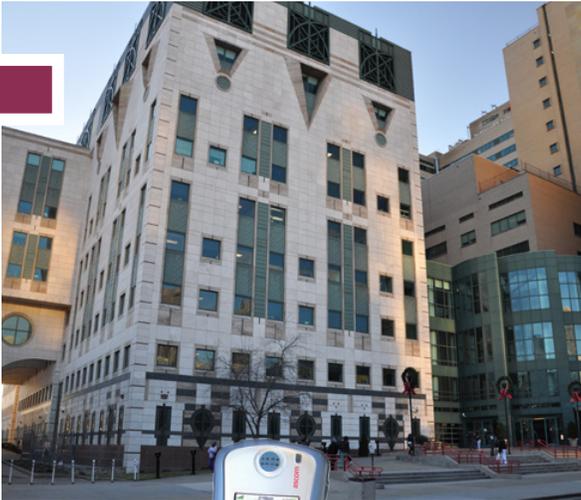


[ CASE STUDY ]

Customer: Grady Health System

Solution: Ascom i62 VoWiFi handsets, Medamax



## GRADY MEMORIAL LEVERAGES ASCOM TO IMPROVE HCAHPS SCORES



### Questions About Ascom Wireless Solutions?

Learn more about dependable Ascom solutions at [www.ascom.us](http://www.ascom.us), or call our experts today at 877-71ASCOM to learn how we can improve the efficiency of your business.

Grady Health System in Atlanta, Georgia treats more than 100,000 Emergency Department patients each year. Grady Memorial is the largest hospital in the state and the safety net healthcare system serving Fulton and DeKalb counties. It is the fifth largest public hospital in the United States as well as one of the busiest Level I trauma and burn centers in the country. Grady is home to many nationally recognized clinical services including the Marcus Stroke and Neuroscience Center, Georgia Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center, the Georgia Cancer Center for Excellence and Grady EMS. Grady also serves as the primary training site for Morehouse and Emory University Schools of Medicine. Grady is located in downtown Atlanta with an emergency department that serves all of the city and surrounding areas. Grady is considered to be one of the premier public hospitals in the southern United States.

### Challenges Faced by Grady

In 2007, Grady was run by a government appointed hospital authority and was on the verge of bankruptcy. With tight community ties to the hospital, the residents of Atlanta did not want to lose Grady and focused on raising funds to keep it afloat. A non-profit organization was developed, a new leadership team was introduced and funding became available for the Hospital to make investments in new beds, medical equipment, EMR, IP network infrastructure, PBX and communication technology.

[ CASE STUDY ]



*"I wanted to provide tools for the staff to be more effective and eliminate miscommunication."*  
 – Rhonda Scott, Chief Nursing Officer

With funding in place to purchase much needed patient care equipment, Grady's leadership team began focusing on ways to increase quality of care and patient satisfaction. The Clinical and the Network Services/IT teams partnered with nursing to develop and implement improvements to the workflow throughout the hospital.

All of the groups had goals to improve patient care and response times, integrate existing systems, increase HCAHPS scores and reduce noise level and alarm fatigue. The Hospital also made sure that each new implementation could be measured to ensure that actual workflow improvements were occurring and that it was maximizing its investment.

Rhonda Scott, Chief Nursing Officer, PHD, RN explains, "I wanted to provide tools for the staff to be more effective and eliminate miscommunication. I knew that funding was needed to purchase new technology to help the hospital improve HCAHPS scores, which ties back to total patient care."

**The Ascom Solution**

The ED previously used public pagers and a Push-To-Talk (PTT) solution but this was costly, had spotty coverage and poor voice quality. Now when an in-coming ambulance calls the department, an advanced Ascom PTT solution enables the ED/Trauma Center to connect the appropriate staff quickly to ensure rapid, quality care for patients.

"Grady knew our HCAHPS scores needed to be higher and we thought one way to improve them was by implementing a wireless communication system and utilizing text messaging to improve patient responses, access and availability to staff" said Kevin Yearick, Director of Network Services. "We tried pagers and wireless phones from a number of vendors, but these provided spotty coverage and did not integrate well with our clinical information systems."



*"We found that Ascom phones, being specifically made for use by clinicians, suit our needs like no other device."*

– Kevin Yearick, Director of Network Services

[ CASE STUDY ]



*“We have to be able to stay connected to providers and clinical staff in the support areas through the use of the Ascom system. This system is critical to providing patient care and we have increasingly relied on it to save time and improve staff efficiency.”*

– Gaynell Miller, VP Patient Care Services

“The solution had to combine the best of voice and messaging to limit any disturbance to staff and patients. We found that Ascom phones, being specifically made for use by clinicians, suit our needs like no other device. With 300 Ascom i62 VoWiFi handsets focused mainly in the ED, Inpatient and Specialty Care Areas, says Yearick “Ascom provided a robust, scalable solution that solved the spotty coverage issues and notification failures. We also have better remote administration of all wireless devices.”

The project team at Grady ran a three week trial period in which nurses addressed issues and proposed improvements to workflow on a daily basis. The project team used the feedback to improve the process and revise the guidelines prior to full implementation. Two floors became early adopters of the phones and immediately saw significant improvements in nursing communication and call light response times. They also found that the phones were easy to use and carry.

Ascom also provided an expert clinical consultant to advise Grady on Patient Flow improvement and best practices for incorporating wireless handsets. The staff at Grady collaborated with Ascom’s clinical consultant to devise a more efficient workflow tailored to the hospital’s needs.

Gaynell Miller, RN, MS, and Vice President of Patient Care Services said “When you empower clinicians with appropriate information and the ability to speak directly to other hospital staff, it improves productivity.”

After implementation of the Ascom solution, physicians and other clinicians embraced the technology and were able to contact nurses directly to receive patient updates. Patients get medications quicker and since handsets are tied to bed alarms, if a patient tries to get out of bed, a nurse can be there quickly to provide assistance and reduce falls.

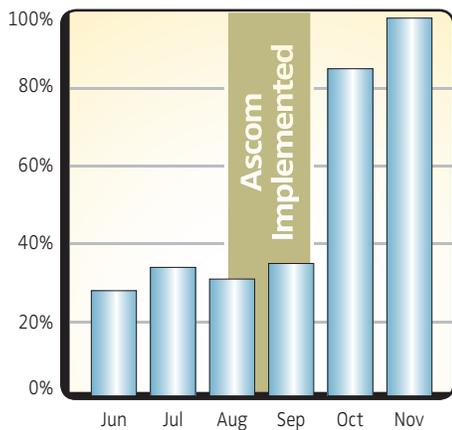
Jacqueline Kennel, Unit Nurse Director, BSN, RN adds, “I love the Ascom phones. There’s no more searching the halls to locate nurses. I call them directly, which cuts overhead noise on the unit. This technology makes nurses more effective and has definitely improved patient care and team morale.”

[ CASE STUDY ]



*“There’s no more searching the halls to locate nurses. I call them directly which cuts overhead noise on the unit.”*

– Jacqueline Kennel, Unit Nurse Director



**2012 Nurse Communication HCAHPS Scores**

Staff reported that the communication chain has become more efficient. Gone is the need to call to the nursing station, then call the nurse, then call the patient back. Now patients can speak to their clinicians directly using the Ascom device. Patients are happier talking to their assigned nurses, response time is much quicker and nurses save dozens of trips each shift.

**Results**

Since implementation of the Ascom handsets in September 2012, Grady has experienced a dramatic improvement in HCAHPS scores, specifically nurse communication. The graph shows the Nurse Communication HCAHPS scores before and after the implementation of the Ascom solution.

These successes have increased staff morale and Grady management credits the Ascom solution for positive trend in several HCAHPS scores. Marked improvements were noted in nurse/doctor communications, response time, and a quieter healing environment.

**What’s Next**

Though some patients were initially hesitant to adopt the new Ascom technology, patients soon discovered they liked being able to quickly speak to their nurse. “I don’t see the Ascom device as just another phone. I see it as a quality improvement and safety tool” says Rhonda Scott, Chief Nursing Officer. “We want our staff to start utilizing this new technology and we’re exploring further integration to other life safety systems.”

## **About Ascom**

Ascom is the Americas' market leading developer of workplace wireless communication solutions providing system users with greater freedom of movement, better service and increased safety. Our research and development focuses on products and solutions for our core business of on-site wireless communication. We are committed to providing the Americas with products that are unique, durable and innovative.

## **Questions About Ascom Wireless Solutions**

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