

EvergreenHealth

Seattle-Area Medical Center Achieves Record Door-to-Puncture Times with Pulsara



THE CHALLENGE

As a two-hospital healthcare system, EvergreenHealth serves a population of nearly 850,000 residents—and over the past few years, their teams and service lines have grown accordingly.

EvergreenHealth's stroke teams were using pagers and audio calls to coordinate care. However, as both the hospitals and the stroke program grew, they began straining the limits of what former standard technologies could support.

"As we were growing the service line, bringing on EvergreenHealth Monroe, considering the freestanding ED, and bringing more neurohospitalists into our

program, there was potential for communication to continue to become more fragmented," said RN Nurse Navigator for EvergreenHealth's Stroke Center, Meg Briggs, BSN, RN, SCR.N. "You can imagine what it was like with the neurohospitalists spanning three sites, having to keep it all together."

And on top of all the growth, patients' acuity was only getting higher, meaning that more patients required more intensive and time-critical care. "Anything we can do to streamline communication and care with high acuity, that's a win," Briggs explained.



EvergreenHealth is a two-hospital healthcare system and freestanding emergency department in Kirkland, Washington, and is part of a public hospital district serving north King County and south Snohomish County. Their main campus is a 318-bed medical center and Level III Trauma Center located in Kirkland, with a second 72-bed campus in Monroe. EvergreenHealth serves nearly 850,000 residents and offers care in 70 clinical specialties.

KEY RESULTS

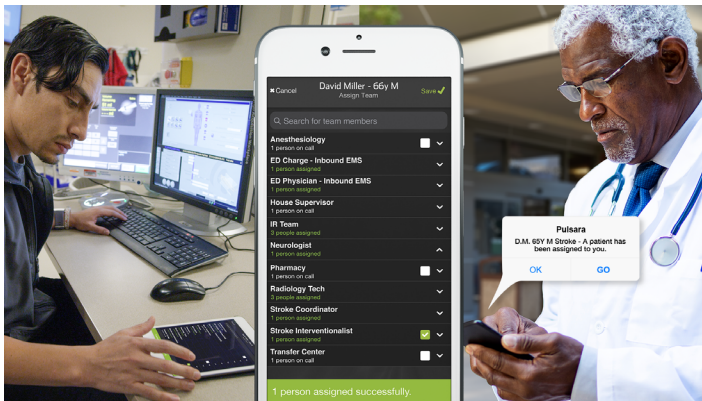
- ▶ Record low 46-minute door-to-puncture time
- ▶ 41% decrease in door-to-puncture time over 1 year
- ▶ Improved team communication with photos and messages



THE SOLUTION

To optimize communication within their growing system, EvergreenHealth chose to implement a communication and telehealth solution that could scale with them: Pulsara.

Pulsara connects people across organizations when seconds matter with a secure, unified patient channel—replacing multiple phone calls, radio reports, faxes, and pagers—and allowing care teams to communicate efficiently and effectively when treating patients.



When EvergreenHealth initiates a patient case in Pulsara, the case is able to evolve in the platform as the appropriate team members are notified to respond. Each caregiver can easily add resources with a simple tap in the mobile app. From incoming patient data to ambulance arrival time to vitals needed for specialist consultations, clinicians can initiate group chats with other members of the care team and can take and upload images into the patient channel. This feature allows all care team members, regardless of where they're physically located, to keep up with the latest updates in the patient's condition.

THE RESULTS

Streamlining their communication process has been a game-changer for EvergreenHealth's stroke teams. In the summer of 2020, they achieved a record low door-to-puncture time of 78 minutes with Pulsara. By the summer of 2021, they hit a new record low: 46 minutes. Within one year, EvergreenHealth decreased their record door-to-puncture by an additional 41%.



"Pulsara has helped us trim down those times, because of the communication," said Briggs. "The messaging has been the biggest help for us, because now we don't need pagers. And beyond that, we shave off minutes by not having to make a lot of phone calls."

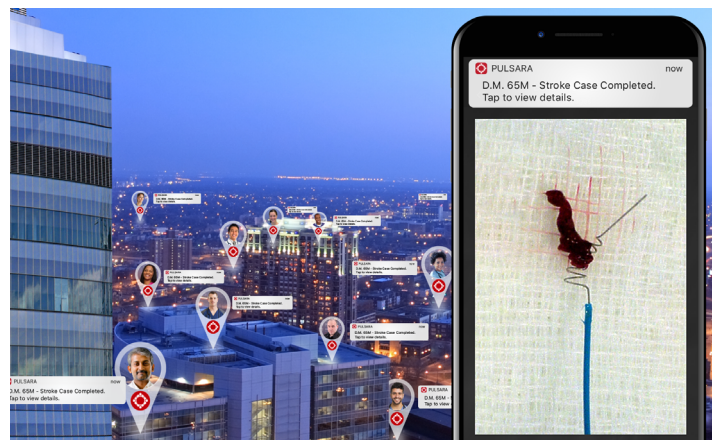
Having the ability to instantly message between team members has significantly reduced the amount of time spent

on communication. Once a new stroke case is activated in Pulsara, the ER can add the appropriate team members and notify them of the patient's condition, even before arrival. Everyone is instantly in the loop. The interventionalist and the Neuro IR lab can use the team messaging function to let the others know what they need, and the Neuro IR lab can also notify the rest of the team when the lab is ready. The ER staff then has all the information they need to prepare the patient before bringing them to the lab. For inpatient strokes, stat nurses use Pulsara to alert the CT techs, instantly notifying them to hold the CT scan room.

Pulsara helps coordinate communication around the clock. At night, EvergreenHealth's neurohospitalists are not in-house, so ER providers use Pulsara to add them to the patient channel allowing them to receive real-time updates and notifications on the patient's case even while they're still at home or en route to the hospital.

Having everyone connected on the same platform has also brought the teams a lot closer, as it allows them to stay connected to the patient's case throughout the care journey. According to Briggs, that continuity has given EvergreenHealth's care teams a greater appreciation for their role in helping to save lives.

"After an intervention, our interventional team members send pictures of the actual clot. That kind of return communication—even though it might be graphic—is a word of, 'Hey, ER, thanks for doing that fast work. Look at the difference we are making for patients.' The team is tangibly recognizing that the data they enter into Pulsara about the patient is helping that next caregiver."



Looking to the future, EvergreenHealth hopes to expand their use of Pulsara to more of their care teams, starting with their hospitalists. Briggs emphasized the importance of leveraging technology to even further support what's really important: team communication. "The tech is the easy part. Pulsara is a very intuitive, easy technology—and I'm not super techy. It's about the teamwork. Teamwork improves patient outcomes. Period."