

# Case Study

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## Toronto East General Hospital *Caregiver Communications and Efficiency*

### About Toronto East General Hospital

Toronto East General Hospital (TEGH) is an award-winning urban community teaching hospital that has proudly served the diverse, multi-cultural population of Southeast Toronto since 1929 when it opened as a 110-bed general hospital. TEGH is a major community teaching partner of the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine, and many other educational institutions, and are proud of the role we play in educating the next generation of physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals. Each year, the hospital delivers more than 3,500 babies; and has more than 215,000 outpatient visits and nearly 70,000 emergency room visits. The 515-bed hospital has over 2,600 employees and 400 physicians and midwives on staff, offering an extensive range of inpatient, outpatient and community-based programs and services.

### Before Connexall

With increasing focus on improving the patient experience, TEGH was seeking a more efficient method to respond to patient requests, while reducing caregiver response times. The main goal of the project was to enhance staff efficiencies and to improve staff-to-patient communications, which would have a positive impact on the overall quality of patient care. Prior to implementation of Connexall, nurses would answer a patient's call light by either physically walking over to a center console, or by going into the patient's room and answering their call light. This process had proven to be highly inefficient, based on the numerous steps the nurse had to take in order to get to the patient's room or the center console.

In collaboration with Connexall, the staff at TEGH performed a comprehensive analysis to find areas in which redesigned workflow and technology could have a substantial impact on patient satisfaction and productivity. By integrating Connexall with the hospital's nurse call systems and the hands-free Vocera devices, nurses would have a more efficient means of communicating with their patients.

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*"Since integrating the system, we've definitely experienced an improvement in workflow, caregiver response times and have eliminated a lot of phone tag."*

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– **Lee Rodriguez**  
Connexall Site Administrator, TEGH  
Toronto, Canada

### The Connexall Solution

In 2008, Connexall was integrated with the TEGH's nurse call and Vocera communications systems. Today, patient calls are routed directly to the appropriate caregiver's badge, allowing instant communication between patient and caregiver. Patients' needs are addressed more quickly, improving patient response times, safety and satisfaction.

As a result of the Connexall solution, nurses have experienced a significant decrease in the amount of time required to answer patient calls. Though the system does not act as a replacement for communicating with a patient face-to-face, it does serve as a powerful tool to make the process faster and more efficient. In addition to having direct communication with patients and greater time savings, Connexall also enables hands-free communication without having to dial or remember extension numbers.

The integrated solution also enables audit logs that record when bedside nurse call messages are received, whether they are read, and if the caregiver responded to the patient. This audit trail helps the organization determine patient response times, giving clinicians the right data to further enhance care quality and improve overall patient satisfaction.

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## Into the Future

Moving forward, TEGH is planning to implement the following enhancements:

- **Upgrade Connexall from version 5.02 to 6.0**, which will enable the following features: SSRS Web Reports (including scheduling, etc.), Rauland assignment sharing, enhanced integrations with Vocera, and improved management tools
- **Train new leadership on Connexall's reporting capabilities** and how to extract data in order to monitor individual clinical response times
- **Expand the solution to additional departments**, bringing Connexall's workflow capabilities to acute, coronary, ICU, telemetry, medicine and pediatric units

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*“Connexall helps us get the right information, at the right time, to the right clinician - at the moment it matters.”*

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– **Nicole Gagne**  
Vocera Administrator, TEGH  
Toronto, Canada

## Connexall Results Summary

Since installing the Connexall solution, TEGH has gained the following benefits:

- Immediate and direct communication between nurse and patients
- **70%** improvement in nurse call response times
- Supports a quieter and more healing environment through reduced usage of overhead paging

Some other notable improvements include:

- **90%** reduction in time required for common communication activities
- Eliminated hassles associated with phone tag, runaround, and “page-and-wait”
- **74%** of alarms are reconciled within minutes

In addition to improved efficiencies and patient care, TEGH also saw increased patient comfort and satisfaction and improved teamwork through faster and simpler communications, all of which improved staff morale.

Moving forward, the hospital will continue to realize the full potential of the nurse call integration with ongoing training and support from the Connexall team.