

# How unified clinical communication drove improvements in workflows and throughput at Capital Health

Will O'Connor, MD, Chief Medical Information Officer, TigerConnect

In acute care settings, it is essential that communication between physicians, nurses, care coordinators and other healthcare professionals is unified across multiple clinical workflows, so that patients receive the right care with minimal wait times. As part of that priority, it is especially vital that consultation requests by emergency department (ED) clinicians reach the appropriate specialty physicians quickly and efficiently. But without a streamlined process in place to find who's on call or how to contact them, requesting consults and coordinating patient care often becomes an arduous game of phone tag between physicians, ancillary providers, and care coordinators.

During an August Becker's Hospital Review webinar sponsored by TigerConnect, Michael Arcaro, MD, medical director for clinical informatics at Pennington, N.J.-based Capital Health, and Gina Loxtercamp, senior customer success manager at TigerConnect, discussed the importance of streamlining communications for clinical workflows. They also shared how the TigerConnect Clinical Collaboration Platform and TigerConnect Physician Scheduling has supported the evolution of those aspects at Capital Health.

Three key insights were:

- 1. Conventional consult processes in acute care settings are inefficient and cause care delays.** Prior to implementing the TigerConnect Clinical Collaboration Platform, Capital Health struggled with a complicated consult workflow between ED doctors and specialty physicians that required multiple steps and took on average 50 minutes. The inefficiencies inherent in this workflow contributed to other challenges, including staff burnout, slow patient throughput, excess average length of stay, and difficulty connecting care teams across multiple outpatient and inpatient facilities.

After adopting the TigerConnect platform, the organization saw its consult workflow reduced to three steps, taking 3 to 10 minutes, saving providers' time and improving patient throughput. "It significantly improved the consultation process by removing workflow inefficiencies, simplifying the process and standardizing communication across multiple platforms," Dr. Arcaro said.

**2. Role- and team-based communication capabilities reinvent the logic of consults.** The platform enables ED care teams to request a consultation without needing to know who's on call or without searching for a specific physician. This is made possible through a global directory of roles and teams that are linked to shift schedules, which allows for HIPAA-compliant message routing to clusters of physicians rather than to individual physicians.

"The benefits are streamlined patient care and caregiver collaboration, as well as elimination of phone tag and staff frustration," Dr. Arcaro summed up. He emphasized that provider satisfaction and morale have improved since Capital Health started using TigerConnect.

A related but separate communication feature is Patient Context Messaging, whereby the platform integrates with the medical center's EHR system to

automatically provide essential patient information – including name, date of birth and medical record number – into the consult request. This reduces the risk of transcription errors or patient misidentification, while also enabling ED physicians to include more clinically relevant details in their consult messages.

**3. TigerConnect Physician Scheduling streamlines administrative clinical processes.** This solution facilitates on-call physician scheduling, evaluation of hours worked, management of payroll and other day-to-day duties, schedule and shift changes in real time and automatic synchronization and role updates across all user devices. Further, the module's advanced messaging feature enables a digital trail of when consult requests were delivered and read.

To register for upcoming webinars, [click here](#).