



CASE STUDY:

Providence Hospital, Washington, D.C. — Member of Ascension Health

Customer Profile

Chartered by President Abraham Lincoln in 1861, Providence Hospital stands as the oldest continuously operating hospital in the Nation's Capital, and a symbol of commitment to the healthcare needs of the metropolitan area. The 382-bed medical facility and 240-bed nursing and rehabilitation center fulfills the mission to the sick and the poor with joy, care, respect, while at the same time embracing the best that medical science has to offer.

A member of Ascension Health System, the country's largest not-for-profit healthcare system, Providence Health System serves the community through diverse and qualified teams of physicians, nurses, technicians and support staff. Programs operated in conjunction with other major healthcare providers throughout the region offer patients and the community a wide array of services for both treatment and prevention.

Simple & Affordable Asset Tracking

Providence Hospital sought a comprehensive, simple and reliable asset tracking solution. Mark Todd, Director, Materiel Management at Providence, chose HOMER because it was a complete, simple and reliable asset tracking system, requiring no infrastructure. He chose HOMER to:

- ❑ Identify equipment as it comes through the door
- ❑ Track equipment that moves
- ❑ Easily identify equipment that needs to be serviced or replaced
- ❑ Allow nurses to look at inventory and request necessary equipment

"Aethon's solution is much less expensive and more complete for what I had in mind for asset tracking."

Aethon integrates automated delivery as part of its asset tracking solution.

"Ensuring that we not only know where our assets are, but that they are where they should be."

Need to Automate Deliveries

Prior to integrating TUG, professional staff was responsible for delivery of medication, supplies, and meals, etc. Nurses, pharmacists, and lab technicians had to spend their valuable time acting like hospital runners — ferrying equipment, lab specimens and medication.

Todd was introduced to TUG at an Ascension Health meeting. He immediately saw opportunities for an integrated and automated messenger service across departments. Providence started with three TUGs. Within a year, Providence adopted an additional three TUGs to expedite deliveries in:

- ❑ Materials Management
- ❑ Pharmacy
- ❑ Lab
- ❑ Dietary

Materials Management

Materials Management used to dedicate one position for staff messenger or hospital runner. Lemar McRae, Materials Shift Coordinator, laments how “no one wanted to be designated as the runner.” Now, TUG fills the need for messengers, and staff members are focused on the management of materials. “Providence is moving forward, with something innovative and extremely effective.”

TUG delivers and picks up supplies on demand, as well as on regular rotations. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, TUG is always on duty and never calls in sick.

Nursing

In a pinch, nurses used to make runs to the pharmacy, lab and materials management. Today, nurses are able to call the TUG to make those runs. Gaurdia Banister, RN, PhD and SVP of Patient Care, believes that “the time the TUG saves, translates into better patient care, as it allows nurses to stay on the floor.”

Pharmacy

Much like the experience in Materials Management, Dr. Zamir Shah, Providence's Pharmacy Director, found that he was able to “eliminate the position of messenger.” Shah looks to TUG as a mechanism for both immediate

needs and scheduled deliveries. TUG is especially useful in the evenings when staffing is typically lower.

Each day, TUG makes up to 40 deliveries. Ultimately, TUG ensures that medication is available on demand, and “improves patient care, because there are more delivery options.”

Dietary

TUG stepped in to help Beth Yesford, Providence's Director of Dietary, meet a serious challenge. Yesford faced labor vacancies and looked to TUG to fill the gap. Inside of two months, TUG has been able to save 100 minutes per day, and is embraced by staff that now enjoys reduced workloads. “Introducing TUG was seamless, almost as if it had been here all along.”

In the dietary department, TUG is used to pick up par stock and late trays. A new TUG will be added to move supplies to and from a coffee bar to open soon.

Lab

Charles Annor, Providence's Lab Director, utilizes TUG as messenger, allowing him to dedicate employees to lab work. Each time a nursing unit calls for a pick up or for supplies to go up to the floor, he sends TUG.

At the end of the day, Annor finds that TUG allows for more time with patients and better patient care. In the past, nurses would go to the lab if a messenger was not immediately available. Now, with TUG in operation, nurses can devote their full attention to providing care without making lab runs.

Annor is “now just waiting for TUG to make my coffee.” He should probably talk to Beth Yesford; she might just be able to send her TUG with a steaming cup of coffee from the new coffee bar.

Conclusion

TUG and HOMER have enabled dedicated administrators and staff to focus on the big picture, providing quality patient care. Providence Hospital's key departments are now more streamlined and efficient, and staff have welcomed their new “colleagues” with open arms.