



Integrated hospital communications support St Stephen's in delivering exceptional patient care.

Situation

Wanted: Integrated communication solutions for new state-of-the-art digital hospital

The UnitingCare Health group had a vision to create a cutting-edge healthcare facility for the Fraser Coast community. In planning the new St Stephens hospital in Hervey Bay, the project team also had another objective – to build the country's first fully integrated digital hospital, and a pilot site for the future of healthcare in Australia.

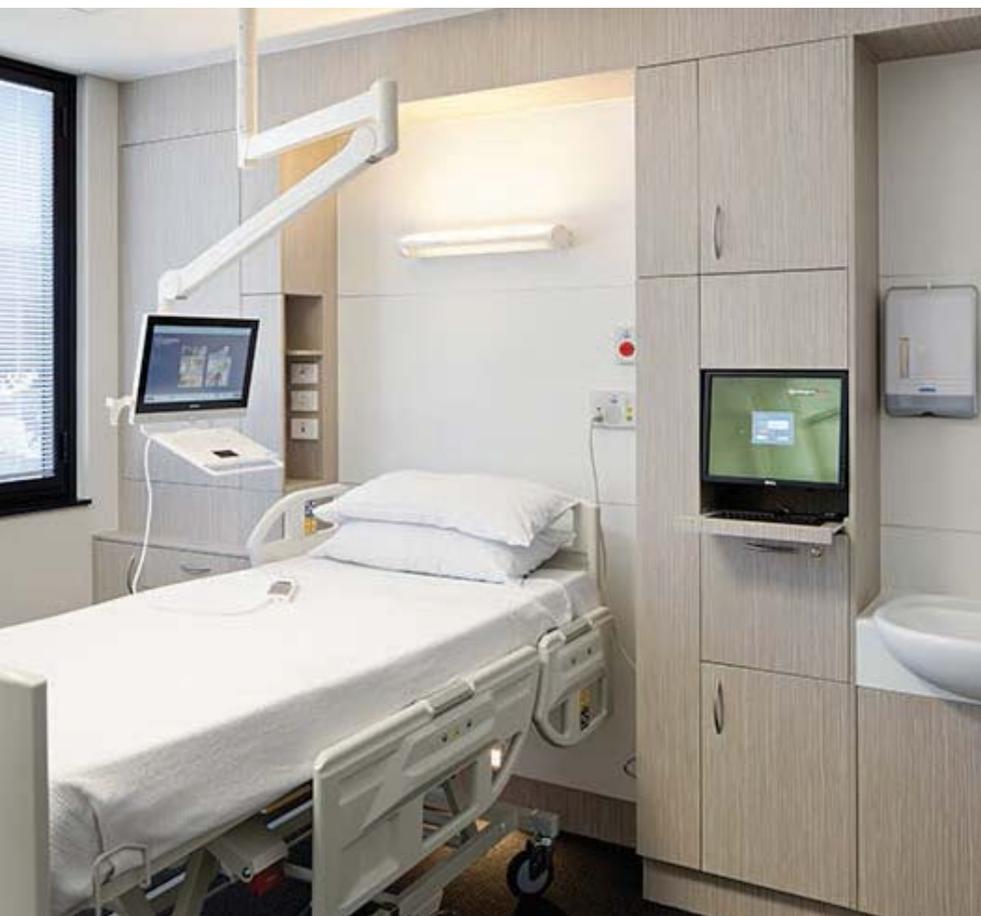
The design was developed with a focus on the health, safety and comfort of patients, and with extensive input from a range of health professionals and the local community. The technology was simply an enabler to the ultimate goal of improving clinical outcomes and driving operational efficiencies.

“Ultimately, it is all about the patient. The new technology allows us to automate our processes and capture and share information in real time but, most importantly, it enables us to deliver exceptional patient care,” says Christine Riley, Project Co-ordinator, Capital Works at UnitingCare Health.

Having selected Cerner as its Electronic Medical Record (EMR) platform, the eHealth project team commenced the search for nurse call and patient entertainment solutions that would seamlessly integrate with the EMR and directly support the patient-centric vision.

UnitingCare Health selected the Rauland Responder® 5 nurse call and communication platform, and HiMed Cockpit point-of-care terminals for patient entertainment and electronic meal ordering.

Today, smart system connections save time, improve collaboration and help enhance the patient experience.



“The bedside terminals help us improve clinical collaboration, and provide patients with autonomy in ordering meals and selecting entertainment options – and hence giving them a greater sense of control and improving the overall patient experience.”

Rae Priaulx
Acting General Manager/Director of Nursing, St Stephens

Solution

A hospital communication platform and patient entertainment system with access to clinical information

In their search for best-of-breed solutions, the project team conducted extensive marketplace research. Rauland Australia was invited to participate in the process and contributed to the early stakeholder consultation workshops and in finalising the system specifications.

Rauland’s solution is designed to support St Stephen’s advanced patient model. The Responder®5 nurse call system provides advanced hospital-wide communication, and the HiMed Cockpit point-of-care terminals enable flexible patient entertainment and communication options, and electronic meal ordering functionality.

“The Rauland solution is the right fit for us. It is based on proven technology, it complements our eHealth strategy and it integrates well with the Cerner EMR system. Rauland’s local presence and their flexible approach was also important to us. They have been exceptional to work with,” says Joseph Maruca, Solutions Architect, Information Services, UnitingCare Health.

When St Stephen’s opened its doors, it did so with Responder 5 nurse call and the HiMed Cockpit terminals installed at every bedside, and Responder 5 workflow terminals in place in each of its five operating theatres.

Outcomes

Smart system connections save time, improve collaboration and enhance the patient experience.

The Rauland solution provides St Stephen's with smart nurse call functionality, a flexible hospital communications platform, and bedside access to medical records and a number of patient entertainment options. It integrates with the Cerner EMR, meal ordering, and Vocera wireless communication devices.

Here are just some of the ways it helps the team at St Stephen's to provide exceptional patient care:

Nurses respond to patient needs, not just patient calls

The smart nurse call handset enables patients to select 'Pain', 'Toilet' or 'Nurse' buttons. The designated nurse receives the notification on their wireless device and can speak to patient to assure that their request has been heard. Nurses can prioritise all of their calls with ease and go to the patient room prepared with what they need.

Patients receive personalised, familiar care

Two-way communication between patient and nurse means the patient is always connected to their primary care giver. This one-to-one relationship helps to reduce the people traffic coming in and out of the patient room throughout the day. If the patient's designated nurse is not available to take their call, the call is routed to the next available nurse or the nursing unit manager and the patient is kept informed in real-time.

Fast, direct communication saves theatre time

At a single press of a button, the workflow terminals enable theatre staff to initiate contact with other theatres or specialist support teams. Clinicians can consult their colleagues with ease,

and swiftly coordinate assistance from the pathology or radiology teams. It takes one quick action to request the assistance of an orderly, with each request clearly specified. For example 'Theatre Clean', 'Urgent Pick-up', or 'Transfer to PACU'.

Greater autonomy helps to enhance the patient experience

Patients are able to access information about their care and treatment plan, select their meals online, and to browse the internet or watch TV - all through a simple, easy-to-use interface. The system has been embraced by patients of all ages and provides them with a greater sense of control and autonomy.

Electronic meal ordering saves time and helps to protect patient safety

Using the HiMed bedside terminals, patients select and order their meals from a personalised menu that reflects their individual dietary and therapeutic requirements. Not only does this eliminate several manual steps (such as menu printing, distribution, collection and collation), it also reduces the risk of the patient being given a meal that may have adverse health effects.

WORDS OF ADVICE FROM THE TEAM AT ST STEPHENS

"When rolling out a digital hospital, it is critical that your IT infrastructure is in place and stable well before you start plugging in bio-medical devices and other equipment. Ensure that you engage partners that will work shoulder-to-shoulder with you. This has been one of the keys to our success," says Joseph Maruca.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

St Stephen's has led with technology to transform the patient experience and it will continue to grow and evolve in line with the needs of the local community.

For the UnitingHealth Group, the hospital is a pilot for its eHealth strategy and patient model which it plans to implement in other sites. "The new digital environment is stable and working extremely well. Our visitors have been very impressed. We are planning to roll-out the same capability in our other facilities and will do so in phases, commencing with upgrades to existing infrastructure," says Joseph Maruca.