and usable in real time is where they come up short. Physicians and nurses are in constant motion, moving room to room, station to station, and floor to floor — but always tethered to a computer to fulfill even simple requests.

Here's the result:

- "63 percent of physicians responded that EHRs fail to improve efficiency." [2]

- "Rather than making patient care easier, [EHRs] end up slowing clinicians down." [3]

- "7 out of 10 physicians think that EHRs reduce their productivity." [4]

- "57% of physicians want improved workflow and increased productivity." [4]

- "An estimated 80% of serious medical errors involve miscommunication between caregivers during the transfer of patients." [5]

1. Kalorama Information, The State of the EMR Market in 2017, Bruce Carlson, April 28, 2017
2. www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-09-08/do-electronic-health-records-breed-burnout
3. hbr.org/2017/06/what-health-systems-hospitals-and-physicians-need-to-know-about-implementing-electronic-health-records
4. www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/life-sciences health-care/us-lshc-physician-survey-hit-factsheet.pdf
5. www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/6/tst_hoc_persp_08_12.pdf

"In their current form and implementation, [EHRs] have had a number of unintended negative consequences including reducing efficiency, increasing clerical burden and increasing the risk of burnout for physicians."

— Mayo Clinic Department of Medicine Program Study on Physician Well-Being

EHR VALUE EXTRACTION

Prying Value from Your EHR

Your physicians and nurses see the importance of your EHR, but they're frustrated by the obvious efficiency deficiencies. This is where a robust, integrated CC&C solution can significantly move the needle. By surfacing EHR data and alerts to the smartphone in real time where they can be viewed, shared, forwarded, and acted upon, massive value is unlocked through:

- Faster treatment for stroke and STEMI patients
- More timely specialist consults
- Smoother patient handoffs
- Expedited results for providers and patients
- Reduced bed days
- Accelerated discharges that meet Medicare requirements

CC&C solutions allow care teams to cut the cord, unlocking EHR data when and where it's needed, resulting in higher ROI from an EHR investment.

"Over the course of one year, after controlling for patient characteristics and time trends, the researchers found that patients whose providers used mobile secure text messaging left the hospital about 0.77 days sooner, equivalent to about a 14 percent reduction in their overall hospital stay."

— HealthCanal.com, Patients Had Shorter Hospital Stays When Their Care Providers Used Secure Text Messaging to Improve Communication, Penn Study Finds

DATA-DRIVEN UTILIZATION

Adoption » Engagement » ROI

In the days before Big Data, investments in software were always a bit of a gamble. Would employees embrace the new software system that was just implemented? And if so, would they use it to its potential? And for those not using it, what was stopping them, and would the organization even be able to identify them? Today's advanced data tracking capabilities answer those questions.

Given the power of a CC&C system to return positive outcomes – shorter patient stays, faster treatment, fewer medical errors – even a single underperforming unit can cost a healthcare organization hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. So it's important to be able to identify poor performers as a critical part of cost containment and productivity metrics. The heart of software productivity is user engagement, and the more advanced cloud apps of today make tracking user activity easier than ever.

Leading CC&C solutions offer custom dashboards that help admins track adoption and engagement trends. They also identify individuals, groups, departments, and facilities that are lagging behind their peers. And when it comes to clinical communication adoption, our experience shows that inertia is your biggest challenge. But we know how you can get around it.

DATA-DRIVEN UTILIZATION

Once they've been introduced to it, most healthcare workers can't live without their clinical messaging application, particularly one that's integrated with systems they use several times a day. But before that? You're likely to hit some turbulence, so it might be useful to plan for the resistance you're almost certain to encounter. Watch for these types of pushback:

"Regular Texting Works Just Fine"

Most clinicians will never formally admit to texting patient information at work for obvious (read: HIPAA) reasons, yet it's still common practice. In fact, it's a rampant problem, particularly for compliance managers and IT, who are left with little control or visibility, but a high degree of legal exposure. However, it takes only a little training for clinicians to see the exciting potential for a proven CC&C solution to transform their efficiency, productivity, and ability to provide better and safe patient care. They'll be ready to run from the woefully inefficient system of pagers, faxes, and voicemail that just haven't kept up.

"I trust my pager"

For residents born in the thumb generation, secure texting is a no-brainer. But for older physicians and nurses whose entire career was built around the beeper on their belt, making the transition to smartphone-based communication can require some hand-holding. Still, you'll increase adoption when you show them how the CC&C solution can:

- Route pages to their phone
- Track message status (sent, delivered, read, forwarded)
- Provide rich details about the request
- Send photos and PACS images
- Replace their pager — forever!

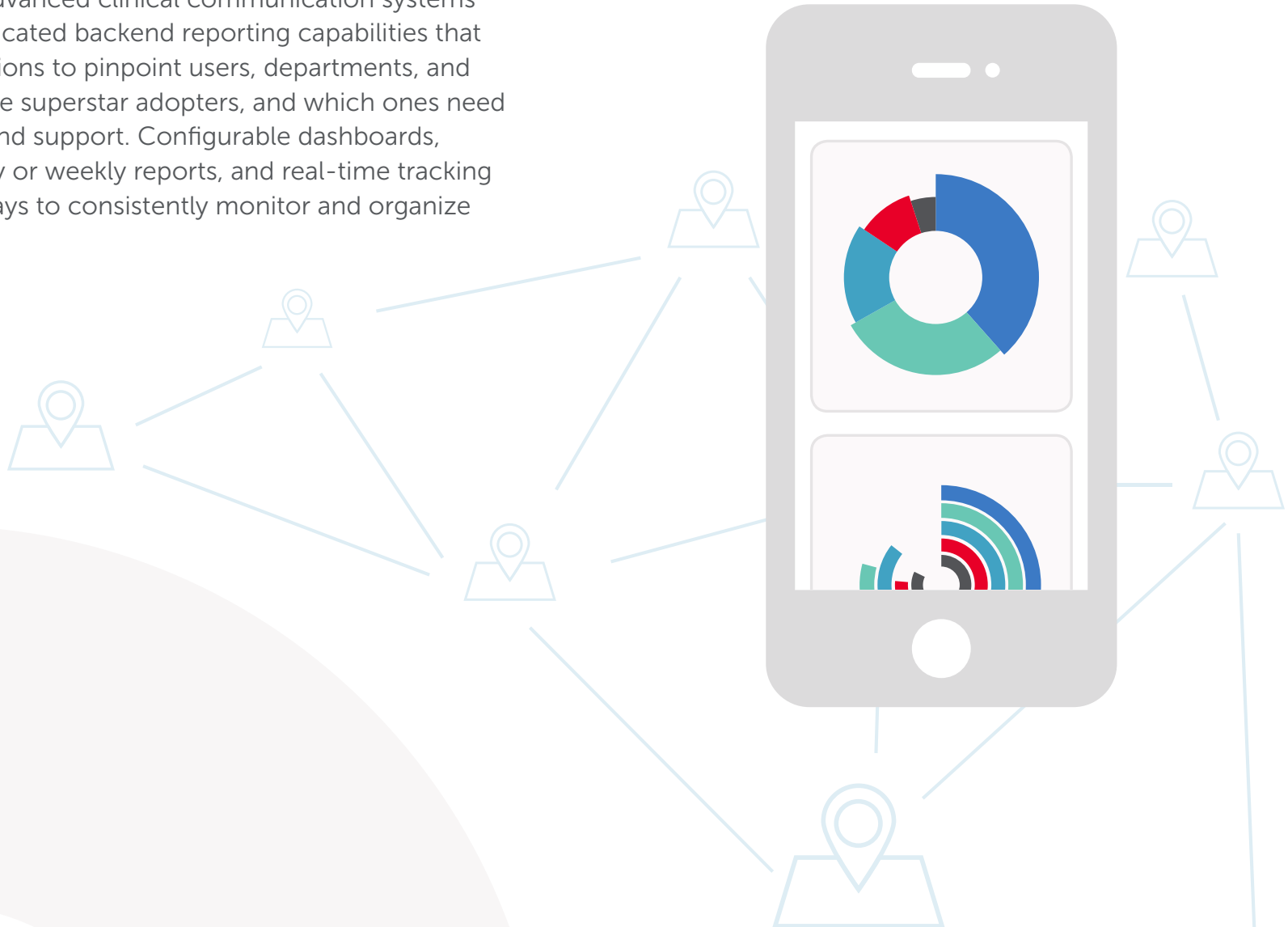## "I don't know my app store password"

It's astounding how many active smartphone users can't remember their app store password. Before any large-scale rollout, ask your employees to look up and memorize their App Store or Google Play password. In typical training, it's not uncommon to have 50% of users not know their login credentials to these accounts. This should be the first item on your pre-flight checklist.

DATA-DRIVEN UTILIZATION

Tracking Usage

Today's most advanced clinical communication systems provide sophisticated backend reporting capabilities that allow organizations to pinpoint users, departments, and facilities who are superstar adopters, and which ones need more training and support. Configurable dashboards, automated daily or weekly reports, and real-time tracking provide easy ways to consistently monitor and organize performance.
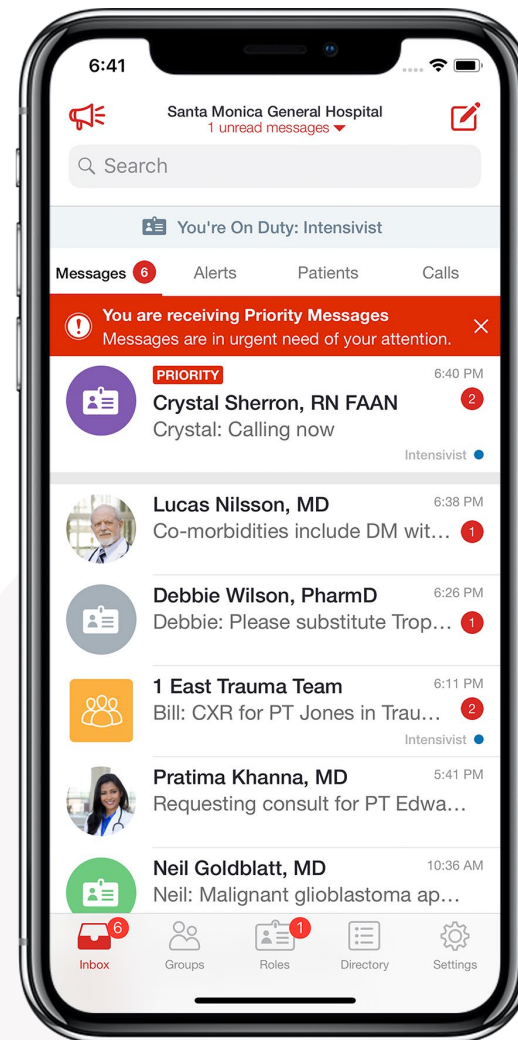
Conclusion

IT-Friendly Secure Messaging for Better Patient Care

The past five years have seen rapid improvements in the features, comprehensiveness, and dramatic ROI of CC&C systems. Changes to the healthcare system continue to accelerate, and IT organizations that stay ahead of the curve will find themselves better prepared to handle the challenges that lie ahead. With the information covered in this eBook, you should have a better idea of how secure messaging can help your organization in the following areas:

- Security & Privacy
- EHR Value Extraction
- Data-Driven Utilization

And do keep in mind — you don't have to go it alone. TigerConnect's experienced team of implementation experts, customer success managers, and skilled support representatives are on your side to ensure your investment delivers the highest possible value.

If you'd like to learn more, email us at info@tigerconnect.com to schedule a demo, or give us a call at **1-800-572-0470** and we'd be happy to answer your questions.

About TigerConnect

As healthcare's largest provider of clinical communication solutions, TigerConnect helps physicians, nurses, and other staff communicate and collaborate more effectively, accelerating productivity, reducing costs, and improving patient outcomes. With 6,000 facilities, 99.99% uptime, and over 10 million messages processed each day, TigerConnect continually delivers advanced product innovations and integrates with critical hospital systems such as the EHR, nurse call, and scheduling solutions.

The company's commitment to client success is reflected in its broad support organization that works directly with clients at every stage to streamline communication workflows and achieve the highest possible ROI.

For more information, visit **www.tigerconnect.com** to learn how clients like RWJBarnabas, Geisinger, and LifePoint are using TigerConnect to solve healthcare's biggest communication challenges.

Visit:
www.tigerconnect.com

Call:
1-800-572-0470