IBM

Canterbury District Health Board improves patient care with a wireless communication system.

Run by the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB), Christchurch Hospital is the largest tertiary, teaching and research hospital on New Zealand's South Island, and it provides a full range of emergency, acute, elective and outpatient services. The hospital, which operates between 600 and 650 beds, provides services to more than 35,600 inpatients each year. In addition, Christchurch Hospital has the busiest emergency department in Australia treating more than 65,000 patients per year.

Overview
Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) Christchurch, New Zealand www.cdhb.govt.nz/chc
Industry • Government
Services • IBM Global Technology Services
IBM Business Partner • Vocera Communications

Canterbury
District Health Board
Te Poari Hauora ō Waitaha

"The use of wireless communication has become part of the standard practice in the emergency department, and is effective for getting the right personnel to the patient's bedside in a timely fashion."

—Dr. Paul Gee, emergency specialist,
  Canterbury District Health Board

Challenge
CDHB has the busiest emergency department in Australasia, treating more than 65,000 patients a year. To handle such a large volume while providing the best care possible, the hospital needs to be able to quickly and easily locate staff members and communicate important information between departments. However, using an in-hospital paging system, staff would sometimes take up to thirty minutes to locate the personnel needed to treat a patient. The hospital needed a more efficient communication system.

Solution
CDHB's emergency department and IBM implemented a solution from IBM Business Partner Vocera Communications that enables hospital personnel to communicate instantly with any other staff member or to call fixed telephone extensions within the hospital. By wearing small wireless communication badges, staff can issue hands-free, voice-activated commands to quickly and easily locate personnel, confirm prescriptions and communicate test results.

Benefits
• Decreased the amount of time needed to locate staff members from an average of four minutes to less than one minute

• Realized a complete return on investment (ROI) within nine months

• A 7% increase in staff efficiency has helped improve patient care

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