

VA Medical Center case study

How a VA Healthcare Center maintained quality care – despite the pandemic



A challenge that couldn't wait

One of the country's largest Veterans Health Administration facilities is a healthcare center that delivers care to more than 170,000 veterans across a three-state region and includes a state-of-the-art acute care tertiary hospital with an inpatient capacity of over 400. When the coronavirus pandemic hit in March of 2020, a surge of COVID-19 patients quickly strained the capacity and resources of the facility. A shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) put physicians, nurses, staff, non-COVID-19 patients and visitors at increased risk of infection. Soon, overworked staff found themselves laboring around the clock to provide desperately needed care.

The hospital immediately implemented a plan to reduce COVID-19 exposure, address the PPE shortage, better isolate the ICU and COVID-19 wards and ensure sufficient care resources while providing relief to stressed and exhausted care providers. However, with the pandemic accelerating, time was of the essence.

A solution to better manage care, resources and exposure

The VA healthcare center turned to its proven and trusted systems integrator, Johnson Controls. Johnson Controls has a long history of support for VA facilities, including installing mass notification and duress notification systems in 150 VA facilities across the country. So the hospital staff knew Johnson Controls had the capabilities and resources to help keep facilities safe and secure for patients, staff and visitors.

Johnson Controls consultants recommended a HIPAA-compliant mobile nurse call station solution to address their needs. The solution would enable easier, non-contact, centralized monitoring of patients by putting a video monitor and intercom system in each room. Artificial intelligence (AI) and analytics capabilities would also provide automated detection and notification of patient conditions that required immediate caregiver assistance.

The VA hospital approved the solution Johnson Controls proposed, and Johnson Controls could fully deploy the solution within 21 days.



Results that will deliver beyond the pandemic

The Johnson Controls mobile nurse call station solution delivered as promised. It immediately began providing 24/7 continuous monitoring for patient comfort and health while helping to protect medical staff. Patients most in need are assured of getting the attention they deserve, with nurses able to view patients actively instead of just looking at their vitals from their station. The hospital has reduced to a minimum the amount of time staff spends in close contact with infected patients, thereby helping to keep COVID-19 infections from spreading.

Resource management and burnout issues are also being successfully addressed. With on-duty staff able to monitor more patients with fewer resources, the hospital can manage both surging demand and nurse/physician shortages while conserving scarce PPE inventory.

Knowing their health is better protected and they can keep up with larger patient volumes, the stress and emotional toll on staff have been significantly reduced.

A more effective and efficient healthcare future

The COVID-19 pandemic was a once-in-a-lifetime global health crisis that the Johnson Controls solution greatly helped manage. But the positive impact will continue to be felt long after the pandemic has subsided. The VA healthcare center has plans to expand its use, knowing that mitigated staff exposure, enhanced patient comfort, the ability to maintain occupancy and care levels, and improve staff well-being and effectiveness are benefits worth building upon into the future.

To learn more about how Johnson Controls can help improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your VA healthcare facility, call us at **1-888-329-3559** or visit info.jci.com/475-cu

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