



Adjuvant Client Highlight

Client: CentraCare Health System and St. Cloud Hospital

- **Location:** St. Cloud, Minnesota
- **Active/associate Medical Staff:** 415 Physicians
- **Licensed Beds:** 489
- **2008 Emergency Trauma Center Visits:** 450,848

Background Hospital:

The St. Cloud Hospital's Telecommunications Center was receiving about 60 faxed copies per month of physician on-call schedules from local area clinics. Each schedule was collected and filed away in a three-ring binder in the Customer Contact Center. Each evening an employee would manually create a "daily on-call" sheet with information located in the three-ring binder and distribute faxed copies throughout the hospital.

When daily changes were called into the Customer Contact Center, this process would need to be repeated. Although the system technically worked, the process of gathering, recording, distributing, and changing the on-call information daily was time-consuming and had the potential for human error. This exposure could happen multiple times per day.

Each time an error was made, or the wrong physician called, the Customer Contact Center was considered to be at fault, no matter what, because they managed the on-call information.

System Requirements, Hospital:

- Intranet site where all of CentraCare's on-call information can be centralized;
- Ability to view information without a username and password;
- Fast and easy to access;
- The ability to add non-CentraCare schedules in the future;

- Future ability to automatically merge only selected information into a useful "daily call sheet" that requires no manual data entry;
- Individual call schedules are maintained by their clinic owners.

Implementation Hospital:

This system was fairly straightforward to implement once all of the CentraCare clinics were using the Call Scheduler On-Call Scheduling software to create and publish their physician schedules.

Adjuvant created a Microsite, or a small mini-website, as a link that is located on the hospital's Intranet. This link was used to organize and manage each clinic's schedule. As each clinic was trained on how to use Call Scheduler to create their on-call schedule, new groups began "lighting up" one-by-one, new links began popping up each week on the Microsite. Once a group was "live" this eliminated the need for faxing a paper copy to the Customer Contact Center for placement in the three-ring binder. This was done over a four-month period.

Although the Customer Contact Center still prints out a "copy" of each schedule monthly to ensure a "back-up" exists in case of a loss of Internet communications, it is rarely used.

Now there are multiple ways of finding out "who's on-call": If you are in the Emergency



Adjuvant Client Highlight

Department you can access the local Intranet with a link to the on-call information. This allows the physicians to find information quickly when they need it. If you are at home, this information is available with a username and password; the potential even exists for providers to access this information on their smart phones. When they are ready to have someone paged, users and medical staff still call the Customer Contact Center to activate their physician notification process.

Background Clinic:

CentraCare Health System has ten medical clinics in the community, representing nineteen medical specialties. Each clinic and specialty is responsible for creating its own physician on-call schedule and faxing it to the St. Cloud Hospital.

The schedule creation process was being done manually by all the clinics using pencil and paper or Excel. The person responsible for creating the on-call schedule varied from a physician to a clinic administrator to an administrative assistant depending on the specialty and the clinic.

The amount of time that was being spent creating, maintaining, and publishing on-call schedules throughout CentraCare Health System was not available, but assumed to be quite significant and the work burdensome.

System Requirements, Clinic:

- Standardized schedule format;
- Easy to set up and train end users and providers;
- Manual scheduling system;
- Upgrade available to automatic scheduling system;
- The ability to set rules in the system to help create the schedule;
- Automatically generate tally reports;
- An area where physicians can request

- time off, vacations and swaps;
- Multiple ways to view and print a calendar;
- Secure system;
- Information available online;
- Little IT/IS involvement.

Implementation Clinic:

This implementation consisted of individual meetings with each "scheduler" in each clinic location. Most of these meeting were done via conference call and all training was completed online.

Our goal was to train the user on how to use the new Call Scheduler system to obtain the scheduling results they were looking for. Some of the clinic groups opted to continue to create their schedules by hand, and then manually enter them into Call Scheduler, while the majority enjoyed having a set of tools they could use to assist them in the creation. Every user had different needs and requirements of the system.

Training took on average 4-6 hours of training per user, and this took place over several sessions and was spread out over 3-4 months to accommodate other projects. Because the learning curve is always greater in the beginning when using software, after 3 or 4 scheduling periods the clinic schedulers began to recognize a tremendous time savings over their old paper and pencil way of scheduling physicians.

Some of the clinics immediately trained their providers to use the "Provider Request Area" to request vacation days, days off and swap with their partners, while others continued to have the physician's request these days using paper. Even though the certain providers were not using the "Provider Request Area," the schedulers were entering the information into the system to help track and approve the paper requests.



Adjuvant Client Highlight

The Future at CentraCare Health System:

On-Call information management is a work in progress. Whenever you are managing a large amount of facilities, specialties, providers and calendars, this equals a large amount of data. The key is to turn that data into useful, accurate information.

The next steps for CentraCare, specifically St. Cloud Hospital, includes the full use of Adjuvant's Call Communicator Solution, on-call management system. This will allow the Customer Contact Center the ability to merge all of their individual CentraCare clinical schedules into a "daily view." This will eliminate the current daily manual task of "writing out a daily sheet by hand." Next, they will begin to tackle the difficult integration of non-CentraCare clinics into the system. This task is labeled as difficult because it is primarily in the best interest of the St. Cloud Hospital, with little perceived benefit at the non-CentraCare clinic level.

There are several obstacles to overcome. First, what does the clinic gain by spending money to help the local hospital? The truth of the matter is the clinics will greatly benefit in time saving from using a software tool to help create, maintain and publish their call schedule since they are currently creating this by hand today. Time savings equals money. In addition, the greatest benefit is "customer/patient service." The clinic's customer is the one who will suffer the most when it takes longer to locate the right on-call physician inside the hospital. The "we all do better, when we all do better" concept applies here.

Another obstacle is who is going to pay the bill for adding non-owned clinics to the system? Will the hospital, outlying clinics, or a mix of the two accept the task? Also, is

there a Stark Law conflict of interest? While Adjuvant and the St. Cloud Hospital are hopeful that this is not a violation of The Stark Law, primarily because the on-call schedule and on-call information management directly affects patient care via the Emergency Department, the matter is still under review.

Once completed, the St. Cloud Hospital will have every schedule from every clinic in the community, which in the past came in via a fax machine, seamlessly integrated into their new on-call management system. This is how CentraCare Health System will ensure that the Right Provider is in the Right Place at the Right Time.