



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Cisco Survey of Hospital Nurses Highlights Impact of Communications Challenges in Hospitals**

#### *National Study Finds Patient Care and Efficiency Continue to Suffer*

CHICAGO, April 6, 2009 – Today at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Conference, Cisco announced the results of a survey that asked practicing nurses to identify the impact of communications challenges in hospitals.

The study, conducted by [Zogby International](#) and commissioned by Cisco, sheds new light on the heavy toll that communication lapses take on patient care, clinical efficiency and the overall ability of nurses to do their job. More than 250 practicing nurses were surveyed online during the past two months. They included those in medical-surgical, emergency room, operating room, and critical care-intensive care unit service.

**Key Survey Findings:****Improving “people-to-people connections” offers the greatest potential for improvement**

The primary issue identified in the Cisco® survey of nurses centered on the opportunity to improve communications among care team members. The time that nurses spend chasing other people to get answers was twice as great as the time they spend locating other resources.

- When asked how many minutes per shift are typically spent “chasing other people to get answers,” up to 86 percent of respondents estimated wasting as much as two hours per shift.
- When asked about information needed to improve communication, 48 percent of nurses surveyed said, “care team availability and location” is most needed from a communications device at the point of care.
- In an open-ended question about the most significant challenge that a nurse’s communications device could address, 56 percent of nurses said, “better communication between staff.”
- About 60 percent of nurses in the study estimate they work up to 10 hours of overtime each week due to time wasted or lost trying to communicate with other staff.

### **Communication lapses directly impact the patient**

Both patient safety and the patient experience suffer from communication lapses. The nurses surveyed clearly highlighted improved communication as a meaningful strategy to improve patient care.

- When asked to what extent communication lapses impact patient safety, 92 percent of nurses surveyed noted a “medium to very high” impact.
- Another 19 percent of nurses said they could more easily avoid patient care errors with the right communications device.
- When nurses were asked what the impact would be on their day-to-day responsibilities if they had access to a common communications device, nearly 30 percent of nurses said that they could provide more timely patient care.
- When asked to rate the potential impact of improved communication on the patient experience, 74 percent of nurses surveyed noted a “high impact.”

### **Hospital nurses suffer from a “digital divide”**

In spite of the communication-intensive nature of patient care, 25 percent of nurses surveyed reported having no access to a mobile communications device. Other nurses reported using multiple mobile devices that do not interoperate.

- Of the nurses surveyed, 91 percent indicated they would like a single communications device to meet their needs, but only 49 percent report actually using a single device. Another 27 percent note using two or more devices during a typical shift.
- When asked about the impact of communication lapses on the quality of their work life, 74 percent of nurses survey identified a high negative impact.

### **Cisco “Nurse Connect” Clinical Workflow Solution:**

To help address the communications challenges that continue to plague hospitals, Cisco is developing a portfolio of clinical care technologies designed to improve communication among mobile clinicians.

- [Cisco Nurse Connect](#) is a newly introduced solution that integrates nurse call applications, including Rauland-Borg’s Responder product lines, with Cisco Unified Wireless IP 7925G Phones to deliver nurse call alerts to mobile caregivers.
- The Cisco 7925G Phone was specifically designed with the features necessary to support the unique safety and biohazard requirements of hospitals, including a battery that supports up to 13 hours of talk-time, ruggedized and hermetically sealed, and Bluetooth support for hands-free use.
- The Nurse Connect Solution offers many benefits. For example, by reaching nurses on their mobile devices, the need to continually walk back to nursing stations or patient rooms is greatly reduced. Nurses can also have two-way communications with patients and send immediate requests to different levels of personnel after talking with the patient.

**Supporting Quotes:**

*Kaveh Safavi, Vice President, Global Healthcare Practice, Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group*  
“Our survey clearly shows that by improving communications, hospitals can directly improve quality of care and even their bottom line. Equipping nurses with the information they need, at the time it’s needed, will help hospitals realize significant time and cost savings as well as improved patient care.”

**For a copy of the full Cisco Nurses Survey please contact Christopher Barker at [chrbarke@cisco.com](mailto:chrbarke@cisco.com) or at 206-679-8151**

**Supporting Resources:**

- [Cisco Healthcare Web site](#)
- Link to Nurse Connect Video - [www.cisco.com/go/healthcare](http://www.cisco.com/go/healthcare)
- Cisco Healthcare Blog - <http://blogs.cisco.com/ciscotalk/healthcare>
- Cisco Healthcare Community of Interest - [www.communityforconnectedhealth.org](http://www.communityforconnectedhealth.org)

**Technorati Tags:** Cisco, Nurses, Survey, Patient, Care, Video, Podcast

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