

# OnCallPeople

## Addressing Age-Old Problems for Busy Healthcare Teams

In healthcare, every second counts. That's why it's important for personnel and stakeholders in a busy physician practice or hospital to know who is "on-call," and having the ability to reach them instantly (at their fingertips) should be easy. Unfortunately, healthcare is slow to adopt technology, so many hospitals and physician practices are using dated, manual processes for scheduling and are still relying on operators and antiquated pagers to communicate. This frustrates physicians and staff alike, and leads to inefficient patient care with a greater potential for communication errors.

OnCallPeople (OCP) aims to change all that and as such, their mission is simple—to improve the quality of care for patients and the quality of life for healthcare providers by simplifying communication, collaboration and scheduling. Below is the conversation that CIO Applications had with Hamza Jamil, the chief operating officer of OnCallPeople on how the company provides a cloud-based application that combines a HIPAA-compliant communications platform with electronic scheduling for healthcare teams of all sizes and clinical settings.

### **What are the trends that will have an impact in the unified communications solution space this year and how is OnCallPeople planning to leverage these trends and evolve?**

Trends in the communications space are rapidly-changing. The notion of unified communications is all over the place. Mission-critical organizations are trying to determine how to best keep up, while avoiding investing in every platform that pops up.

I believe some of the biggest trends for the coming year in the unified communications space include: a continued shift toward cloud- and subscription-based services, more organizations adopting a bring your own device (BYOD) philosophy, increased adoption of 5G technology, enhanced security concerns, and an even greater focus on integration/APIs. All of these trends align well with the OnCallPeople model, so we're well-positioned for the future. We're already cloud/subscription-based, secure and HIPAA-compliant, and

our tool is designed to support the BYOD model. In terms of APIs, OnCallPeople is designed for interoperability and can integrate with all the major EMRs (Epic, Cerner, Allscripts) and virtually any existing scheduling, HR or communications platform.

As 5G continues to proliferate, we can anticipate better performance for video calling – which will give OnCallPeople's users even more options for communication, collaboration and consultation among healthcare teams.

### **Please elaborate on the challenges existing in the unified communications solution space and how is OnCallPeople effectively addressing these issues?**

When it comes to communication—generational preferences and the adoption of new technologies vary greatly by age. Many organizations with a multi-generational workforce are struggling to arm staff with the tools they need to communicate more effectively, without completely changing existing processes and workflows. That's why OnCallPeople offers phone, SMS and chat—which allows the less tech-savvy workers to use the tools they are comfortable with in hopes that they will transition over time.

Another challenge in the unified communications space is remembering that many industries don't rely on desk workers—rendering many unified communications solutions virtually

useless. To address the unique challenges of shift workers, OnCallPeople integrates dynamic scheduling into its communication platform. This ensures all members of the care team know who is on-call with 100 percent accuracy at all times.

### **Please shed some light on OnCallPeople's Unified Scheduling and Communications Solution on the basis of its methodology, features and benefits involved?**

When developing OnCallPeople, we consulted with physicians, administrators and healthcare workers to determine their greatest challenges when it comes to communication. We heard clearly that confusion over who was on-call (which

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occurs often due to last-minute schedule changes) and communication among healthcare teams during patient handoffs were two critical problems these organizations were facing. At the same time, administrators indicated that they were concerned about the continued costs associated with maintaining multiple platforms for communication—including growing infrastructure costs, operator-based telephone systems, paging technology, etc. For these reasons, we focused on developing a single, cost-effective solution with the following key features:

- *Communications Suite* which allows users to select phone, chat or text to communicate instantly (which streamlines patient hand-offs);
- *DirectConnect* which is our proprietary intelligent call routing technology – making it easy to instantly reach the right provider or team member without an operator;
- *SmartScheduler* and *Open Shift Marketplace* which together simplify scheduling and the trading of shifts that occurs so often in healthcare.

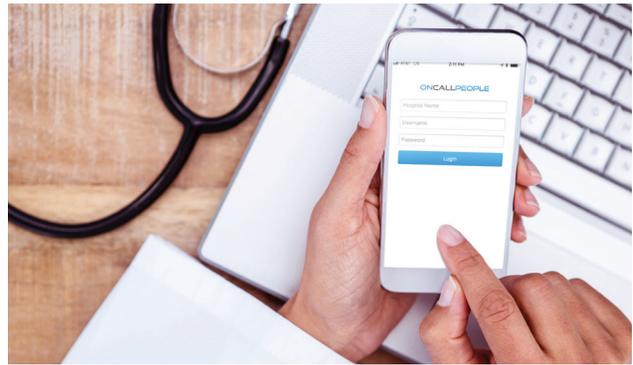
## **Please cite a case study on how OnCallPeople has enabled clients to overcome hurdles and attain desired outcomes.**

We work with Mercy Health System, one of the top five largest health systems in the country. We've been supporting Mercy South Hospital's growing hospitalist team—which was a group of physicians who were becoming increasingly frustrated by their dated scheduling and communications tools.

We got their team up and running with OnCallPeople in just a few days and almost immediately, we were handling a call volume of 4,000+ calls per month. Using OnCallPeople's scheduling platform, real-time updates to the schedule become instantly visible to all stakeholders. Users can quickly identify which providers are covering a specific unit or floor of the hospital, as well as those with on-call or admitting responsibilities. For the first time, the dynamic scheduling and communications needs of the hospitalist group are being addressed with a single software solution, on a single screen—making it easy to connect with the right provider the first time. Positive results documented thus far include: improved workflows, greater efficiency, decreased patient length of stay, improvement in the patient experience, and positive feedback from satisfied providers.

## **How does OnCallPeople steer ahead of the competition?**

We feel confident that our solution is the most robust and cost-effective option out there for busy physician practices, hospitals and health systems. There are plenty of unified communications applications out there – and plenty of scheduling platforms, but there's no single solution (that we've seen) that offers both



and is designed to meet the unique challenges facing healthcare organizations.

In addition, we believe our proprietary DirectConnect/intelligent call routing technology truly sets us apart in the unified communications space. DirectConnect uses schedule-based call and message routing to ensure team members are always reaching the correct provider who is actually on-shift, with 100% accuracy. Finally, anyone who works in healthcare knows how common last-minute schedule changes are. Our unique “Open Shift Marketplace” makes it fast and easy to get open shifts filled fast – leading to greater physician and staff satisfaction and 100% shift coverage.

In addition, it's rare for a hospital or physician practice to invest in a new technology that can actually save money, but OnCallPeople's return on investment is proven. OnCallPeople reduces administrative and infrastructure costs, eliminates the need for multiple platforms for scheduling and communication, and reduces costly communications errors.

## **What does the future hold for OnCallPeople?**

OnCallPeople is poised for continued growth and expansion—both here in the US and internationally. The challenges facing the healthcare industry are age old and most organizations are finally coming around to the fact that there are digital solutions that can really make a difference in improving performance and efficiency. We plan to continue enhancing our existing platform based on customer feedback and in response to newer technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G, etc. Future iterations of OCP could use AI to predict provider communication preferences, anticipate higher census based on historical data, and much more.

Finally, while OnCallPeople is currently focused on the healthcare industry—we've mastered how to work with one of the most highly regulated complex industries in the world. In the future, OnCallPeople may expand outside of healthcare to address similar challenges for any industry that struggles with communication and scheduling – particularly those managing a shift-based/on-call workforce. It's a very exciting time for us and we look forward to seeing what the future holds for us and our growing customer base. **CA**