Stillwater Medical Center sends ICU, ED, and Day Surgery Vitals to its EHR via Accelero Connect®

OBJECTIVE: Stillwater Medical Center wanted to automate how vital signs were captured and recorded in the Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency Department, and Day Surgery, so nurses could focus on patients, not paperwork.

SITUATION: Nurses were spending a lot of time manually recording patient vital signs and then re-entering that information into the Electronic Health Record (EHR). This redundancy increased nurses' workload and the chance of documentation errors, such as transposed numbers. The process also delayed physicians' online access to essential patient data.

SOLUTION: As part of its long-standing commitment to leveraging the latest technology to enhance patient care, Stillwater chose iatricSystems™ Accelero Connect® to enable data exchange between a variety of patient vital signs equipment in these departments and the hospital's EHR.

RESULTS: "With Accelero Connect, real-time, patient-centered information automatically integrates into the EHR, so nurses can spend more time with patients," explains Cindy Carreno, RN, Clinical Nurse Manager at Stillwater Medical Center. Additionally, Stillwater physicians can now access accurate vitals immediately to assess patients and prescribe appropriate treatments without delay.

"We wanted our nurses to focus on patients, not paperwork, so we decided to look for a solution that would automate how vital signs were captured and recorded."

– Chris Roark
Chief Information Officer
Stillwater Medical Center

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Stillwater Medical Center in Stillwater, Oklahoma, is a 117-bed, not-for-profit, acute care hospital dedicated to providing high-quality care to its local residents and surrounding communities in north central Oklahoma.

As part of its commitment to enhance patient care through leveraging technology, Stillwater executives decided to take action when they saw the extra steps and time it took nurses to document patient vital signs in the ICU and other areas. "Our hospital has always stood behind technology as a means to make care more efficient and ultimately better for our patients," said Chris Roark, CIO of Stillwater Medical Center. "It became apparent that the way we were manually capturing vital sign data in the ICU not only left room for user error but also was highly inefficient. We wanted our nurses to focus on patients, not paperwork, so we decided to look for a solution that would automate how vital signs were captured and recorded."

The Search for a Scalable Solution

The hospital needed a solution that would work with a variety of patient monitoring equipment in multiple departments — continuous monitors in the ICU, low-acuity monitors in Day Surgery, and monitors in the ED. Stillwater's leadership — from both the clinical and IT sides — were involved in the selection process, which helped address the technical and clinical needs and identify what was required for a fully functional interface that would provide lasting benefits.

After weighing all of their options, Stillwater chose iatricSystems Accelero Connect. "Accelero Connect enabled us to implement a scalable solution that met our needs and was cost effective," said Roark. "In addition, their healthcare integration experts provided exceptional guidance and technical support to ensure a smooth and on-time implementation."

Success in Every Department

By using Accelero Connect to enable data exchange between ICU patient monitoring equipment and the hospital's EHR, Stillwater significantly improved patient care and safety while streamlining nurse workflow. "Prior to the Accelero Connect implementation, our ICU nursing staff had to manually record patient vital signs every 15 minutes and then re-enter that information into the EHR," said Cindy Carreno, RN, Clinical Nurse Manager at Stillwater Medical Center. "With Accelero Connect, real-time, patient-centered information automatically integrates into the EHR, so nurses can spend more time with patients."

Accelero Connect also made it possible for Stillwater to connect low-acuity monitors in its Day Surgery to its EHR without requiring the hospital to purchase additional software. "Accelero Connect enables a more efficient documentation process for our nursing staff," said Lea Brown, RN, Same Day Surgery / Endoscopy Clinical Manager at Stillwater Medical Center. "We have automated clinician workflow by sending vital sign results to our EHR without anyone having to manually key in these details."

By leveraging Accelero Connect a third time, Stillwater also automated vital sign data capture and streamlined clinician workflow in its ED, one of the hospital's busiest areas. "This ED interface takes us one step closer to having our entire organization's vital signs monitors connected to departmental systems and to the EHR," said Roark.

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Helping Physicians Help Patients

The implementation of Accelero Connect in all three areas also gave physicians online access to vital signs in real-time. Now they can assess patients and prescribe appropriate treatments without delay. Roark concluded, "By enabling data sharing between disparate technologies, we are truly enhancing the quality of care we provide. Clinicians want to provide the best care possible, and Accelero Connect helps them do this by eliminating ineffective, time-consuming, and potentially error-prone processes. By harnessing the power of integration, we've eradicated inefficient processes while improving patient care, workflow, and patient safety."

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