Connected Community Hospitals: A Healthy Innovation
Community hospitals have a clear charter—to care for the health of the community. While it may be clear, it is not always easy. So community hospitals like yours are always looking for ways to deliver excellent patient care, increase patient satisfaction, provide more services to the community, do more with their budget, plus attract and retain outstanding clinicians by giving caregivers tools to be highly efficient.

A network platform that provides these benefits for everyone involved in patient care can make healthcare more accessible and affordable. It can also enable community hospitals to:

- **Improve patient satisfaction:** Providing access to more complete and accurate patient information improves patient satisfaction and care.

- **Make caregivers more efficient:** By spending less time finding files, colleagues, or equipment, healthcare professionals can focus on what they do best—care for patients.

- **Connect everyone to the right tools:** It’s not enough to use technology solutions in isolation in individual departments. They need to be shared throughout the hospital, with patients, families, physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists, pharmacists, and other caregivers having appropriate access.

- **Deliver better care:** The ability to let everyone involved in patient care share information, collaborate, and communicate more efficiently can improve the speed of healthcare delivery and the quality of the care itself.

Cisco® calls this the Connected Hospital—a vision for healthcare with seamlessly connected, networked patient information, communications, caregiver collaboration, and processes that reduce costs, improve access to care, and enhance the quality of that care.

Connecting Care to Opportunity

Hospitals of all sizes have the opportunity to use technology to meet community needs and fulfill their mission of care. Cisco has the vision, technology, and expertise to help you achieve that.

The connected hospital enhances coordination and collaboration, starting at the point of care. Information critical to patient treatment is shared when and where necessary, and continuity of care is safe, quick, and seamless. Connected community hospitals extend these capabilities with the flexibility to make better use of local and regional facilities and specialists, and to adapt, regardless of what the future brings.
The Network Is the Platform for Achieving Your Goals

By using intelligent networking to share vital health information and communications, community hospitals of all sizes are improving patient care. Cisco provides a highly secure communications infrastructure, the Cisco Medical-Grade Network, to meet the needs of patient care and diagnostic support.

Hospitals around the world are already building on the Cisco Medical-Grade Network to improve the quality of care by making patient information available when and where it is needed. This platform provides:

- Connections across all hospital departments and to external healthcare partners to make clinical and business processes efficient and effective
- A responsive, resilient, and highly protected infrastructure to meet critical requirements for performance, availability, reliability, and security
- Converged networking that combines voice, video, and data—run and managed on a single network—and fully integrates key applications with a common network-based platform for:
  - Order entry and results
  - Electronic medical records and computerized physician order entry
  - Medication dispensing
  - Patient education

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Poudre Valley Health System

When Poudre Valley Hospital System in Fort Collins, Colorado, decided to build a second acute-care facility, it wanted to create a robust network with high-level security that would support the latest clinical technologies and provide caregiver mobility.

Bar-code scanners provide more accurate medication administration. The in-house GetWell Network uses in-room television screens for patient education information and real-time feedback to hospital staff. A nurse call system contacts caregivers wirelessly all over the facility. A state-of-the-art electronic medical record provides the best current information across the continuum of care.

Russ Branzell, chief information officer, says of the system: "The more we build on this electronic platform, the more we use advanced technology, the more we're actually finding efficiencies to make healthcare affordable, reasonable, and—more important—better for the patients, with better outcomes."

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Components of the Cisco Medical-Grade Network

Cisco Medical-Grade Network Foundation: As community hospitals evolve from paper-based workflows to digital applications and communications, the importance of the network foundation increases to support mission-critical hospital applications. The Cisco Medical-Grade Network provides the foundation for healthcare when high availability and reliability are critical.

Mobility: A highly secure wireless network enables mobile access to critical applications, which facilitate seamless delivery of healthcare services and improves the quality of care. Mobile caregivers can achieve measurable improvements in patient safety, quality of care, and operational efficiencies. It can enable caregivers to get test and treatment results more quickly, facilitate staff collaboration, and reduce operational costs by:

- Allowing caregivers to access information when and where they need it
- Enabling staff to track resources with location-based services
- Decreasing response time for care, leading to improved patient satisfaction

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Cisco Medical-Grade Networks Connect Hospitals and the Community

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**The Children’s Hospital at Westmead**

A new mobile wireless system in the emergency department at the Children’s Hospital at Westmead in Sydney, Australia, decreased staff and patient waiting times, improved patient care and safety, and boosted staff satisfaction and productivity—according to a study by the NTF Group.

Twenty hours of staff time was saved per day, which equates to 7,439 hours per year. If these time savings were extrapolated across all hospital departments, potential time savings from the use of wireless technologies would be around 122,000 hours per year. The monetary value of those savings, calculated on the basis of current average salary levels across the hospital, would be more than US$7 million a year.

The hospital’s director of information services, Dr. Ralph Hanson, says, “We know IT brings benefits to healthcare delivery. When you translate that to the care clinicians give, you can see the immediate benefits.”

### Unified Communications

Clinicians receive large volumes of pager, fax, e-mail, and voice communications on a daily basis from colleagues, medical staff, and patients. Stored in separate information silos, they are difficult to filter, manage, and prioritize. As a result, clinicians may create artificial barriers to prevent colleagues and patients from interrupting their work.

The Cisco Medical-Grade Network provides the foundation for unified communications with a single converged infrastructure capable of support data, voice, and video. Unified communications provide the information control and integrated technology solutions to:

- Improve workflow, communications, and collaborative care
- Integrate communications

### Security

According to research from the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, two major concerns for hospitals are internal breaches of security and business continuity. Security threats can lead to loss of private data and assets, down-time, inefficient resource use, and monetary loss.

As hospitals shift more healthcare information from paper-based processes to digital applications, security needs to be an on-going process with initiatives to continually address new requirements and threats. A Cisco Medical-Grade Network delivers a high degree of security to hospital facilities and extends across the connected health environment to provide:

- Prompt, detailed threat reporting and improved compliance
- Intelligent features that help protect data, improve information integrity, and enhance network reliability
- Scalable infrastructure that supports additional applications

### Working Toward a Connected Future

Based on its industry participation and partnerships, Cisco has earned a leadership role in healthcare innovation and transformation. The Cisco Medical-Grade Network contributes to that leadership. By providing a framework that integrates applications for more efficient patient care, which serves to maximize return on investment, it helps today’s community hospitals around the world prepare for tomorrow.

For more information, or to see how you can obtain a free Cisco Medical-Grade Network review, contact your Cisco representative or reseller today. Or visit: [www.cisco.com/go/healthcare](http://www.cisco.com/go/healthcare)