

Customer Success Story



Stony Brook Medicine

Location: Stony Brook, NY

Industry: Education and Healthcare

RAVE CUSTOMER SINCE: 2010

Company Size: 603-bed facility with over 6,000 employees.

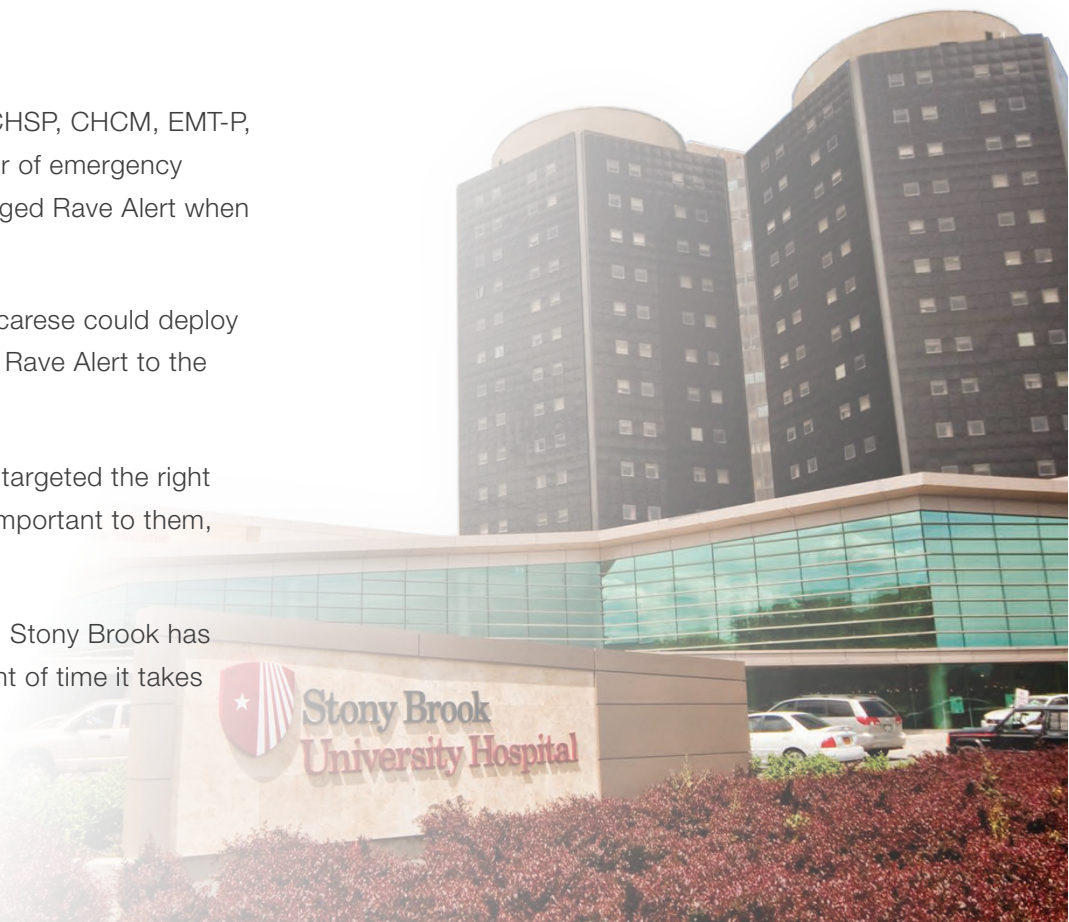
Solution: Rave Alert, Rave Guardian

Challenges

- > For a 48-hour period throughout Super Storm Sandy, the university and on-campus hospital experienced a campus-wide network outage
- > Several emergency issues transpired, including a gun-point robbery, and essential staff and students needed to be communicated with

Results

- > Lawrence M. Zaccarese, JD, MPA, CHSP, CHCM, EMT-P, assistant chief of police and director of emergency management at Stony Brook leveraged Rave Alert when everything else failed
- > With the help of Rave's experts, Zaccarese could deploy voice, text and email alerts through Rave Alert to the appropriate parties on campus
- > By leveraging Rave Alert, Zaccarese targeted the right audience, with the message most important to them, at the right time
- > Since implementing the technology, Stony Brook has significantly cut down on the amount of time it takes to notify the campus





Larry Zicarese, JD, MPA, CHSP, CHCM, EMT-P, Assistant Chief of Police and Director of Emergency Management at Stony Brook University

“ We use Rave Alert because it's easy to use and effective. During Hurricane Sandy, we relied on Rave Alert to communicate with our campus when we experienced multiple emergencies during the 30 hour campus-wide network outage. ”

Preparing for the Worst: HR's Role

HR can be the make-or-break factor in a hospital's disaster preparedness plan. One emergency management professional explains how.

As Hurricane Sandy made its way north along the eastern seaboard in October 2012, one Long Island hospital's police force urgently made last-minute preparations for the coming storm.

Naturally, everyone was feeling a bit edgy, but after years of training alongside both hospital leadership and local law enforcement, the team was ready.

It's a good thing it was, says Larry Zicarese, JD, MPA, CHSP, CHCM, EMT-P, assistant chief of police and director of emergency management at Stony Brook Medicine, a 603-bed facility with over 6,000 employees.

"It was everything you wouldn't want to deal with in a 48-hour period," he says. During the worst of the super storm's onslaught, Stony Brook Medicine's campus, which also houses Stony Brook University, experienced a major network outage. Internet, cable, and phones went dead for 30 hours.

Adding insult to injury, an instrumental part of the hospital's power grid failed during the storm, leaving the entire campus, including the hospital, in the dark for 37 minutes.

But hospital leadership's preparation, its strong relationship with local law enforcement, and the involvement of HR and administrative workers, the hospital was able to get the lights back on, keep the hospital staffed, and be there for the patients.

Whether a disaster is in the form of a hurricane, an earthquake, a terrorist attack, a snowstorm, or something else, hospitals need to be prepared. Here are Zicarese's top tips regarding what HR can do to help get the entire hospital on track.

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MOBILE SAFETY

1. Organize Trainings

The most important thing HR can do to establish readiness is training workers for the worst before it happens, says Zicarese. "You should be doing tabletops and post mortems after incidents."

And don't be shy about advocating for increased funding for hospital safety and disaster preparedness initiatives. Safety and security are often among most important things to be funded that don't get proper funding, says Zicarese.

"It might be costly, but it's well worth the investment. As an attorney, I can tell you that it can pay dividends in front of a jury."

2. Remember: Workers are People

In the midst of a disaster even the most dedicated healthcare workers are going to have concerns beyond what's happening in the hospital. To maintain proper staffing levels and keep workers focused on their jobs in the middle of a crisis, employers should meet them halfway.

In some situations, this might mean giving employees lodging close to the hospital or providing transportation. When asking workers to be on duty during a snowstorm, consider offering to pay for a hotel room near the hospital, meals, and a safe ride to and from the hospital. Not only will this boost attendance, but it will also minimize concerns about commuter safety.

In other situations, workers will have concerns around the safety of their families, especially children and the elderly. One solution is to create a temporary family area for watching TV and reading books.

3. Reach Out to Local Law Enforcement

Don't wait until the crisis strikes, Zicarese advises. The time to reach out to local law enforcement and emergency services is now.

"There should be a relationship between the organizations," says Zicarese. "The hospital CEO should never be meeting the local police chief for first time when something bad happens... they should be on each other's speed dials."

It's key to remember that disaster preparedness is something that never ends; it's a continuous process. But that's something most HR professionals will find to be second nature. "HR knows this is something to take seriously," says Zicarese.

Lena J. Weiner

Lena J. Weiner is an associate editor at HealthLeaders Media.