

# St. Luke's Enhances Quality of Patient Care with NetMotion Mobility®

St. Luke's Episcopal Health System is one of the nation's largest health systems with 105 hospitals, 30 critical access facilities, home health agencies and several other health-focused facilities in 19 states. It has long been considered a pioneer in both medical procedures and technology implementations. However, clinicians were regularly losing connectivity moving throughout and between facilities. St. Luke's deployed NetMotion Mobility to ensure that the group's growing number of staff across its expanding campus had resilient connectivity throughout their day.

## Growing Pains

A rising number of help tickets for similar, persistent issues confirmed St. Luke's growth was overwhelming the organization's existing wireless network. The IT team quickly took inventory of the issues they were having and how they were negatively impacting patient care.

"Clinicians using handheld devices had trouble maintaining their sessions while moving around the floors," explains Gene Gretzer, senior analyst and wireless initiative project leader for St. Luke's. "As doctors and nurses walked through areas where the wireless network was weak – such as long hallways, onto elevators, or through older areas in the hospital – they'd lose their network connection. This caused the legacy VPN and applications to quit, requiring the clinicians to log in again, restart applications and re-enter any data that may not have been transmitted."

The situation frustrated busy doctors and nurses who felt that they were wasting time on devices that were supposed to be increasing their productivity. The IT team also had concerns about wireless security, especially in light of HIPAA compliance requirements. The team reached out to NetMotion to learn more about Mobility and how it could help.

## Streamlining Patient Care and Security

St. Luke's learned during a demo that Mobility would provide staff with reliable, seamless network connectivity. With a network that had grown from a single, IP segment VLAN to a multi-facility network, Mobility would also act as a second firewall, preventing network access by unauthorized devices.



### INDUSTRY:

Healthcare

### OBJECTIVES:

- Eliminate dropped network connections
- Maximize hospital medical equipment ROI

### SOLUTIONS:

- NetMotion Mobility

### RESULTS:

- Eliminated drops in connectivity
- Provided faster access to patient data and test results
- Accelerated patient diagnosis and treatment process
- Reduced x-ray processing time from 30-45 minutes to one and a half minutes

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**Gene Gretzer** | Senior Analyst and Wireless Initiative Project Leader

Mobility enables staff and care givers to move around their facilities and get their work done without worrying about dropped connections. If a user passes through an area with poor network coverage, applications maintain their state and reconnect automatically and quickly (often in less than a second), enabling the user to pick up right where he or she left off.

Mobility's management console gives the IT team the ability to centrally manage all of the devices their clinicians use. They receive real-time data on devices and users such as the applications being run, the amount of data transmitted, even the battery life of each device. And they can immediately quarantine a lost or stolen device from the network.

### **Speeding Up the X-Ray Process**

With a better understanding of Mobility's impact, St. Luke's IT team realized that it could improve other network-dependent hospital processes. For instance, Mobility could keep the health system's state of the art mobile scanning and x-ray units better connected, increasing the upload speed of images and other data to the patient records database.

“Clinicians are viewing neurologic studies and x-rays faster and visiting more patients during their rounds,” adds Gretzer. “We have also reduced the time for a clinician to receive electronic x-rays from, in many instances, thirty to forty-five minutes down to about one and a half minutes – allowing clinicians to diagnose issues and begin treatment faster.”

Today, St. Luke's staff is accessing data via wireless devices in real-time, 24 hours a day. Physicians and nurses are using wireless laptops and tablet PCs to track and chart patient care. Clinicians dispense medicine after scanning barcodes on patient ID bracelets with wireless barcode scanners. And even the hospital's nutritionists plan menus with patients and transmit those orders wirelessly to kitchen staff for later preparation.

Thanks to Mobility, reliable, secure wireless technology continues to offer several opportunities for St. Luke's to improve operational efficiency and, most importantly, better patient care.