

Connections

A Flo Healthcare newsletter on improving patient care

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The Second Time Around: All Children's Hospital Replaces Carts with Flo 1750



All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg, Fla., has been a leader in pediatric treatment since its founding in the 1920s. In order to remain at the forefront, the hospital sought a wireless mobile clinical workstation that nurses and physicians could take with them right to the bedside for charting and rounding.

The hospital implemented computers on wheels (COWs) several years ago, but found that the devices' large size, lack of comfort and inability to indicate how much power remained prevented clinicians from taking them into patient rooms.

New Selection Criteria

All Children's IT department worked with the hospital's nursing staff to assess the current carts and figure out what needed to be different the second time around. The new criteria included a smaller footprint, a height-adjustable work surface, the ability to add or upgrade components as needed, and a way to keep tabs on the battery's charge.

After nurses and physicians tested devices for several days, they ultimately chose the Flo 1750 wireless mobile clinical workstation, which they had nicknamed "The Skinny COW" because

of its small size. Jodi Moll, an RN and clinical informatics education specialist at All Children's, noted that the Flo 1750's height-adjustable work surface, footrest, and large monitor made it more comfortable for nurses to use. The small footprint also facilitated bringing the workstation directly to the point of care.

Better Access to Battery Data

Moll said that Flo's BatteryPro software sealed the deal. BatteryPro displays the battery data on the workstation monitor so that users can see what percentage of the battery is left, how much runtime remains, and the amount of time it will take to charge up to 100 percent.

The hospital ordered 46 Flo 1750s, with a Wyse thin client and 20-inch monitor. The workstations are up and running in the hospital's PICU, NICU, emergency center and in admissions.

Deborah Whittemore, a client technology specialist at All Children's, noted that the IT department also favored the Flo model because, compared to competing models, it is so easy to add peripherals and upgrade the computer in the future. Flo's flexibility is paramount in a hospital such as All Children's, where each department requires a different design.

From the General Manager

Over the years, many customers have asked me what I would look for when selecting a point-of-care partner. For me, the answer comes down to one word: excellence. When evaluating potential partners, ask questions about their technology, safety, product design, the environments where their solutions work, and staff and patient satisfaction.

When it comes to technology, find out what special applications they offer. This will tell you how well they've thought about the end user. For instance, do the workstations come with power management software? Clinicians should be able to easily see what percentage of the battery remains, how much runtime remains, etc.

Safety from both a user and patient perspective is critical. Users should have peace of mind knowing that their entire workstation – not just one or two components – is fully certified. Find out if the entire workstation is certified as a system to be in compliance with the UL 60601-1 safety standard.

Another area to evaluate is product design. Are your technology partners looking for creative ways to integrate technology with the workstations? The informed consent process, for example, can easily be automated with a wireless mobile workstation.

When evaluating your current needs, don't forget about your future growth. One day your organization may want to institute a telehealth initiative to reach beyond its own walls. If so, consider a point-of-care partner who has experience working in a variety of environments.

Finally, talk to other hospitals and find out if staff and patient satisfaction levels have increased since wireless workstations were deployed.

Excellence is a key element in the foundation we've built at Flo Healthcare and something we don't take lightly. We want to be the point-of-care partner you trust to deliver safe and reliable technology that will improve patient care, while increasing staff and patient satisfaction. Together, we are improving connections, improving care. If you have any questions, please drop us a line.



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Telehealth Initiative Connects Rural Stroke Patients with Neurologists at Hub Hospitals

Imagine this scene: a woman in rural Georgia suffers a stroke, and her family rushes her to the local ER for treatment. Once she arrives, however, the ER staff reports that she must be transported to its hub hospital, hours away, where a neurologist can adequately diagnose her situation. By the time she arrives at the hub for evaluation, she has suffered irreversible brain damage.

"Unfortunately, this situation is all too real for many rural hospitals all over the United States," said Sandeep Agate, president and CEO for REACH Call, Inc. Thanks to a telehealth initiative between REACH Call, Inc., and Flo Healthcare, rural patients no longer have to travel to a hub hospital for stroke treatment.

"From the time a patient suffers a stroke, he has a three-hour window to be diagnosed and receive treatment before suffering permanent disability, perhaps even death," Agate said.

The typical treatment for a stroke victim is a blood-thinning medication called tPA – tissue plasminogen activator. tPA is used to dissolve blood clots in the brain that occur during a stroke. It must be ordered by a neurologist and administered to the patient within three hours of a stroke, posing a major problem for rural hospitals with no local neurologist on staff.

Remote Patient Evaluation

Agate explained that REACH Call works in a "hub and spoke" network of hospitals, where the hub (usually located in a larger city) provides physician-consulting services to spoke hospitals (typically in rural areas) for remote evaluation of acute medical conditions, such as stroke. These spoke hospitals use a workstation from Flo Healthcare to communicate with a physician at the hub hospital. Spoke hospital ER staff can use the web browser running on a laptop embedded in the workstation to register a patient and to request a consult with a remote physician.

"Since REACH is a 100 percent web-based turnkey service, there is no hardware or software installed in the hub hospital," Agate said. "The consulting physician can use any laptop or PC and a broadband internet connection to communicate with the spoke hospital and evaluate the patient."

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Flo 1750 with video conferencing capabilities



Flo Healthcare Works with the iMedConsent™ Application to Automate Informed Consent in VA Hospitals

A comprehensive Informed Consent policy is essential in all hospitals. Well-designed Informed Consent forms should contain a description of the proposed treatment, the patient's diagnosis, the risks and benefits of the contemplated procedure, and a listing of alternative therapies. Physicians review this information with the patients and answer any questions. Then patients must verify their understanding and voluntarily agree to the proposed treatment.

Benefits of an Automated Consent Process

Automating the consent process offers many benefits to the hospital, physicians, and patients. When the informed consent process is automated, it provides a mechanism for standardizing the consent discussion across all providers and for all procedures. Standardization of the informed consent process and related forms is one way to ensure compliance and meet the patient's need to receive consistent information. Electronic forms reduce a tremendous amount of paper used by the hospitals, paper which can be lost prior to getting into the patient's medical record, thus potentially delaying treatment. Through the use of technology, these forms can be automatically added to the patient's electronic medical record, increasing patient safety and making this information available to all hospital staff.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) chose to adopt an electronic approach to standardizing the informed consent process nationally in 2004. Currently, the VA employs the iMedConsent™ application, a computer-based patient education solution developed by Dialog Medical. This solution provides the basis for the informed consent process in each of the VA medical centers throughout the U.S.

A large number of VA centers are using mobile workstations from Flo Healthcare to access the iMedConsent-generated forms and bring them right next to the patient's bedside. That number is expected to continue to grow.



"Time and time again, our VA hospital customers confide that our workstations' ease of use made Flo their top choice," said Janet Herold, director of national accounts for Flo Healthcare. "Flo workstations' small footprint, long battery life, and height-adjustable work surface make our products both comfortable and easy to use."

Customizing the Flo Workstation

In order to accommodate the iMedConsent application, Flo developed a swivel monitor so the physician can turn the monitor toward the patient while reviewing the documentation. In addition, Flo added a signature pad to its workstations so patients can sign the forms after the physician reviews the consent form with them. The forms are then dated and time-stamped and immediately added to the patient's electronic medical record.

"Fully comprehended informed consent has been identified as a key component to ensuring patient safety," said Tim Kelly, vice president of marketing for Dialog Medical. "Adapting a mobile workstation to accommodate the needs of both the patient and the provider, as Flo Healthcare has done, is essential to facilitating this shared decision-making process in a paperless environment."

Telehealth Initiative continued...

Access to All Patient Data

He added that the physician at the hub has complete control over the two-way audio and video communication and can view all patient data, DICOM images such as CT Scans, and use the integrated decision support tools to efficiently and effectively evaluate the patient and recommend treatment.

REACH, which stands for Remote Evaluation of Acute isChemic stroke, is a full-service application services provider co-founded by Dr. David C. Hess and other members of the Medical College of Georgia (MCG).

"Deep in the heart of the stroke belt of the United States, rural hospitals in Georgia were unable to provide stroke care to patients visiting their ERs," Agate said. "These stroke patients were transferred to MCG in Augusta for treatment, often too late to receive tPA."

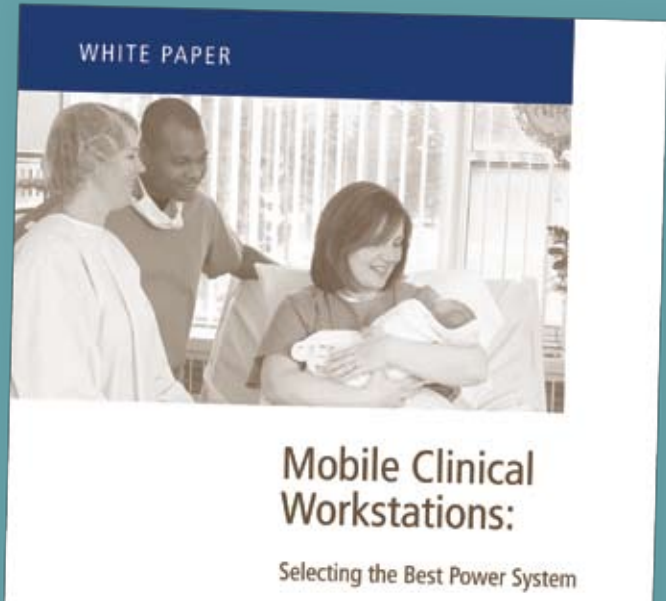
Currently, the REACH Call application using the Flo 1750 workstation is in use by 44 hospitals.

Mobile Clinical Workstations: Selecting the Best Power System

Choosing the right power system for your workstation is important, and your selection will probably be based on a number of factors, including safety, run time, performance over time, use, flexibility and total cost of ownership.

To help you make the best choice possible, Flo Healthcare has created a free white paper, *Mobile Clinical Workstations: Selecting the Best Power System*. It discusses the six key requirements of power system performance that hospitals need to consider before acquiring mobile clinical workstations. Plus, it evaluates the ability of three battery technologies – sealed lead-acid, nickel metal hydride and lithium-ion – to meet these requirements, with special attention paid to the business case of the two leading types of power systems.

Download your own copy at www.flohealthcare.com and check back often for more helpful resources.



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