



Nursing Staff at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center Helps Transform Workflow by Leveraging InnerWireless' Converged Wireless Platform

New all-private room Critical Care Hospital offers comprehensive wireless coverage, creating clinical mobility throughout the new 367,000-square-foot facility

RICHARDSON, Texas – Aug. 27, 2009 – InnerWireless[®], Inc., the premier provider of end-to-end in-building converged wireless solutions, today reported that Spyglass Consulting Group's independent study of the new Critical Care Hospital at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center (VCU Medical Center) reveals the benefits of involving nursing staffs in the assessment and application of healthcare technologies such as InnerWireless' Horizon[™] Converged Wireless solution. By actively engaging its nursing staff in the development and planning processes, VCU Medical Center has transformed workflow to much higher levels of efficiency since opening the facility in October 2008.

“InnerWireless' converged wireless solution has provided us with a single managed platform that hosts virtually every wireless service, including Cisco WLAN (Wi-Fi), along with a wide range of mission- and life-critical applications operating on a diverse range of wireless devices,” said Heather Craven, RN, MS, CMSRN, a nurse clinician in the acute care medicine department at VCU Health System. “Their wireless network platform ensures that we will have uniform wireless coverage with reliable connectivity and sufficient capacity to meet our patients' needs today and in the future.”

The new Critical Care Hospital represents the future of critical care delivery in the 21st century, and despite being three times the size of its predecessor, the new hospital needed to operate with the same number of nurse FTEs. This meant the new hospital and its staff required advanced communication technologies to enable full clinical mobility, including comprehensive wireless coverage to support the goal of delivering timely, efficient and safe critical care.

The Spyglass report addressed the nursing staff's key workflow challenges that would be implemented as part of the new facility. First, all patient rooms were becoming private (including 45 NICU rooms) and reconfigured into a rectangular footprint, making it more challenging for nurses to communicate. Also, the patient care areas were going to be significantly larger compared to the nursing units in the original facility, so new point-of-care processes would supplant repeated trips to and from the nursing station to input/access electronic patient information, medications, supplies or to locate other clinicians. Finally, use of the overhead paging system would be restricted to create a quieter care environment more conducive to the patient healing process.

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Faced with these challenges, the VCU Medical Center nursing staff examined how mobile computing devices and wireless communications networks such as InnerWireless' Horizon could streamline existing workflow, enhance patient safety, increase patient satisfaction, and improve the patient information process. The nurses worked closely with VCU Medical Center's IT department and visited other academic medical centers across the U.S. to see how similarly-sized organizations had successfully deployed InnerWireless' platform and the wireless medical equipment that enables true clinical mobility. Technology fairs were also set up at the VCU Medical Center so that medical equipment manufacturers could demonstrate their devices and provide hands-on training.

VCU Medical Center decided that InnerWireless' distributed antenna system (DAS) would best fit their needs and address all different types of network integration complexities. The InnerWireless Horizon converged wireless platform was designed and installed with final testing completed in time for opening day.

"InnerWireless' professional services organization helped us plan and deploy the network, starting with a comprehensive assessment of the new hospital to help us better understand how RF signals propagated room-to-room, floor-to-floor, and across the entire building," said Greg Johnson, chief technology officer and director of technology and engineering services at VCU Health System. "The wireless platform was engineered and deployed to address the unique requirements for each wireless service, device and application, and InnerWireless' unique Layered-WLAN topology enabled us to map client traffic to different Wi-Fi channels to optimize network throughput and performance."

VCU Medical Center deployed a number of wireless and mobile solutions to meet the nurses' objectives, all integrated and delivered on the InnerWireless platform. Enhancements to Rauland Borg's nurse-call system has enabled nurses to be more responsive to patient needs, while the wireless voice over IP communications system from Ascom allows nurses to conduct more immediate and direct communications with other care team members. The Emergin™ alarm management and automated event notification system from Philips Healthcare has enhanced patient safety, not only by generating an alarm if vital signs deviate outside a set range, but it also sends a text-based alert to the nurse's Ascom VoWLAN handset for quicker response.

In addition, the InnerWireless Horizon solution also accommodates the IntelliVue™ wireless medical telemetry system from Philips Healthcare. As a result, VCU Medical Center provides ambulatory patient monitoring in more than 50 percent of the care area. In addition, the clinical staff utilizes more than 300 mobile computers on wheels to electronically collect and review clinical information from the hospital's Cerner HIS.

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“Nurses are more mobile within the new critical care hospital,” said Craven. “They are responsible for managing the same number of patients spread out over a physical floor space three times larger than the older facility. Nurses do not have time or luxury to make unnecessary trips to the nursing station to respond to overhead pages or play telephone tag with physicians which may negatively impact patient care.”

“Nurses represent the most common touchpoint within any hospital, particularly in a critical care facility such as VCU Medical Center, and the Spyglass report reflects the valuable role nurses played in developing a wireless ecosystem that would elevate their delivery of quality critical care without additional headcount,” said Ed Cantwell, president, CEO and chairman of InnerWireless. “We’re seeing more hospitals take the same approach to ensure nurses take a stakeholder position when new wireless technologies are evaluated and deployed within a facility, and InnerWireless looks forward to working with VCU Medical Center to provide the wireless solutions they need to deliver the highest levels of patient care and safety.”

Supporting the broad spectrum of wide-area and local-area wireless services, including 3G and 4G cellular, 802.11 a/b/g/n, whole-house medical telemetry, fire/life/safety, paging and two-way radios optimized for voice, location and data, the Horizon product line ensures seamless integration with advancing technologies and applications, while providing a secure wireless future for the hospital.

About Spyglass Consulting Group

Spyglass Consulting Group (www.spyglass-consulting.com) is a market intelligence firm and consultancy focused on the nexus of information technology and healthcare. Spyglass offers products and services in customer and market intelligence, strategic partnership development, product marketing and investment due diligence. Spyglass’ current research is entitled Healthcare without Bounds that focuses on the current and future potential of mobile computing and wireless technologies within the healthcare industry. Spyglass customers include more than 120 leading high technology vendors, management consulting organizations and healthcare providers.

About InnerWireless

InnerWireless is the premier end-to-end in-building wireless solution provider for healthcare, enterprise, hospitality/gaming and government markets. With Horizon™ – a broadband, Converged Wireless platform – InnerWireless ensures the delivery of Wireless Wide Area Networks (WWAN) and Wireless Local Area Networks (WLAN) services including cellular/PCS, fire/life/safety, Wi-Fi and medical telemetry – guaranteed. Designed expressly for mission- and life-critical wireless applications, Horizon’s comprehensive, single antenna infrastructure enables pervasive coverage and optimized capacity with an eco-friendly “green” design and an industry leading warranty. InnerWireless also collaborates with key industry partners to enable the delivery of turnkey solutions. As a Cisco Premier Certified Partner, specializing in Wireless LAN technology, InnerWireless provides and supports Cisco WLAN solutions. As an AeroScout Gold-Level Value Added Reseller, InnerWireless can deliver the latest in location-based solutions. With a complete end-to-end solution, InnerWireless helps achieve a new and lasting degree of wireless freedom. For more information about InnerWireless, visit www.innerwireless.com.

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