

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL COLORADO

THE CHALLENGE

Children's Hospital Colorado, which focuses on patient and family-centered care, has been ranked nationally by U.S. News & World Report every year since the inception of its pediatric hospital rankings in 1993. It was named among the top five in the magazine's Best Children's Hospital's 2015–16 Honor Roll.

In 2015, six of the hospital's specialty areas were among the country's top 10, including Diabetes & Endocrinology (No. 4), Neonatology (No. 6), Gastroenterology & GI Surgery (tied for No. 6), Pulmonology (No. 7), Orthopedics (No. 7) and Cancer (tied for No. 9). Named a "Most Wired" hospital by Hospitals and Health Networks magazine from 2013 to 2015, it was also awarded the McKesson Quest for Quality Award in 2015.

The organization's strategy to improve access to care as well as provide specialty care closer to families' homes has been a guiding priority and prompted the formation of 15 regional "Network of Care" locations. These include numerous specialty care clinics, urgent care centers, and full-scale emergency departments. The networks have continued to rapidly expand and add new locations and more services every year. In 2012, construction began on an expansion for the main hospital.

As the organization grew, staff decided to make a major change. "In support of our focus on patient- and family-centered care, we elected to become a 'silent' hospital," explains Andrew Blackmon, chief technology officer. This meant reducing disruptive noises such as loud public-address announcements, alarms, and alerts. The initiative required staff to re-evaluate the organization's entire critical communications strategy.



Children's Hospital Colorado



OVERVIEW

Children's Hospital Colorado is a private, not-for-profit pediatric healthcare network dedicated 100 percent to caring for kids. Founded in Denver in 1908, it offers many cutting-edge programs, services, treatments, and research areas that exist at few other pediatric hospitals. With more than 2,500 pediatric specialists and 6,200 full-time employees, the organization is home to a number of nationally and internationally recognized medical programs. It has been ranked as one of the best children's hospitals nationally by U.S. News & World Report for the last 20 years.

INDUSTRY

Healthcare

BUSINESS DRIVERS

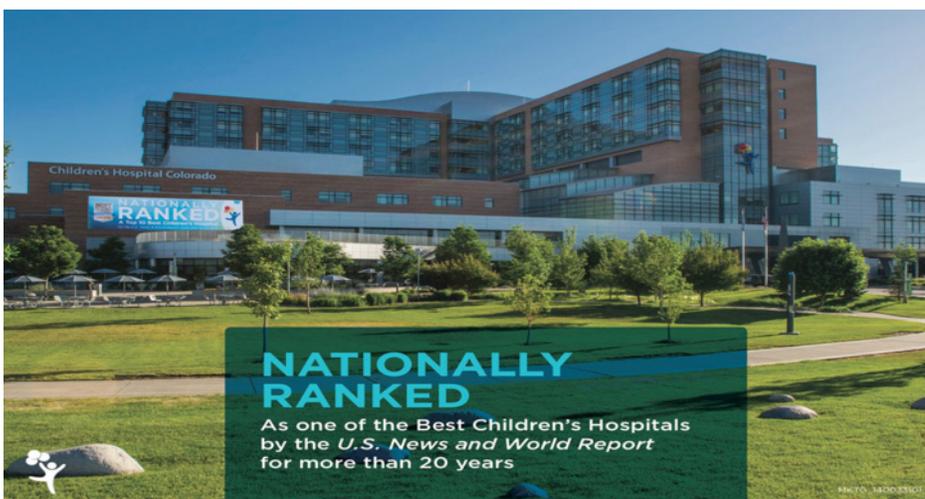
- Improve provider effectiveness through better communication
- Increase staff efficiency with better tools for on-call scheduling and alerts
- Increase reliability of paging network throughout hospital
- Enhance patient care by providing a quieter, more peaceful environment

SOLUTION

- Spok® solutions for paging, emergency notification, on-call scheduling, web directory, clinical alerting, and secure texting

RESULTS

- Minimized noise throughout the hospital for better patient- and family-centered care
- Improved reliability of paging network, allowing quicker response time
- Improved mobile communications among providers, resulting in better patient care
- Reduced operational expenses by eliminating outdated systems



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Andrew Blackmon
Chief Technology Officer



“Our goal was to make sure that we could still communicate efficiently and get the right physician to the right bed in a timely manner, without impacting the patient experience,” said Blackmon.

They started by looking at their paging solution, which they determined would not be able to provide adequate flexibility and coverage throughout the new facility.

“We needed a system that was fast and extremely reliable no matter where you happened to be in our location,” said Blackmon.

In addition to paging they needed a dependable solution for nurse call alerts and code calls, and a system to handle on-call scheduling. The list also included finding a way to communicate well with physicians without relying on announcements broadcast throughout the hospital, as well as reducing the number of devices that staff needed to carry.

THE SOLUTION

Looking for a strategic partner that could offer a range of solutions and integrate well with existing technology, the team turned to Spok.

“We were already considering Spok for paging, so it was logical to utilize that integration further,” said Blackmon. Staff liked the reliability and benefits of Spok’s paging solution and opted to also incorporate on-call scheduling and nurse call alerts. When that was well received they began a pilot of the Spok Mobile® secure text messaging solution, which allowed constantly on-the-move physicians to communicate with each other more quickly and easily. “We are working to limit clinician interruptions so physicians can concentrate on the patient,” said Blackmon.

THE RESULTS

With Spok’s powerful platform in place, communication reliability has improved, as has the overall care delivery process.

Staff members can now view logs and monitor when pages were sent, received, and acknowledged, which helps them better coordinate treatment plans. Delivery of code and nurse call alerts is far more dependable, which means patient needs are easier to address, particularly when a time-sensitive situation arises. And thanks to the elimination of outdated technology, the hospital is seeing reduced operational expenses and an overall improvement in communication among providers. They now have the convenience of discreet, secure mobile communication without relying on public announcements for information and messages. And most importantly, the quieter hospital has improved patient care and satisfaction.

“Spok is a hub of communication tools. It’s really important for a health system to be strategic and efficient, and a partner like Spok can help address a number of issues and enable us to plan for the future,” said Blackmon. “That allows us to focus on what’s really important: providing the best possible care for the kids.”