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CASE STUDY

Main Line Health Enhances Infection Control and Patient Confidentiality with KSI keyboards and rf IDEAS® readers

Hygiene is critical in any healthcare setting. Maintaining hygiene across a vast healthcare enterprise with multiple locations and thousands of employees is a monumental challenge.

Main Line Health (MLH) is a not-for-profit health system serving portions of Philadelphia and its western suburbs, offering acute care through Lankenau Medical Center, Bryn Mawr Hospital, Paoli Hospital and Riddle Hospital; as well as non-acute services through Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, Mirmont Treatment Center for drug and alcohol recovery, and the HomeCare & Hospice home health service. The MLH family also includes Main Line HealthCare, a multi-specialty physician network, and Lankenau Institute for Medical Research.

When MLH needed cost-effective infection control for shared keyboards that are handled hundreds of times a day, rf IDEAS in partnership with KSI Keyboards handled the challenge with one simple solution.
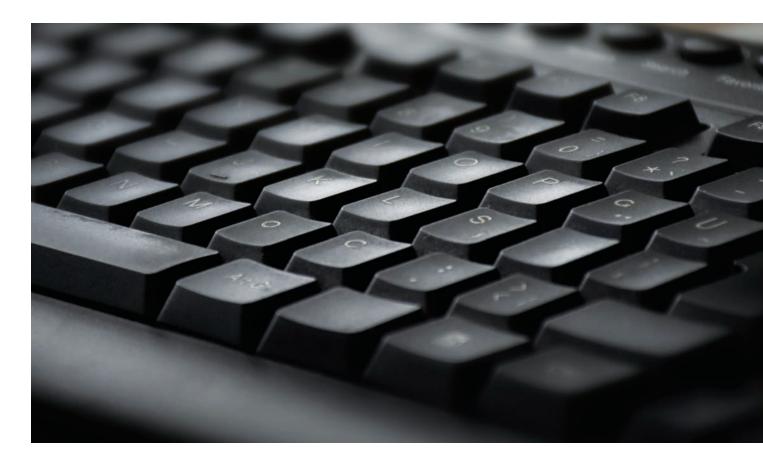
THE CHALLENGES

1. Keeping computer keyboards free of bacteria

A tribute to its more than 10,000 employees, MLH has received numerous awards for quality care and service, including Magnet® certification, the nation's highest honor for nursing excellence.

One of the criteria for Magnet certification measures infection control effectiveness, which is a crucial challenge for a health care facility. Devices like a PC or laptop keyboard located in nurses' stations or on mobile carts—which are handled hundreds of times a day by doctors and nurses throughout MLH's four acute care hospitals—can be a prime spot for the collection and spread of infectious germs.

"Over the years, we have implemented multiple styles and types of infection control keyboards, including roll-up styles and short-life disposable keyboards," says Steve Czapla, director of IS customer support. "It has been challenging to find a balance between cost-effectiveness and usability. The keyboards from KSI met that balance. Clinical staff at our hospitals liked the both feel of the keyboards and the ease of cleaning."

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THE CHALLENGES

2. Reducing clutter and freeing up PC ports

In order to maintain strict adherence to HIPAA, two years ago Czapla and his IS team deployed rf IDEAS proximity readers throughout its four acute care hospitals and one rehabilitation hospital, enabling doctors and nurses to use their existing hospital ID credentials to sign in to computers in the nurses' stations and on mobile carts.

The rf IDEAS readers allowed them to simply tap their cards against the reader to verify authorization and gain access to each computer, rather than trying to remember and type in multiple passwords, multiple times a day. The solution saved the staff a significant amount of time and frustration. It also ensured that no one could access computers without authorization, maintaining strict patient data confidentiality.

However, Czapla noticed that the workstations and mobile carts where the laptops were located were already cluttered with wires from keyboards, mouse, power supplies, etc., forcing the IS team to mount the readers elsewhere and making them awkward for the staff to get to. In addition, all of the peripherals needed a USB port, including the rf IDEAS reader, and that created the problem of too many devices with not enough ports.

THE SOLUTION

Easy-clean KSI keyboards with embedded rf IDEAS readers

Czapla reached out to Kevin Krause, president and founder of Security Rep, Inc., an independent expert on biometric and security devices, to help Main Line Health put together the right solution. Krause recommended Key Source International (KSI) easy-clean infection-control keyboards with embedded WAVE ID® readers, easily addressing multiple requirements with a single solution.

THE BENEFITS

Infection control, reduced clutter and single sign-on for improved workflow

"As a Magnet designated health system, keeping infection rates low is extremely important for us," says Ann Hooper, MA, PMP, project manager for Main Line Health Information Services. "Only 7% of U.S. hospitals meet that criterion."

So far, MLH has rolled out over 3,000 keyboards across several hospitals with plans to install 400 more in the health system's emergency departments.

Greater infection control
With the KSI keyboard, nurses and Environmental Services staff are easily able to clean keyboards without having to worry about damaging them. The keyboard is internally sealed to prevent issues with liquid spills and features recessed keys for easier cleaning and improved ergonomic use.

A rocker switch located on top of the keyboard turns it off. The keyboard can then be disinfected easily and safely using KSI's San-a-Key Healthcare Technology System with patented clean switch and EPA-approved germicidal wipes. After the keyboard dries, a flip of the switch turns it back on and the computer is ready for use.

Reduced clutter
The KSI keyboard with embedded WAVE ID reader not only clears up cluttered desktops and mobile carts, it also provides access to more laptop ports, as the reader is no longer external. The clearly visible red light on the upper part of the keyboard lets doctors and nurses know exactly where to wave their ID credentials.

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THE BENEFITS

Improved workflow from single sign-on (SSO)
A simple wave or tap of a staff member's existing ID card over the red light sends data to third-party SSO software that identifies the individual and verifies that this user is authorized to access patient data on this computer. If so, it instantly unlocks the computer.

Using SSO can improve security and save valuable time each day by eliminating the need for doctors and nurses to have to remember passwords and manually type them in multiple times a day.

Avoids replacement cost
No longer considered a throw-away item, the keyboards from KSI have a five-year warranty, which helps MLH avoid significant replacement cost for the keyboards used on thousands of computers throughout the health system. "That makes a big difference because a hospital environment can be tough on the keyboards," says Czapla.

For more application information, visit www.rfIDEAS.com

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