



Hospice of Hope

Hospice Realizes Benefits of Secure Communication When Dealing with Vulnerable Populations



CASE STUDY

Hospice of Hope

Serves 12 counties in Northern Kentucky and Southern Ohio

Texting is pervasive for personal and business use. In any given facility, healthcare or otherwise, texting is used as a quick way to ask a question, give an opinion, and acquire information. Like many healthcare organizations, Hospice of Hope's staff communicated with their colleagues through various methods including texts, email messages, phone calls and faxes. Hospice of Hope began using DrFirst's secure text messaging tool, Akario Backline® to create a protected environment for vital messages to be sent throughout their organization.

Prior to implementing Akario Backline, Hospice of Hope faced several communications and security challenges, including: limited ability to monitor text messages sent or received, potential HIPAA violations from non-secure text and email communications, back and forth phone calls to relay information to on-call staff, and lack of efficient means to share documents such as overnight reports.

"Though we had policies in place against sending any patient information via text message, it was difficult to completely prevent employees from texting without a program to provide a means to communicate, while ensuring that they are following policy," said Shawn Flaughter, Business Manager for Hospice of Hope.

Hospice of Hope learned about Akario Backline when they were looking at DrFirst's e-prescribing functionality and saw that the company also has a secure text messaging solution. "We knew that Backline would be a good way for our staff to send information electronically. Backline is also very reasonably priced compared to some of the other solutions we had looked at," said Shawn Flaughter.

Akario Backline is easy-to-use, and enables HIPAA-compliant secure communication and collaboration specifically designed for the healthcare environment. The tool helps organizations like Hospice of Hope implement optimal secure texting which staff can use to quickly reach each other, collaborate and work more efficiently using a 1 to 1, group or Patient-Centered Chat. The solution connects providers in real-time conversations to support care in progress at any time, from any location.

The solution not only made all text communications secure and easily accessible for view by administrators at Hospice of Hope, it also improved productivity. "Our receptionist loves Akario Backline. She spends less time trying to get in touch with people to relay phone calls and information," said Shawn Flaughter. "Some of our nurses have also commented on the benefits: they can now easily send a message without having to wait for a staff member to call back to get more information, and that's really saved them time."

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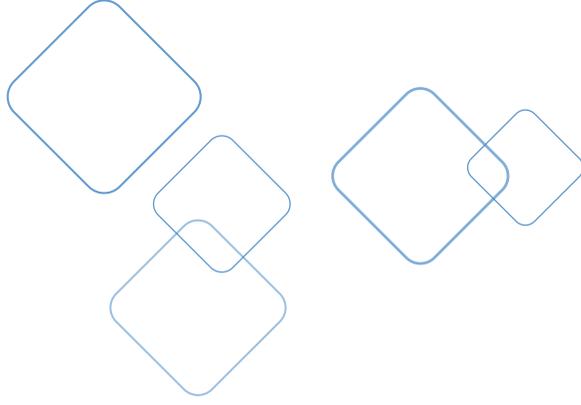
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DrFirst



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*- Shawn Flaughter
Business Manager
Hospice of Hope*

“From my perspective, I see improved productivity from our old pharmacy fill requests. In the past, our nurses sent pharmacy patient refill requests through many different modes of communication. We were getting some through fax, and some through email. Without a consistent process, our nurses weren’t always sure if we had received the information. We haven’t heard anyone saying a request was sent but not received since we implemented Backline.”

Working with DrFirst has been simple and Hospice of Hope gets their questions and concerns addressed in a timely manner. “Working with the help desk has been super easy. With a lot of places you don’t get a direct connection with a person,” said Daniel Forsythe, Certified Pharmacy Technician for Hospice of Hope. “The fact that I have a one-on-one relationship with DrFirst’s technical team has been really great for us.”

In addition to the close working relationship with DrFirst, Hospice of Hope realized many other benefits. “If I had to list the best parts of the solution it would be secure communication and efficient communication because we can get information much sooner, efficiently and quickly,” said Shawn Flaughter.

“HIPAA compliancy is also a huge benefit. We no longer have to field emails that say, ‘why didn’t you password protect this?’ or ‘why are you putting so much information in a non-secure email?’ Now we don’t have to worry about potential PHI being sent insecurely because the mode of communication is secure,” said Daniel Forsythe. “Reduction in the need to continually be chastising our staff about risk management is an unexpected benefit.”

Hospice of Hope rolled out users one team at a time, giving consideration as to how to implement Akario Backline into their workflows to most effectively distribute information. The organization currently has 85 users from the 125-person team. “I was satisfied with the training that I received and another administrator said that she was also very satisfied,” said Daniel Forsythe. “As soon as our training was completed we both felt confident using the communication tools and administrative oversight tools. The interface itself is so simple, there’s not much DrFirst had to teach us.”

