Solution impact study

Gold Coast University Hospital implements Quiet Environment

The Quiet Environment supported reduced alarm fatigue amongst staff and improved patient safety and continuity of patient care.

"Improved continuity of care and patient safety was achieved by connecting patients directly to their nurse."

Gold Coast University Hospital

↓61%

Reduction in Alarm Noise[1]

↓66%

Reduction in Staff Notifications[1]

Gold Coast University Hospital

GCUH is a major health facility located in Southport on the Queensland Gold Coast. The 750-bed medical facility offers secondary and tertiary level health care across more than 20 facilities with services including: specialist cancer and cardiac services, neurosciences, trauma and neonatal intensive care. Primary health services including child and oral health are also delivered from community settings.

↑54%

The ward is a quieter and more restful environment

The Challenge

Gold Coast University Hospital in Queensland conducted a silent In-Patient Unit (IPU) trial as part of its 'Releasing Time to Care' initiative, focused on giving clinical teams more time with patients, while empowering them to improve safety, quality and delivery of care. 'Releasing Time to Care' is an evidence-based, patient focused continuous improvement program. The initiative is designed to enable inpatient unit-based teams to redesign and streamline the way they work; with the goal of freeing up more time to care for patients, leading to improved patient safety and outcomes, and improved staff well-being.

The Solution

The Hospital completed the silent trial using the Concentric Care Lighthouse solution, integrated with its Responder Nurse Call System. The silent In-patient Unit trial saw all annunciators silenced and patient requests directed through to the relevant nurses' phones, allowing them to call back to the room to speak with the patient from anywhere in the unit.

Clinical Outcomes

- Reduced Response Times
- Improved Continuity of Care
- Improved Staff Satisfaction
- Reduction in Alarm Fatigue

Improved continuity of care and patient safety was achieved by connecting patients directly to their nurse, with staff response times averaging 48 seconds when using voice.

The silent ward helped nurses to determine their patients' needs more quickly and be more responsive to patients, as they were able to prioritise their response and gather equipment or medication before attending to the patient in person.

Staff satisfaction measures showed a 54% improvement in nurses considering the ward a quieter and more restful environment[2].

By implementing silent notifications without annunciator alarms, Gold Coast University Hospital achieved a 61% reduction in alarm noise[1]. This is a significant step towards reducing alarm fatigue amongst staff and improving patient safety outcomes.

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1. Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service and Rauland Australia conducted a proof of concept trial of a silent ward environment in Ward C6E; an in-patient unit at Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH). The trial was conducted as part of the Releasing Time to Care program between 23rd August 2019 and 17th December 2019.
2. Healthcare staff are typically exposed to hundreds of alarms during each shift; researchers believe that the number of alarms may be in excess of 1000 alarms per shift. This may lead to staff becoming desensitised to the alarm, which in turn may lead to a delayed or inadequate response to the alarm. This is known as alarm fatigue. In 2015, the US Food and Drug Administration reported more than 500 alarm-related patient deaths across a period of five years. Ruskin, Keith J. and Hueske-Kraus, Dirk. Alarm fatigue: impacts on patient safety. Current Opinion in Anaesthesiology. 28(6):685-690, December 2015.