Why Mitel?
customer highlight series

Sullivan County Community Hospital

Medical care institutions never take a break, and neither can their communications systems. For the Sullivan County Community Hospital, a member of the Indiana Rural Health Association (IHRA), this was one of the driving factors behind a recent decision to replace their aging Nortel Option 51 with a modern IP-based telephony system that can grow with their expanding needs.

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Rural hospital uses Mitel to improve community care

Not only did it take up to six hours to recover the old system after a crash – an unacceptable outage for a hospital – they were also down to just a handful of free ports. With the construction of new facilities two miles from their main campus, and increased integration with other rural hospitals in the area, the need to upgrade was clear.

Choosing the best medicine

With the help of Gibson Teldata, an integrator based in Terre Haute, Indiana, the hospital evaluated a range of offerings. The choice came down to a Mitel® solution based on Integrated wireless handsets, versus a Cisco® solution. Ron Shake, Director of Facilities for the hospital, explains that the Cisco bid would have been more expensive to implement. "The Cisco proposal required a SMARTnet®, and rolling out a 24/7/365 healthcare-grade SMARTnet to a rural hospital would have been prohibitively expensive." By contrast, the Mitel solution could take advantage of a fiber connection to their new facility, some two miles away, that was already planned to support data connectivity. Add to this the fact that the Cisco proposal would have required them to replace all their handsets and for Shake, the decision was clear. "Once we looked at true costs and ROI, the choice to go with Mitel was obvious." The Cisco proposal may have looked sweeter, but Mitel offered the best medicine. Another consideration for Shake was the deep knowledge and expertise in Mitel systems offered by Gibson Teldata, an integrator with local capacity to provide solid guidance and resolve issues quickly and effectively. Shake reflects that "Gibson's expertise with Mitel products made them an indispensable part of this project."

Life support systems

Just as the human body has two lungs and two kidneys, a well designed telephony system will provide redundancy for extra resiliency when something goes wrong. Using two MCDs, with nearly 200 single line ports and IP endpoints, one in each location,

Sullivan County Community Hospital can seamlessly failover from one system to the other in the event of an outage. In fact, using resilient Mitel 5312 and 5340 IP Phones means that even individual phones scattered across their two locations will automatically detect a disconnect from call controller. If it cannot reconnect, it will seamlessly register on the other call controller without the end user experiencing any disruptions.

Another key consideration behind the Mitel choice was the fact that the hospital is seeking to connect to and leverage the Indiana Telehealth Network to leverage multiple pathways for both disaster recovery and the delivery of other applications. As part of the IHRA, they will have the option to fail their systems over to centralized switches in Indianapolis for even greater redundancy.

Ambulatory care calling

Healthcare workers are constantly on the go, moving between departments, floors, and facilities. Keeping them connected can be a challenge. As part of their infrastructure upgrade, Sullivan County Community Hospital invested in the Mitel wireless handsets, a wireless mobility solution that allows mobile users to remain connected regardless of their location as they roam the hospital. "It gives our health professionals a lot more flexibility to reach each other for quick, ad-hoc consultations," relates Shake. "They don't have to spend time tracking down the physical location of a colleague, and that translates into greater productivity and better patient care."

Similarly, offsite workers such as administrative staff working from home can use Instances of the MiVoice Business, part of the Mitel MiCollab Server, to access voice mail, conferencing, and other features of the office phone system from remote extensions. And when remote workers need to discuss confidential patient information, the call is automatically secured by the Mitel solution's built in encryption.

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Another strategically important part of MAS for the hospital is Mitel Unified Communicator® (UC) Mobile, which allows users to link their extension with a mobile device, home phone, or just about any other telephone number. An incoming call will simultaneously ring both their extension and the twinned device. Administrative staff uses UC Mobile to receive critical communications on their smartphones, wherever they go. Shake points out that the service has worked so well that they plan to expand it across a wide range of mobile workers who need to be reachable as they roam the expanding campus. Sullivan County Community Hospital also has big plans for the MiCollab Server. Nursing staff require access to ongoing training to improve their skills and remain current. Conferencing will allow them to access lectures and classes offered remotely without the burden of having to travel to an urban center from their rural location.

The hospital also plans to upgrade their Microsoft® Exchange server in the near future, and this will allow them to integrate voice mail services, part of Mitel NuPoint Unified Messaging™ (UM), into their exchange environment for even greater flexibility and transparency.

Simplified Administration

Mitel Enterprise Manager, which provides management tools that allow simple configuration, control, and management of Mitel's enterprise product portfolio, has greatly simplified administration tasks. When the hospital moved their home care department to the new facility two miles away, the phone move was extremely straightforward. It took less than an hour to apply configuration changes to the switch. "Basically, we just collected up the phones, moved them to the new building, and plugged them back in. It was that simple," recalls Shake. And for users it was seamless.

They simply dialed extensions as they always had, so the move involved no need for additional training or support. The hospital also likes that managing phones is quick and trouble free. Phones are simple to provision and remotely uploading phone settings saves them even more time.

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Cost reduction surgery

As the hospital expands, the Mitel solution not only gives them the ability to add and move whole departments easily, it also provides options to integrate their phone system with long-term business strategy to innovatively defray costs. For example, the hospital is considering further expansion that would allow them to take in medical services tenants such as commercial laboratories and independent doctors. By providing voice services to tenants over their switch and using Mitel Call Accounting, a comprehensive call costing and reporting application, they can easily track and bill for their tenants' phone services. "In healthcare, every cent counts, and Mitel Call Accounting has the potential to really help us control costs and do more with our resources," relates Shake.

For the Sullivan County Community Hospital, choosing Mitel was clearly the right choice. With expandability and robustness secured, they are ready to meet the rapidly evolving challenges of providing health services in rural Indiana while adapting to the needs of a mobile and highly dynamic work force.

About Gibson Teldata

Serving Indiana and Illinois, Gibson Teldata's primary focus is providing communications solutions from basic structured wiring to fully integrated voice and data systems with advanced applications including: Voice Messaging, Unified Messaging, IVR, Contact Centers, Call Accounting, Automatic Call Distribution (Call Center), Computer Telephony Integration, and more. They draw on proven methodologies, highly-trained staff, and established relationships with the nation's top equipment suppliers to customize a solution specifically designed to meet their clients' unique business needs.

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> **Ron Shake**, Facilities Director, Sullivan County Community Hospital

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