

## **Sutter hospital saves money, boosts satisfaction with wireless VoIP**

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Sutter Solano Medical Center in Vallejo, Calif., spent \$280,000 to implement wireless voice-over-IP telephony a little more than a year ago. The hospital recouped its investment in little more than six months, says John Teymourian, senior network IS administrator for the 102-bed facility, by taking advantage of all the features VoIP offers over traditional wired telephone service.

The hospital had been looking at VoIP in 2007 for the cost savings, but found during a 2008 renovation project how simple it was to relocate personnel without having to change their phone numbers. "It was costly for us to move these people around to different offices with plain old telephone service," IS affiliate leader Linda Pezzola tells FierceMobileHealthcare. But it's simple and inexpensive to do so with wireless VoIP.

"Also, when we're deploying new areas, we're saving on cable drops," Teymourian says.

The technology has pulled off the fascinating trick of simplifying the lives of Sutter Solano's clinicians easier while simultaneously increasing accountability. By tying paging into the central call-handling system, pages go directly to the wireless phones doctors and nurses now carry throughout the hospital, plus there's a way to track when pages were sent, how quickly the clinicians respond and what actions they take. "It was hard to hold the staff accountable when we paged them," Pezzola says, since pages had been easily ignored, especially those from patient rooms.

Now, when patients ring the nurse call button, or when a nurse pages a doctor, the page goes directly to the proper person's phone, and the alerts escalate if there's no response in a reasonable amount of time. "This is to make sure the patient is getting the proper response and the proper care," Teymourian says. And rather than feel like they're being watched, clinicians have embraced the system. "This way, the doctor can call the nurse and talk to her immediately."

Sutter Solano now is looking to tie GE Healthcare monitoring devices into the Cisco VoIP system so doctors will be able to see telemetry images right on their mobile phones, Pezzola says. As of now, they get text messages to inform them of any irregularities.

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