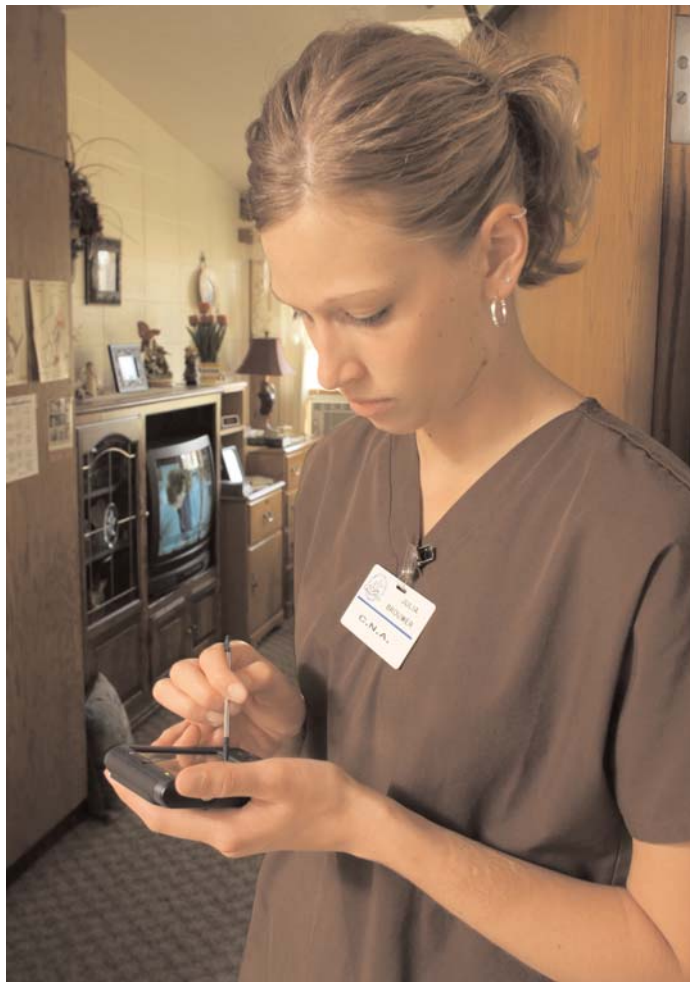




Good Samaritan Improves Senior Care with Socket SoMo® 650 Handheld Computer



"We believe the Socket SoMo 650 gives the best of both worlds in terms of price value and performance, and it helps us succeed in our mission to deliver the best care to our residents."

– Rusty Williams
CIO
Good Samaritan

Founded in 1922, the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society (Good Samaritan) is a Christian social ministry organization and the largest not-for-profit provider of senior care and services in the United States. With more than 230 locations in 24 states, Good Samaritan offers a comprehensive range of housing options and services, including Alzheimer's care, skilled nursing, assisted living, subsidized housing, and outpatient therapy.

Due to heavy regulation at both the state and federal level, senior care facilities must maintain a large amount of documentation. Although mandates for documentation are designed to protect and promote the well-being of residents, for many organizations, the piles of paperwork puts a strain on already overburdened nursing staff and takes valuable time away from patient care. As a result, Good Samaritan has deployed an innovative mobile system that enables the organization to not only streamline documentation but also efficiently manage and monitor the daily care of its residents.

INEFFICIENCIES OF PAPER

"The paper system in our organization is very similar to that of any other health care entity. There's a lot of disparate information, often in three-ring binders," explained Monique Lingle, MSW, Clinical Application Registration Consultant for Good Samaritan.



Many waited until the end of their shift to do documentation, often resulting in duplicates, omissions or other errors in patient files. The time and tediousness of documentation work also affected employees' morale. "CNAs would report to us that they didn't feel valued, because they spent so much time filling out forms and often had to stay late to get it done," Lingle said.

Besides challenges with documentation, Good Samaritan, like many healthcare organizations, also had problems with caregivers waiting until the end of their shift to review nursing care plans. These federally mandated documents specify the type of care each resident needs, ranging from the appropriate pain reduction methods and cognitive assessments to the level of assistance needed for bathing. In order to ensure proper care, Good Samaritan wanted to make it easier for CNAs to review patients' plans directly from bedsides, dining areas, recreation rooms, or other points of care.

GETTING HANDS ON

The new handheld system consists of a Socket SoMo 650 handheld computer running Hands On software, which Good Samaritan developed. Nurses, CNAs, and other healthcare providers use it to document patient care processes at the point of care, greatly improving the accuracy and timeliness of information. "Caregivers capture data at the time they do the assessment. Therefore, the information is available immediately to the whole care team as opposed to waiting for it to make its way into the clinical record itself," explained Rusty Williams, CIO of Good Samaritan.

"The senior care industry is an industry that is very regulated and demands for different types of documentation and patient record-keeping. This has led us into the "Hands On" project to allow us to collect the assessment information at the point of care."

— Rusty Williams
CIO
Good Samaritan

"It wouldn't be uncommon to have a CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) flow sheet at the nursing staff's desk, an intake and output form hanging on the back of the bathroom door, a meal intake book by the dining area, and a mood and behavior book on a nursing cart," she described.

With hectic work schedules and lots of paperwork scattered in different areas, CNAs did not always have time to access document binders after tending to a patient.

Caregivers also use the mobile system to instantly access care plans and patient records over the facility's Wi-Fi network. At a glance, nursing staff can determine if a resident has accomplished all of his or her daily activities, including meals, rehabilitation, social and extracurricular activities. The SoMo 650 features a business-class Wi-Fi radio with fast roaming, so caregivers can move throughout a facility, switching between access points, without dropping their connection. Data captured by the system can also be used for medical purposes and to inform the assessment, which determines the level of care to be provided.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEVICE

Initially, Good Samaritan tested a consumer-grade PDA from a leading manufacturer, but it was susceptible to breakage and did not last very long. "It just was not durable for the daily rigors of our heavy operational type environment," Williams said. Good Samaritan also looked at more industrial-grade devices, but they were beyond the budget of a not-for-profit, faith-based organization.

With the SoMo 650 handheld computer, Good Samaritan has found a device that is durable enough for rigorous daily use but also affordable enough for their budget constraints. "We believe the Socket SoMo 650 gives the best of both worlds in terms of price value and performance, and it helps us succeed in our mission to deliver the best care to our residents," Williams said. "In

the future, we're looking for the SoMo 650 to become a universal type of device that our clinical staff can use."

The society is rolling out 3,200 units of the SoMo 650, backed by the SocketCare™ Premium service plan. During implementation, the organization has found support from Socket to be invaluable. "As with any deployment, we've run into challenges, but Socket support has been superior to anything I've experienced. Socket was quick in diagnosing and attending to situations and to helping us on the way to implementing an entire solution," Williams remarked.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION

While many not-for-profit organizations hesitate to invest in technology because of financial limitations, managing costs was a primary motivation for Good Samaritan to roll out mobile technology.

Dedicated to quality, compassionate care regardless of patients' ability to pay, Good Samaritan serves mostly low-income seniors. With rising costs of care and limited government funding, the organization wanted to find new ways to improve organizational efficiencies.

"Across our 24-state coverage area, approximately 60% of our residents rely on the government to pay for their services. With low reimbursement rates from Medicaid, we are very cost-constrained," Williams explained. "That's another reason why we have to be innovative and creative with these types of solutions to keep our expenses low and accuracy high."



"As a faith-based organization, we have to watch our margins and investments very carefully, and we couldn't find anything affordable in the market that fit into our budget and met our performance requirements until we found the SoMo 650."

— Rusty Williams
CIO
Good Samaritan

CUSTOMER AT A GLANCE

- Organization: The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society
- Founded: 1922
- Headquarters: Sioux Falls, South Dakota, USA
- URL: www.good-sam.com
- Primary business: Christian social ministry organization and provider of senior care services

CHALLENGE

Streamline documentation and improve access to patient care plans and records

SOLUTION

- Socket SoMo 650 handheld computer
- Hands On software from Good Samaritan

RESULTS

- Documentation at the point of care improves quality of record-keeping, saves time, and speeds availability of information to other caregivers
- Improved access to nursing care plans ensures proper care and improves compliance with government regulations
- Greater job satisfaction through simpler, less tedious documentation process
- Electronic documentation eliminates the need to transcribe handwritten notes and cuts down on paper storage



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