

## **Location based Staff Duress System provides Instant Access to Security Keeping Staff Safer at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center**

Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center is a preeminent, internationally recognized academic medical center with balanced excellence in patient care, research, and education. They're dedicated to providing the highest quality services and improving the health of their region, state, and nation. They succeed in this commitment as a premier health system by generating and translating their extensive knowledge base to prevent, diagnose, and treat disease while also training leaders in health care and biomedical science.

### **THE ISSUE**

Recently, almost 80% of nurses reported being physically attacked on the job within the last 12 months (1. Scientific American, Dec. 31, 2014) and across all industries, health care workers experience the highest level of nonfatal workplace violence. While Wake Forest Baptist has an exceptional security team, places a strong emphasis on security, and works tirelessly to provide the highest levels of security for their staff and patients, they know they're not immune to this troubling issue.

As part of their ongoing practice, Wake Forest Baptist holds a daily safety huddle- to discuss a multitude of safety topics, including reports of staff that have been hurt or threatened by patients or visitors. An ongoing concern of management and those on the front lines is how to best request and deliver a rapid response when emergency assistance is needed.

Like most hospitals, Wake Forest Baptist has deployed hard-wired, discretely mounted panic buttons throughout its campus. The concept being if help is needed, one need only reach one of the buttons, activate it, and responders would be on the way. As a practical matter, the density of the call buttons was higher in areas considered to be high risk, such as parking decks, behavioral health units and outlying campus pharmacies. It was a commonsense response to a very real situation. However, incidents still occurred and staff still had concerns about whether they could find and get to a hard-wired panic button when needed.

The reality of the situation was that by their very design, the wall-mounted emergency call buttons covered only a small percentage of the total campus. This meant if incidents occurred outside of arm's reach of the buttons, help could not be effectively called. Wake Forest Baptist knew that, ideally, they needed a solution that provided universal coverage across the campus, and one that allowed security to respond to the exact point of need. The need was obvious, and the expectation for resolution was coming from the very top of the organization.

## **THE IDEA**

With the initial requirements determined, Wake Forest Baptist tasked their Office of Enterprise Visibility with reviewing current systems within the organization to see if any might offer a viable solution. This team, staffed in partnership with Infinite Leap, Inc., immediately looked to the comprehensive RTLS deployment as the source of the solution. In addition to being able to leverage the existing financial investment, the EV office was able to deploy a state-of-the-art Staff Duress system in a fraction of the time that implementing a new or separate system would have taken. This meant staff safety increased dramatically in a matter of weeks.

The implementation consisted of workflow planning, system configuration, and RTLS badge (a badge the same size and dimension as employee identification cards)

distribution to staff. Once deployed, staff were able to request help through the simple touch of a button on their badge. With that simple action, an alert is sent to the centralized security station. It shows up on a large monitor indicating exactly which staff member generated the request, as well as their current, exact location. Then security dispatches help to them immediately.

Beyond the immediate response for assistance, this innovative solution automatically delivers incident metrics and reporting capabilities that were previously either done manually, or not collected. As an added benefit, the system was set up to allow staff to use the same badge- through the press of a different button- to request non-emergency related assistance; in the past, situations like this may have meant a patient was left unattended. This transformed the solution, and improved patient safety as a separate and important consequence.

In all, creation of the solution included:

- Strong collaboration with and commitment by leadership at all levels of the organization.
- Design of a new notification process and procedure using the Enterprise Visibility Software Platform provided by partner, Intelligent InSites.
- Implementation of a full RTLS badge and system, allowing for programmable buttons to initiate a staff duress request, share location detail in real-time, and distribute multiple alert notifications to multiple recipients.
- Deployment of RTLS staff badges from RTLS hardware infrastructure partner GenTrak, consisting of a staff ID-sized RTLS badge that would fit with current Wake Forest Baptist ID cards. The three programmable buttons on badges were standardized across campuses to be used for staff duress and urgent staff assistance requests.

- Staff badge configuration, distribution, and training for approximately 3,500 staff members to date.
  - Average training time per staff member on the use of the badge was under 3 minutes, due to the fact that staff only had to add the badge to the ID stack and press a button.
  - Creation of a single page instruction sheet that contains all the information staff needs to know to use and understand the solution.
  - New employees have the badge and training provided at the time of the new employee orientation process.
- Development of alert visibility through software display; regardless of where a staff member activates a staff duress call, a notification alert is sent to the Emergency Communications Center and main medical center campus.

## THE IMPACT

Once training was complete, staff members were equipped and ready to use their badges. The speed and efficiency of the alert process was apparent as soon as the solution launched. Now staff members get immediate help with a quick push of a button, no matter where they are. When an incident occurs and a button is pressed, Emergency Communications Center (ECC) staff is notified instantly and multiple officers are dispatched. While en route, ECC staff use the software to view the location and phone number of the closest workstation phone for the staff member who called. Then they call that number to determine whether additional information or safety resources might be needed.

Staff duress notifications are also immediately sent to leadership via an instant text message. At a department level, the alerts are shown on large LCD displays at nurse

stations, providing employees with a continuous display of all staff and patients on the floor, as well as pending alerts.

While the end result is an impressive-looking system, the more important statistic is that the time it takes to respond to an alert has been shortened. Alerts are now sent when staff feels they're in a vulnerable position, rather than waiting until an incident occurs. Through that capability, many incidents have been resolved faster and others completely avoided or de-escalated because of the proactive nature of the solution.

The solution has aided the security team in providing the fastest possible response to emergency situations. It's been so popular among the Wake Forest Baptist staff that the Enterprise Visibility Office receives continual requests for wider distribution of the staff RTLS badges, with the expectation that more than 8,000 staff will be provided with RTLS badges by the end of 2015.

Most importantly, Wake Forest Baptist now has a solution that gives their staff peace of mind, and keeps them safer now than ever before.

#### Sources

1. Scientific American, "Epidemic of Violence against Health Care Workers Plagues Hospitals", authored by Roni Jacobson, December 31, 2014 - <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/epidemic-of-violence-against-health-care-workers-plagues-hospitals/>

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For more information about this project or the use of Enterprise Visibility technologies in general, please visit the Infinite Leap website at [InfiniteLeap.net](http://InfiniteLeap.net) or contact us via email at [Info@infiniteleap.net](mailto:Info@infiniteleap.net).