



Groves Community Hospice

Hospice Implements Secure Texting to Improve Communications and Patient Safety



CASE STUDY

Groves Community Hospice

Hospice and Rehabilitation Facility

Located in Kansas City, Missouri

Secure, efficient communication between doctors and staff is key to reliable patient care. For Groves Community Hospice, every situation involving patients requires rapid response; this poses a particular challenge, as more than 80 percent of the hospice staff work in the field.

With so many doctors and staff off-site or on-call, and considering the inherent urgency of hospice care, Groves needed to streamline staff communications and enable a better way for physicians and staff to connect and discuss critical patient issues within a secure environment.

The providers and staff at Groves often found themselves tied to their desk phones or trying to decipher cryptic information from pager messages. “Our staff is very segmented, since they all work separate schedules in disparate locations,” said David Hensley, Business Office Manager for Groves Community Hospice. “In an attempt to stay connected, we were using a combination of pagers and phone calls, which our staff found disruptive and time consuming when they needed to be with patients.”

“Our process, though reliable in the past, needed to incorporate the smartphones that many of our staff already have,” said Hensley. After looking at numerous secure texting options, Hensley determined that DrFirst’s Akario BacklineSM would best suit their needs.

Akario Backline, a secure care coordination software application created specifically for healthcare use, provides a simple, secure texting solution for web and mobile that supports HIPAA compliance and allows Groves staff to communicate on the web or via their own smart devices. Team members are able to set-up patient-specific work groups, easily see through status indicators who on the team is currently available to chat, and easily transfer patient-related audio, video and photo files.

With the implementation of Akario Backline at Groves, staff communication is immediate, clear, and cohesive. Doctors and nurses consult and collaborate within discipline-specific groups, and securely transfer information supporting better patient care. “It has been invaluable for management, as staff have become more familiar with each other and gained better trust. It happened much faster than we thought it would,” said Hensley.

Corporate Headquarters

9420 Key West Ave., Suite 101
Rockville, MD 20850
Toll Free (866) 263-6511

sales@drfirst.com

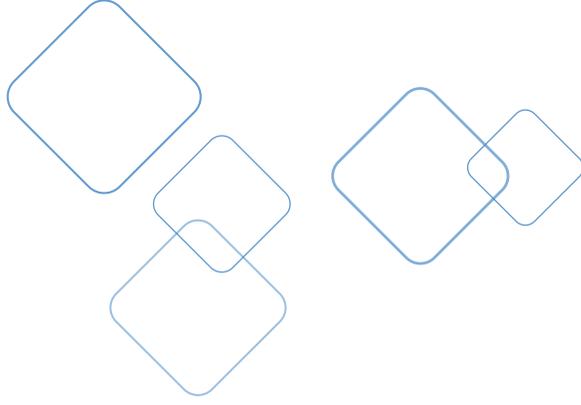
West Coast Office

916 E. Baseline Rd, Suite 202
Mesa, AZ 85204
(602) 466-7547

www.drfirst.com | blog.drfirst.com



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*- David Hensley
Business Office Manager
Groves Community Hospice*

Known for their family-involved individualized care services, the staff at Groves benefited from the added communication in another unique way: the ability to share patient experiences. “On Veteran’s Day, a former Navy sailor and his family were presented with a cake and a certificate to thank him for his service. Unfortunately, due to their schedules, only three or four staff members could attend, although at some point nearly all of our staff had worked with him before. With Backline, we were able to share the patient’s responses with the entire team,” said Hensley. “It was as if everyone was there.”

Backline was implemented at Groves in an easy, but controlled, rollout. It was tested with the management team for five days, and was then deployed to the rest of the staff. Doctors and nurses saw an immediate impact in the ease of their on-call process. “Backline is very intuitive, and we found that setting up groups was easy to do via the mobile app,” said Hensley.

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