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Level 13, 601 Pacific Highway
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Printed in Australia
03/08

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Designed by the IBM Grafxlab.
GL_9615

This case study is based on information
provided by Samarinda Lodge and illustrates
how one organisation uses IBM products.
Many factors have contributed to the results
and benefits described. IBM does not
guarantee comparable results elsewhere.

Samarinda Lodge improves resident care while increasing staff productivity with IBM Global Technology Services

**About Samarinda Lodge**

Samarinda Lodge is a not-for-profit residential aged-care facility in Ashburton, Australia, serving approximately 40 residents. The organisation is staffed by registered nurses as well as personal care attendants and offers 24x7 care for its residents.

With only one caregiver per three residents, the facility needs its staff members to be able to communicate effectively with residents and with one another to ensure that each resident receives the highest quality care. Because they are constantly on the move, Samarinda Lodge's nurses and attendants were relying on cumbersome walkie-talkies in addition to pagers and cell phones to contact one another. However, the walkie-talkie solution was not secure and would sometimes pick up conversations involving "colourful language" from passing truckers' citizens band (CB) radios. Because the conversations of others could be easily overheard using this system, the facility was concerned that the private medical information of its residents might also be overheard.

Further, the solution did not allow the level of responsiveness to resident needs that Samarinda Lodge wanted. The organisation needed a more effective communication system that would help to protect its residents' privacy and allow staff members to contact one another more quickly and easily.

Overview

■ **The Challenge**

Samarinda Lodge is a not-for-profit residential aged-care facility in Australia. With only one caregiver per six residents, the facility needs its staff members to be able to communicate effectively with residents and with one another to ensure that each resident receives the highest quality care. However, the facility's existing communication system—cumbersome walkie-talkies sometimes combined with pagers and cell phones—did not allow residents to contact all staff members or allow staff members to contact one another quickly and easily. Samarinda Lodge needed a more effective communication solution to help improve its responsiveness to resident needs.

■ **The Solution**

Samarinda Lodge improved communication between staff and residents by working with IBM to implement a hands-free, voice-based communication solution. Based on communication badges from Vocera, the new solution enables staff members to easily call any resident's room, any other staff member or the front desk from any location, while continuing to attend to the task at hand. In addition, residents can use the phones in their rooms to call any staff member.

■ **The Benefits**

- Improved care of residents through greater responsiveness to their needs
- Helps reduce labor costs and helps to attract and retain staff
- Won several awards for innovation in healthcare

IBM and Vocera answer the call

Samarinda Lodge worked with IBM to implement a hands-free, voice-based communication solution that improved communication between staff members and residents. The new solution enables staff members to easily and securely call any resident's room, any other staff member or the front desk from any location. And because the solution is hands-free, a worker can continue to carry out the task at hand. In addition, the solution allows residents to use the phones in their rooms to call any staff member.

The solution consists of several integrated components: a new wireless infrastructure, a new Internet Protocol (IP) telephony solution that replaces the organisation's private automatic branch exchange (PABX) telephone system, communication badges from Vocera and the client's existing nurse dispatch system.

- *Improved care of residents through greater responsiveness to their needs*
- *Reduces labour costs by 10 percent by enabling staff to be more productive*
- *Won several awards for innovation in healthcare, boosting the client's reputation in the industry*
- *Achieved return on investment (ROI) within 12 months*

“The new communication solution has literally transformed our operations. Our staff wonders how we used to function without it, and our residents are absolutely thrilled.”

— Samarinda Lodge

With only one caregiver per six residents, the Samarinda Lodge needed its staff to be highly mobile to ensure that each resident received high-quality care. Constantly on the move, the facility staff was equipped with cumbersome walkie-talkies to communicate with each other and to receive assignments from the front desk. But the walkie-talkie solution was not secure and would sometimes pick up conversations from passing truckers' citizens band (CB) radios that involved “colourful language.” Because the conversations of others could be easily overheard using this system, the facility was concerned that the private medical information of its residents might also be overheard.

The walkie-talkies were not the only problem - nurses also carried pagers and sometimes cell phones to communicate with residents. Carrying all of this equipment was awkward, and facility staff hoped for a simpler, more secure communication method.

IBM deploys Vocera wireless communications system

Samarinda Lodge engaged IBM Global Technology Services under an Integrated Communication Services contract to implement a centralised communication framework for facility staff.

For the first phase of this three-phase project, the IBM team constructed a wireless infrastructure to support a new dispatch system. The IBM staff also integrated new communication badges from Vocera with the wireless infrastructure to replace the previous walkie-talkie solution.

The second phase of the project involved replacing the client's private automatic branch exchange (PABX) telephone system with a new Internet Protocol (IP) telephony solution. With the new phone system integrated with the wireless framework, patients can now use the phones in their rooms to call facility staff members' Vocera badges. Conversely, staff can now call rooms from any location in the facility.

Finally, for the third phase of the project, the IBM team integrated the Vocera badges with the client's nurse dispatch system. Now, nursing staff can communicate with each other and with the front office using only their Vocera badges.

Improved efficiency helps to improve patient care

With the centralised communication framework from the Global Technology Services team, Samarinda Lodge has significantly improved the productivity of its staff. In fact, the organisation estimates that it has experienced a ten percent savings in its labour costs, meaning that the solution will pay for itself in a couple of years.

The more meaningful benefit of the solution is experienced by the patients. Because residents can now communicate with staff anywhere in the facility, caregivers can respond more quickly to requests. And since staff members can now communicate more effectively with each other, they can better coordinate their efforts to help ensure a better quality of response for residents.