



## Physicians at Halifax Health Go Mobile with MEDITECH Expanse

### Introduction

As a leader in community health systems, Halifax provides advanced medical care (including trauma-related emergency care) to the Central Florida region. Their ER is frequented, not only by residents, but by many out-of-town visitors drawn to the surrounding tourist area. Physicians were looking for ways to improve their efficiency so they could spend less time tracking down prior medical histories, as well as avoid having to leave the patient's bedside to document.

Halifax chose longtime partner MEDITECH to help them implement new EHR technologies to improve the clinician and patient experiences. With Expanse, providers were able to naturally improve their efficiency.

### SNAPSHOT

#### Opportunity

Located in Daytona Beach, FL, Halifax Health Medical Center's emergency department is both the largest in the state, and one most frequently visited by tourists — challenging Halifax clinicians to find new ways to enhance operational processes and increase efficiency.

#### Solution

Halifax Health found that the mobility and usability of MEDITECH's Expanse EHR improved the experience of their providers and patients both in the acute setting and the ED.

#### Benefits

- Mobile devices cut down on physicians' administrative burdens, while improving workflows and satisfaction
- Having physicians use a tablet to review information at the bedside significantly enhanced patient experience
- EHR mobility improved ED throughput and reduced LOS by 1/2 a day

#### Profile

Halifax Health Medical Center (Daytona Beach, FL) is the hub of a system of more than 35 emergency departments, hospitals, and professional centers — spread across the Volusia and Flagler counties of Florida — called Halifax Health. This 680-bed facility includes a **level 2 trauma center** and employs over 500 physicians representing 54 medical specialties.



## Getting Out of “The Fishbowl”

Prior to going LIVE with MEDITECH Expanse, Halifax had a designated physician area called “the fishbowl,” where physicians reviewed patient charts on desktops prior to rounding. After completing their rounding, they had to return to the fishbowl area to enter orders and document on charts.

***“Using MEDITECH Expanse on a tablet has enabled me to save up to an hour of time while documenting and placing orders,” comments Sam Miller, MD.***

## Improving Workflows and Provider Satisfaction

The biggest impact Expanse made on Halifax physicians was to change the physician approach to care to be more mobile. Over 80% of Halifax hospitalists are now using tablets to review charts while rounding and for placing orders. Hospitalists report mobile ordering to be much more efficient.

Halifax set specific goals for physicians to use mobile tablets in acute care and the ED, as well as expedite their discharge process to shorten the average patient length of stay. Tom Stafford, vice president and CIO of Halifax Health, set an additional goal to keep physicians away from desktop computers and at the patient’s bedside — a goal that was achieved once physicians began using mobile tablets.

“I was amazed after hearing our physicians use words like ‘gamechanger’ and ‘life-altering’ as we introduced mobility on the iPads. One busy ED physician reported an increase in relative value units (RVUs) by almost 20%, which is outstanding.”

**Tom Stafford, VP and CIO  
Halifax Health**



Now, physicians can start reviewing the patient's chart before entering the patient's room, as well as bring that information right to the patient's bedside on a mobile device. This eliminates the need to carry paper with handwritten notes, or worry about forgetting important information.

Physicians at Halifax also found that History and Physicals (H&Ps) are faster in Expanse because providers can review past family, medical, and social history (PFSH) information with the patient rather than starting from scratch. Physicians can sort by history and physical or by the patient's ED Physician Documentation and promptly get the information they need.

## Reducing ED Physician Burnout

ED physicians at Halifax are also reporting that the easy-to-use tablets are cutting down significantly on the burdens of their administrative work. Physicians can transition naturally to the electronic chart, since the information onscreen is listed in the same order as on the handwritten chart. Entering orders for labs, medications, and diets are much faster using a mobile device.

***“Using a tablet is really kind of intuitive and natural for us,” said Dan Peterson, MD. “A lot of the burden in emergency medicine is all of the clerical work, and it goes away when you have the tablet right there with them. I don’t feel like I’m being shackled to the computer for 8 hours, and I’m able to get through all of my work and leave on time every day.”***

Additionally, enabling physicians to personalize and save their typical normals for each diagnosis and chief complaint also makes the documentation process more efficient. The option to customize their display allows both hospitalists and ED physicians to see the same data and care summaries, but view it in a way that is most meaningful to them.

***“We have a lot of patients that live in Florida for only half of the year, and so we don’t get to know them quite as well as full-time residents,” states Robert Daly, MD. “But once their PFSH information appears from a previous visit, we are very quickly able to pull that up and see exactly what they were here for the last time they came in.”***

“The personalization and mobility of the MEDITECH system has really decreased physician burnout. Ninety percent of our physicians are using electronic documentation, which has been so helpful.”

**Ginny Kwong, MD, CMIO  
Halifax Health**



## More Satisfied Patients Connecting with Physicians at the Bedside

No physician wants technology to come between them and their patients, and for good reason. Halifax physicians reported that patients seemed more engaged when they were able to review their charts with providers at the bedside. Seeing their results in real time, graphic trending, and images such as x-rays or ultrasounds helped them to understand what is happening and why the next steps for care are necessary.

The mobile devices are also helping physicians relate to their patients and communicate important education information. Having that face-to-face time has strengthened the provider-patient bonds at Halifax, and presents more opportunities for patients to ask questions — ultimately leading to more satisfying encounters and better compliance.

“Reviewing patients’ charts in the rooms with them has been a major positive change. One 30-year-old female patient nearly cried tears of joy when we reviewed her ultrasound images at the bedside.”

**Daniel Peterson, MD**  
Halifax Health







# Improving ED Throughput with a Mobile EHR

Mobility has been especially important to Halifax physicians working in the ED. Expanse has improved ED throughput and helped to shorten patient length of stay by 1/2 a day, which is critically important to Halifax Health given their high patient volumes. Physicians at Halifax attribute these improvements to the following:



## Eliminating Travel Between Exam Rooms and PCs:

Physicians can see the patient, complete the exam, write the discharge orders, confirm the pharmacy, e-Prescribe medications from the tablet, and leave the room with everything being done within a few minutes.



## Built-In Logic:

MEDITECH Expanse recommends orders when patients are triaged with a certain complaint. Physicians can get patients started and worked up for faster throughput while also benefiting from a variety of safety checks.



## Dictation via iPhone:

Using a smartphone, physicians can dictate in the CT suite to document quickly for trauma patients.



## Clearer Sign Out Process:

MEDITECH Expanse includes a more formal sign-out protocol, allowing for greater accountability within the ED from one doctor to another. There is a clear and obvious acceptance of a sign-out, which is documented with a time-stamp — creating a greater measure of accountability.



## Smoother Transitions to Acute:

Transitioning patients from the ED to acute care requires the admitting physician to place admissions orders before the patient can be assigned an acute bed. Physicians have an easier time moving to the next level of care quickly when there is one system in place, while communication between ED physicians and hospitalists is improved.



## Streamlining Discharge Processes

The improved Expanse workflows have been especially noticeable during Halifax's discharge process. Physicians can easily review medication lists at the patient's bedside and identify which medication orders should be stopped, what should continue, and which orders are new prescriptions. They can also confirm the patient's preferred pharmacy before placing orders while at their bedside. Verifying this information is easy on a tablet, which means nurses get the orders they need immediately after one-on-one conversations with the patients.

Having EHR access on a tablet has also eliminated delays resulting from having to go to a desktop to place an order after leaving a patient's room. Physicians also don't need to worry about forgetting important order details, as they run between "the fishbowl" and the patient's room. Finally, Halifax achieved their goal of discharging inpatients by 10 a.m., by using multidisciplinary rounding with mobile devices to identify patients with no barriers and a disposition to go home in each unit.

## Moving Forward

Halifax Health plans to expand its mobile rollout to other specialties in the community. So far, it has completed these efforts with the Family Medicine residents and faculty, along with inpatient rehabilitation, OB, Neonatologists, and pediatrics providers. Halifax is currently training their palliative care providers. They are also looking to expand mobility to community physicians, in particular those specializing in GI, Cardiology, and Infectious Disease.







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