Hospital Technology Integration Saves Time, Improves Compliance

Through a partnership with ADSI, Valley Health System successfully integrates ARCHIBUS with GE Healthcare's AgileTrac

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– Edo Voleric, Engineering Department Director, Valley Health System

Organization

Valley Health System

Industry

Healthcare

Location

Ridgewood, New Jersey

Organization Information

- The Valley Hospital serves more than 440,000 people in 32 towns
- Employs more than 3,000 people

Facility Management Applications

ARCHIBUS Building Operations & Space Management

Facility Management Partner

Applied Data Systems, Inc.

Business Benefits Realized

- Eliminates the need for time-consuming manual data entry in two separate software platforms.
- Improves the hospital's return on investment in GE Healthcare's AgileTrac technology.
- Improves documentation and reporting for The Joint Commission standards compliance.
- Prevents maintenance technicians from having to learn an additional software program.

The Valley Health System is known for its quality care and cutting-edge technology. In 2010, the hospital added to that technological advantage when it implemented GE Healthcare's state-of-the-art AgileTrac™ technology. Billed as a "care traffic control system", AgileTrac uses radio frequency identification (RFID) technology to track hospital equipment and even hospital patients as they move through the facility to improve efficiency and optimize care delivery.

A Unique Opportunity

While the implementation of AgileTrac was a high-level, hospital-wide initiative, Valley Health System Director of Engineering Edo Voleric quickly realized it presented a unique opportunity to improve facility management operations. By integrating AgileTrac with his department's ARCHIBUS facility management

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system, Voleric determined he could streamline a previously time-consuming maintenance process and help maximize the hospital's return on investment in AgileTrac.

"One of the functions of our department is to maintain the hospital beds, but at Valley Hospital the beds travel with the patients," says Voleric. "This means a bed might be on the second floor of one building on Monday morning and the third floor of another building by Tuesday. In order to perform maintenance on the beds our technicians had to hunt them down, which was an extremely time-consuming process."

With the addition of AgileTrac, the beds would be tracked as they moved throughout the hospital using RFID tags. However, the technicians still faced a multi-step process. First, they would need to log into ARCHIBUS and retrieve the hospital bed work order. Then, they would need to log into AgileTrac to find the bed and take it out of commission for the duration of the repair. After completing the maintenance work, they would again need to enter the information into both ARCHIBUS and AgileTrac.

Finding a Better Way

Voleric knew there had to be a way to integrate the ARCHIBUS and AgileTrac systems, but he needed expert assistance. To help make his goals a reality, he enlisted the help of his longtime computer-aided facilities management (CAFM) partner, Applied Data Systems, Inc. (ADSI). With more than 20 years of experience customizing CAFM software, Voleric realized ADSI would be an ideal partner for the project.

"The team at ASDI dove right in and got to work," says Voleric. "They collaborated extensively with GE Healthcare to ensure the customizations were successful and suggested improvements that went beyond what I initially thought would be possible. They even completed the project two weeks before the deadline."

Voleric was also impressed with the high level of support and problem-solving ADSI provided. "ADSI was so supportive and helpful," he says. "Even though they were many states away, between conference calls and WebEx sessions they were always right there when we needed them."

Ultimately, ADSI created a bi-directional data feed linking ARCHIBUS and AgileTrac. Thanks to the integration, when the maintenance department adds new assets into ARCHIBUS, the software program determines whether it should be added to the AgileTrac inventory and, if needed, does so automatically. In addition, it allows the hospital to move RFID tags from bed to bed without disrupting each bed's work order history. Finally, it ties the RFID technology into the facility's CAD drawings, allowing the system to dynamically map "hotspots" where hospital beds are located.

Integration Brings Benefits

The integration of ARCHIBUS and AgileTrac eliminated the need for Valley Hospital facility management staff to spend hours each month on the tedious process of manual data entry. Now when a maintenance request for a bed is created, the exact location of the bed is automatically pulled from the AgileTrac system and listed on the technician's work order; the need to log into the AgileTrac system and look up the location of the bed is eliminated. "It is a huge time-saver," says Voleric. "The process of logging onto a different platform to look up the bed location would have taken several minutes per work order. Multiplied over many months and years, that really adds up."

In addition to time savings, the integration brings added convenience, improved return on investment and increased compliance. From a convenience standpoint, the need for the facilities management staff to learn the new AgileTrac platform is eliminated; all the information they need can be found within the familiar ARCHIBUS interface. The project also increased the hospital's return on investment in AgileTrac by increasing efficiency and streamlining operations within the facilities management department. Perhaps most importantly, the integration ensures all preventive maintenance information on every hospital bed is accurate, up-to-date and easily available, helping to maintain compliance with The Joint Commission accreditation standards.

For Valley Health System, achieving these benefits was possible thanks to a partnership with ADSI. According to Voleric, "ADSI was able to address every need or issue we had quickly and effectively. I would definitively recommend them."

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