

# Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre

Boosting staff safety and patient experience

## Organization overview

Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre (SLMHC) is a fully accredited 60-bed hospital and a 20-bed extended care facility located in Northwestern Ontario, Canada. The organization provides a broad range of primary healthcare services - including diabetes care, stroke prevention, mental health counselling, addiction services, and acute and outpatient programs - to all residents of Sioux Lookout and the First Nation communities in the region.

MenoYaWin, in the Anishinaabe language means health, wellness, well-being. SLMHC patients and families have the option of integrating traditional and modern medicines and practices into their healthcare experience.

## Challenges

- Strengthen staff safety
- Streamline workflows and unify staff communications
- Make it fast and easy to contact the right language interpreter

## Vocera Solution

- Vocera Smartbadge
- Vocera Engage
- Nurse Call Integration

## Results\*

- Boosted staff safety
- Simplified workflows and staff communications
- Improved the process to reach the right language interpreter
- Enhanced communication in isolation environments

## Challenges

When the province of Ontario's Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour collaborated on a Workplace Violence Prevention strategy, they provided healthcare organizations with guidance to implement a solution to help safeguard staff. Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre (SLMHC) began looking for a clinical communication platform.

"We wanted a solution to support staff safety, enhance our interpretation services, streamline workflows and unify staff communications as an organization," said Chris Young, Clinical Informatics Specialist at SLMHC.

## Vocera Solution

Clinical and information technology leaders at SLMHC deployed the Vocera Smartbadge, a wearable, hands-free device that brings together voice calling, messaging and alarm notifications, along with the Vocera Engage intelligent workflow engine.

Engage is used to integrate the organization's nurse call system with their Vocera solution to help improve the accuracy and escalation of notifications without the need for third-party middleware. SLMHC clinicians can quickly receive relevant nurse-call notifications with patient, event and care team context directly to their Smartbadge. They can respond to a call right away from their Vocera Smartbadge and talk to the patient through the pillow speaker.

"We defined groups to respond to specific events on the backend of the Vocera system," said Young. "So, the right staff members receive nurse call, code blue, code white, patient emergency, laboratory, bed exit and other critical notifications on their Smartbadge."

Implementing a unified clinical communication solution that would bolster safety around the clock was a top priority for SLMHC leaders. The dedicated panic button on the Smartbadge allows staff to summon help quickly and discreetly.

"I use the panic button on my Smartbadge if I'm ever in a dangerous situation," said Lori Donnelly, RN, Patient Care Manager at SLMHC. "I know our security staff will receive my call and be by my side right away."

All staff members use Vocera technology to stay connected at SLMHC – leadership, nursing, information technology, interpretation services and more. "Even if we don't wear a Smartbadge, we can forward all Vocera calls to our phones, so we're always logged in when we're working," said Young.

The interpretation services team at SLMHC uses the Smartbadge to make sure the right language specialist can be located, so patients and families with limited English proficiency can communicate with doctors, nurses and other hospital staff. Staff can simply say, "Call interpreter" to request services from the team member who speaks the appropriate language. Interpreters can even translate if they are off campus because they can be reached on their personal phones through the Vocera system.

"There are three Indigenous language groups in our area with 19 different dialects spoken by our patients and their family members," said Kathy Loon, Executive Lead for Indigenous Collaborations and Relations at SLMHC. "Vocera technology makes it fast and easy to connect with the right language specialist to interpret so patients and their families can fully understand the diagnosis and care plan."

## Results\*

SLMHC's Vocera solution has helped the organization elevate patient care.

"Our patients can easily connect with their care team when they need assistance," said Young. "The direct line of communication between patients and staff made possible by Vocera technology helps boost patient experience, safety and overall recovery."

The organization's workflows are now more efficient because relevant notifications are sent to the appropriate response groups.

"We can easily broadcast codes to specific groups, such as code blue and code white," Young said. "Vocera technology has helped speed response times to critical events. It has also reduced the need to use intrusive overhead paging. Today, the right rapid response group members receive the right notification on their Smartbadge and can act fast."

The overall sentiment from SLMHC staff related to feeling safe at work has been enhanced since implementing Vocera technology.

"My Vocera Smartbadge makes me feel safe, even if I'm working a late-night shift or am alone with a patient that could be a fall risk," Donnelly said. "It puts me at ease because I know help is only the push of a button away. It's comforting to know that my teammates also have a lifeline when faced with a with a code white or a situation where they need assistance."

"I also found the Smartbadge to be an important tool as we responded to COVID-19," said Donnelly. "When we were working in isolation rooms and needed additional supplies, the Smartbadge made it easy to connect with someone to bring the necessary tools to the room without risking contamination."

Because the process to contact the right language interpreter has been streamlined, patient and staff experience has improved.

"Vocera technology helps make our jobs easier," Loon said. "It's much more efficient for staff to find the right interpreter. One night, the only member of my team working was a Cree interpreter, and a patient came into ER who only spoke Ojibwe. Because I speak Ojibwe, the interpreter used her Smartbadge to call me on my cell phone at home. I was able to interpret for them over the call because of Vocera."

"We're always working towards excellence – Vocera technology helps us provide the best possible experience for patients and staff," said Loon.

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### – Kathy Loon

Executive Lead for Indigenous  
Collaborations and Relations  
Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health  
Centre



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### – Lori Donnelly, RN

Patient Care Manager  
Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health  
Centre

For More Information

Visit **vocera.com**,

email **info@vocera.com**

or call **+1 888 9VOCERA**

### Vocera, now part of Stryker

3030 Orchard Parkway

San Jose CA, 95134

t: +1 408 882 5100

f: +1 408 882 5101

toll free: +1 888 9VOCERA

[vocera.com](http://vocera.com)

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