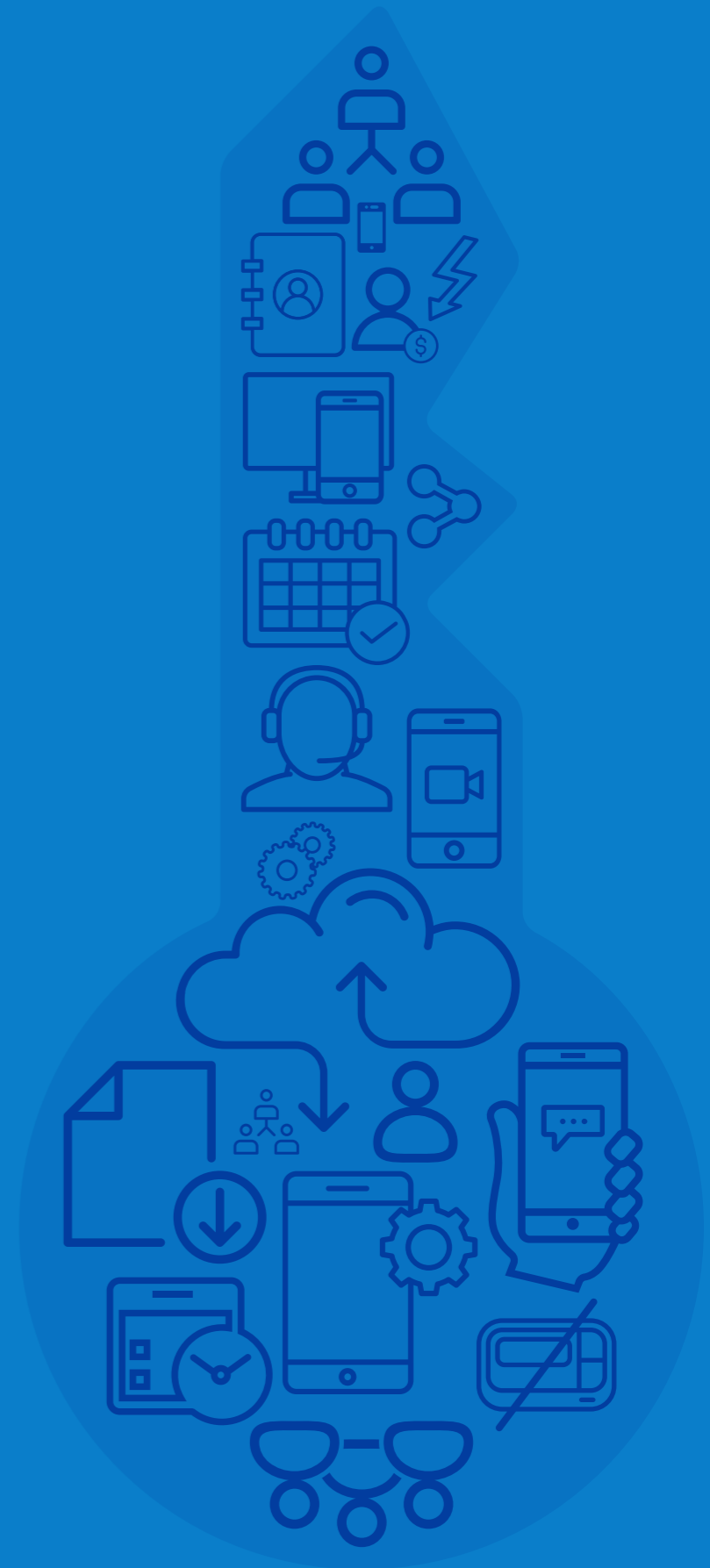# tigerconnect

8 Hidden Ways to Unlock Massive EHR Value

How clinical communication solutions close the gaps in EHR functionality to save time, boost productivity, and deliver true ROI.

The EHR is your hospital's single biggest IT expenditure, but are you really getting value to match? Investing in a clinical communication solution can help unlock substantial productivity by merging system-generated data with a clinical messaging layer for true collaboration at the point of care.

The EHR Messaging Gap

EHRs provide technology for housing patient information, but their slow entry into the mobile landscape has left a very mobile clinical staff tied to computer workstations and overburdened with data entry tasks. Clinical communication and collaboration platforms (CC&Cs) close this 'last mile' gap, helping you realize broad organizational improvements in productivity, speed, and quality of care, not to mention, unlocking massive value from your EHR and other clinical systems of record.

CC&Cs make EHR data actionable by helping you:

- Connect the entire organization, not just clinical staff

- Keep communication flowing during outages

- Integrate with nearly any system or EHR

- Message colleagues by name or role based on who's on duty now

- Replace pagers and integrate with your answering service

- Rapidly create care team groups

- On the fly send a broadcast message to large groups

One Platform Connects the Entire Health System

CC&Cs Enable Broad Communication Across All Facilities for Better Care Collaboration

Imagine if only a fraction of the care team members in an organization or health system could communicate with each other. That's similar to what using EHR chat is like. And since caring for patients requires the time and energy from both clinical and non-clinical staff, not connecting everyone on a single platform leads to longer ED wait times, lower bed turnover, slower discharge times, and higher incidence of medical errors due to communication lapses.

This is where a CC&C's magic kicks in. CC&C's connect the entire health system – including clinical and non-clinical staff across a range of facility types – all on a single platform in an easy, flexible, fully integrated way, and at a fraction of the cost of an EHR license.

By centralizing data (EHR, nurse call, alerts, etc.) from disparate sources and vendors across facility types, CC&Cs seamlessly blend real-time patient information with robust communication capabilities into a single, easy-to-use app experience. This helps staff coordinate patient transfers between facilities, resolve medication issues, or message a patient's PCP from a single directory.

| EHR Mobile Apps	Clinical Communication Platform
• No easy way to communicate between facilities	• Entire health system under a single directory
• Requires an EHR license – non-clinical staff are left out of the process	• All staff – clinical or non-clinical – have access to two-way messaging
• Every message becomes a permanent part of the patient record	• Flexible freeform messaging supports real-time situational needs
• No mass notification capabilities	• Broadcast messages inform the entire organization, a department or team
• No alternate way to escalate messages when connectivity is poor	• Uses SMS to alert a user of a message when a data connection or WiFi is unavailable

CC&C Value-Adds
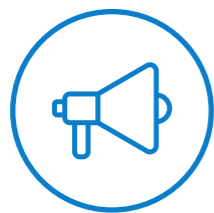
Send broadcast messages to the entire organization or subgroups

Quickly look up and message colleagues separate from the patient record
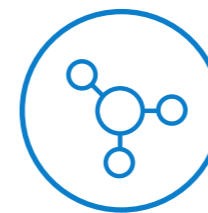
Connects an entire health system's clinical and non-clinical staff across facilities

Communicate via text, voice or video chat

Outages

CC&Cs Keep Communication Flowing When the EHR or Other Systems Go Down

Service interruptions and EHR outages are inevitable. Weather events, malware attacks, hardware failures – any one of these can bring an EHR down and taking your communication with it.

Because advanced CC&Cs are cloud-based and operate on their own separate channel – LTE or WiFi – they bypass this risk and keep communication flowing during a crisis, when it's needed most. Teams can continue to message and collaborate while broadcast messaging keeps the organization informed of things like system status, threat levels, and situational updates. Executive staff can strategize asynchronously in real-time without relying on email or endless phone calls.

EHR Mobile Apps

- Embedded messaging means communication stops anytime the EHR goes down

- IT and other teams must revert to phone calls, email or non-compliant SMS during outages

- No broad messaging capability means employees are left in the dark regarding system/organization status

Clinical Communication Platform

- Independent network keeps communication channel open during outages, weather events or malware attacks

- Always-on communication channel enables IT and executives to strategize on a secure, uninterrupted channel

- Broadcast messaging capability enables easy and frequent status updates to the entire organization or specific departments

CC&C Value-Adds

Independent network keeps communication flowing during EHR outages and blackouts

Real-time message updates keep the organization informed up to the minute

Secure, encrypted channel protects communication during cyberattacks

Separate from – but Connected to – the Patient Record

Conduct private conversations about patients outside of the patient record

Determining the best treatment for a patient isn't always a clear-cut process. Sometimes, the discussions among colleagues include details that aren't necessarily beneficial for a patient to read in their medical record or on a patient portal. Most EHRs require these conversations to take place within the patient record, forcing clinicians to be very measured in what they say and how they say it. Once again, here's where CC&Cs step in to assist.

CC&C's allow staff to conduct detailed patient conversations knowing that none of the details will become part of the patient's record. This facilitates freer, more clinically honest communication without the fear that a comment may be taken out of context by a patient or loved one who may read it. Many of the more advanced CC&Cs offer the flexibility of capturing and saving select responses back to the patient record through a custom EHR integration.

| EHR Chat App Limitation	Clinical Communication Platform
• All conversations are captured in the patient record	• All conversations occur outside the patient record
• Limits freeform conversation	• Clinicians and non-clinicians can discuss multiple topics and cases on a single thread
• No broad messaging capability means employees are left in the dark regarding system/organization status	• A CC&C integration can allow select messages to be saved to the patient record in the EHR

CC&C Value-Adds

Freeform messaging model allows clinicians to conduct candid conversations about patients

Conversations can include the entire care team across topics

EHR integration enables select messages to be saved to the patient record
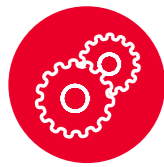
Healthcare Interoperability

Integration with nearly any EHR or 3rd-Party System

The massive consolidation happening in healthcare today is creating a mash-up of post-acute, ambulatory, skilled nursing, physician groups, and other organization types all using a mix of EHRs and other systems. This increasingly disconnected state heightens communication challenges for everyone involved and keeps staff mired in an endless cycle of logins, voicemail, pagers, answering services, fax machines, and whiteboards when coordinating care.

Meanwhile, CC&C's accessible APIs and developer-friendly code libraries allow for seamless integration with the widest range of hospital systems to interpret real-time data and deliver it in a clean, actionable format. While the major EHRs struggle to integrate with nurse call, answering services, or scheduling systems, CC&Cs excel at seamlessly merging the most relevant real-time patient data with human-to-human communication, minimizing trips to a workstation and streamlining care coordination.

EHR Mobile Apps	Clinical Communication Platform
• Proprietary, closed system complicates integrations	• Open API allows integration with most EHRs and hospital-related systems regardless of vendor type
• No pre-built integration for nurse call, answering service, or paging systems	• Out-of-box integrations with popular systems like VoIP, answering service software systems
• Difficulty integrating with 3rd-party scheduling systems	• Centralizes scheduling data from sophisticated solutions to Excel files into a single shift-based calendar

CC&C Value-Adds

Open API easily integrates with third-party systems for richer user experience

Works seamlessly with existing answering services, paging systems, and call centers

Supports VoIP integrations for video and voice calls by role or individual

Actionable Data vs. Static Data

Optimized Notifications and Alerts for Easy Access and Quick Action

The digitization of health records over the past decade has been both a valuable and necessary step toward standardizing the way health information can be collected and organized. As 'systems of record', EHRs are effective at organizing information, but they often fail at making that information easily accessible and actionable at the point of care. This is where clinical communication solutions fill an important void.

CC&C platforms were created specifically to solve the communication challenges in healthcare. Designed and built by mobility experts, CC&Cs mimic the ease and usability of consumer apps to enable better communication and coordination of care among healthcare professionals. By capitalizing on the mobile wave and integrating with critical hospital systems, CC&Cs are able to centralize and optimize data from numerous silos, funneling and filtering relevant, real-time patient data through an intuitive interface for quick and efficient collaboration.

EHR Mobile Apps	Clinical Communication Platform
• Unwieldy app experience attempts to replicate desktop functionality on a smartphone	• Purpose-built for communication and optimized for mobile devices – delivery confirmation, group messaging, smart cards, etc.
• Critical results are not push-based and remain isolated in the EHR	• Streamlined data delivered in an actionable format
• Mobility is not a core competence for EHRs	• Rich feature set supports text, voice or video

CC&C Value-Adds

Streamlined, mobile-friendly interface optimized for care team collaboration

Built specifically for messaging – not a screen-scrape of a desktop experience

Intelligently delivers only the most relevant data, preventing user overwhelm

Quick and easy team collaboration through an app designed for medical professionals

Role-based Communications

Intelligently Route Messages by Individual or On-Duty Role Owner

In most EHRs, finding and messaging care team members doesn't happen easily, and too often, staff must resort to whiteboards, printed schedules, and spreadsheets to track down the right clinician. This usually means that care teams set up in the EHR are out of sync with the ones actually taking care of the patient at the moment. Sending messages to a glorified email inbox does not solve the problem. In urgent situations, this becomes a patient safety issue. With CC&Cs, this problem is solved automatically through integration with a scheduling solution.

CC&Cs combine shift schedules with a role-based employee directory to do advanced things like auto-populate a patient's care team based on the chief complaint or intelligently route messages and alerts based by role or room assignment. Staff can look up and message any role that the organization has defined, and users never have to remember a clinician's name or track down a phone number. This preserves continuity of care across shift changes, and CC&Cs can even include a calendar view of shifts weeks into the future.

EHR Mobile Apps	Clinical Communication Platform
• Limited or no scheduling integration with 3rd-party systems	• Integrates with 3rd-party scheduling solutions for automated care team assignments and message routing
• Care team creation is mostly manual – no automation by chief complaint or quick addition of team members	• Supports both automated and on-the-fly care team assignment
• No way to message colleagues by role – must know the staff member's name	• Allows lookups and messaging by job function and who's on duty – clinician name not needed

CC&C Value-Adds

Easily integrates with 3rd-party scheduling solutions for role- and shift-based messaging

Intelligently routes messages by role based on preset automated care team assignments

Aggregates advanced and basic shift schedules into a single, master calendar

Schedule-based directory makes it easy to locate, text or call the current on-duty specialist or clinician

Care Team Management

Rapidly Assemble & Manage Care Teams

Certain medical situations require the rapid assembly of a care team. Even with an EHR that's fully integrated with your hospital directory, the odds of assembling that team without a flurry of pager alerts, phone calls and overhead paging is near zero.

This is just one more area where CC&Cs can enhance the value of the EHR. The ability to quickly and automatically build and add to care teams means critical information gets shared all at once with exactly the right individuals at the right stage of care. This is especially important for situations like stroke, sepsis or heart code cases, where every minute counts. Additional capabilities like message read status and automated role escalations ensure non-responsive team members are quickly substituted, and VoIP-enabled video and voice provide another fast way to connect.

EHR Chat App Limitation

- No fast way to build a care team in critical situations

- Limited or no automated assignments by role or chief complaint

- Care team assignment is limited to those with EHR access

Clinical Communication Platform

- Intelligently automates care team assignment based on chief complaint

- Allows quick assignment, removal, and self-opt-out of care team groups

- Supports one-tap voice or video calling using VoIP

CC&C Value-Adds

Automates the creation of care teams by chief complaint

Manually add/remove members of a patient's care team throughout the patient's stay

Automatically escalate unread messages to an alternate care provider

Paging & Answering Service Integration

Eliminate Pagers and Accelerate Call Center Response Times

While pagers and answering services feel like relics of the past, they're still an active part of most hospitals' communication protocol. In fact, the Journal of Hospital Medicine recently reported that nearly 80% of clinicians still use pagers. CC&Cs routinely replace these antiquated devices by making pager alerts and messages instantly and securely accessible through the smartphone app. EHR chat and mobile apps simply don't support these types of integrations.

It's a similar story for answering services and call centers. CC&Cs integrate with most call center software allowing agents to forward detailed messages and see instantly when it's been delivered and read. They can even redirect messages to an alternate provider, if needed. No more wondering if the clinician received the page while the patient waits needlessly.

EHR Chat App Limitation	Clinical Communication Platform
• No integration with paging systems or call center software • No easy way to confirm if and when a page has been received and read	• No pager necessary – Users can receive pages, alerts, and voice messages directly on their smartphone • Call center agents can send detailed messages and see when messages are delivered and read • Integrations with popular systems such as Spok, Amtelco, and others are supported

CC&C Value-Adds

Integrates readily with popular paging systems and call center software

Capable of receiving numeric, text and voice messages on a smartphone or desktop

Message status indicators show when messages have been delivered and read

Saves organizations up to $120 per year per user in pager service fees

CC&Cs VALUE-ADDS

INTEGRATIONS	DESCRIPTION	TIGERCONNECT
Role-based Scheduling	Integrate with any scheduling system to automate role assignments by shift with full calendar views up to four weeks out	👍
Nurse Call System	Intelligently route nurse call messages to the appropriate staff member for faster, more accurate responses	👍
VoIP / Video & Voice	Connect with existing phone systems and facilitate calls via the mobile app over the data network	👍

REVENUE CAPTURE	DESCRIPTION	TIGERCONNECT
Referral Management Engine	Health systems can link to affiliate physicians to capture patient referrals and keep those patients from defecting	👍

SECURE MESSAGING	DESCRIPTION	TIGERCONNECT
Group Messaging	Create groups on the fly to improve collaboration and coordination	👍
Message Forwarding	Easily add colleagues and experts to ongoing text conversations	👍
Read Status (1:1/Group)	Know instantly when messages are sent, delivered, and read	👍
Message Recall	Recall a message and attachments before or after it has been read	👍
File Attachments	Securely attach photos/files/dictation to messages; (Box, OneDrive, etc.)	👍
Broadcast Lists	Mass-message the entire organization or a custom distribution list	👍
Auto-Fwd / Do Not Disturb	Set custom auto-replies if unavailable or forward messages to a colleague	👍
Not Tied Patient Record	Message any staff member on any topic without being part of the patient record	👍
External Messaging	Securely converse w/colleagues/patients who don't have TigerConnect	👍
Message Lifespan	Messages permanently self-destruct after 30 days or less	👍

ADMIN / USER MGMT	DESCRIPTION	TIGERCONNECT
Analytics & Insights	Conduct deep-dive analysis on messaging trends by individual, department or organization to draw insights for optimizing use	👍
Transactional Reporting	Capture & view metadata for every message that is sent	👍
Device & User Management	Manage user access remotely; Block access for lost/stolen devices	👍
Security Policies	Set and enforce security policies (e.g. PIN lock, message lifespan, etc.)	👍

Conclusion

By now you should have a clear sense for the most valuable ways purpose-built clinical communication and collaboration solutions (CC&Cs) enhance EHR functionality. Just to refresh, here are some final takeaways:

EHRs	Clinical Communication Solutions
Built for storing data	Built for communication and connecting care teams
Limited mobile functionality	Employs best practices for mobile app design
Accessible to EHR-licensed users only	Available to the entire care team and affiliates
'Walled garden' approach to integrations	Open API integrates with nearly all hospital systems, including nurse call paging/answering services
Messages tied to the patient record	Supports freeform communication
Mobile chat apps support only basic text and calling	Feature-rich app supports VoIP video and voice calls

While this eBook is pretty comprehensive, you might still have questions, so we invite you to call or email us, and we'd be happy to provide more in-depth explanations or show you a demo that illustrates the strengths of the TigerConnect solution.

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